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DeLaveaga School Contract Awarded On Two Conditions

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Reese Construction of Santa Cruz apparently will get the contract for completion of interior work at DeLaveaga School, but not until some legal questions about fund transfers to pay for it have been answered.

The Santa Cruz City Board of Education yesterday accepted Reese's low base bid of \$219,400, some \$5084 above the architect's estimate of \$214,316 for the building contract.

Francis M. Bell, 112 Getchel Street, cited sections of the Education Code governing expenditures by school budgets, and appropriation of income in excess of school district budgets, and placing limitations on the expenditures of all budgeted funds including reserves.

Bell recalled that when trustees decided to complete DeLaveaga School, they agreed to finance the project by using funds from the elementary district's reserve.

He noted that he had been assured then by the board president that such a transfer of funds would be legal.

However, yesterday Bell cited

the code sections imposing limits and setting forth procedures for such transfers.

He concluded, "Before any contract is awarded it would be appreciated if the Education Code could be studied and a legal opinion given in writing so the taxpayers can have confidence that their tax dollar is being guarded and only expended in accordance with law."

Superintendent Denzil Morrissey and Dave Gray, assistant superintendent for business, said some \$240,000 of the project's total cost of \$260,000 is in the budget, but that an additional \$20,000 must be transferred. The board transferred \$85,000 last year.

Terming Bell's request "legitimate, fair and reasonable," Trustee Keith Shaffer stated that before a contract is issued, the county counsel should give a legal opinion to assure "that we are on solid ground."

Trustee Eugene Adams said the contract should be withheld until the budget transfer has been completed.

Shaffer then moved that the board accept the Reese bid subject to the two conditions. It passed by a unanimous vote of trustees present. President Eli Bariteau and John Melendy were absent. Don Starr presided.

In addition to the \$214,316 for the base contract, the project includes \$10,800 for carpet, \$15,645 for fees, \$3000 for inspection and tests, \$6500 for kitchen furniture and equipment, and \$9739 for classroom furniture and equipment.

Gray told the board that sums for paving would be cut from the contract to bring it within the budgeted amount. He said the paving could be done at less cost by the district staff and could be financed by a fund of \$16,000 set aside for site development at DeLaveaga School.

Gray also assured Shaffer that the \$260,000 would be enough to complete the project and prepare the rooms for occupancy.

The work includes the finishing of six classrooms, two shared spaces, a science-commons room, a multi-purpose room and a kitchen.

It is uncertain when the contract will be issued, although Gray expressed hope that the county counsel could give his opinion within two or three days.

The contractor has 90 days for completion of the job.

A second bid in the amount of \$233,500 was submitted by George W. Davis of Watsonville.

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