

Library

PUBLIC LIBRARY
SANTA CRUZ

County Passes Library Budget, 'Statement Of Understanding'

6/27/79

Once again, county government's annual resistance to funding its assigned portion of the city-county library budget folded at the final hour and the library budget was approved Tuesday as requested.

On Monday, Supervisors' Chairman Dan Forbus and Supervisor Pat Liberty indicated there would be serious problems with the funding until the city agreed to begin hammering out a new city-county library agreement.

To meet its library commitment, county supervisors borrowed \$134,000 from its money pool set aside to build new board chambers and picked up another \$100,000 from the new jail's contingency fund to pad the library budget. Total general fund (property taxpayers' cost) for the

\$1.5 million budget came to \$576,924, according to the county administrator's budget.

Going into the budget session Tuesday, Forbus still was angry at a couple of city councilmen's remarks (to cut county branch libraries if the county did not fund its portion of the budget), and made it clear that he has no faith in the city being cooperative in coming up a new city-county library agreement.

The new agreement has been sought by the county over the past year, and the board's motion to approve the library budget included a demand that a new "statement of understanding" be reached with the city.

The statement of understanding will

take on the question of which governing body, the city or the library board, has the authority to run the library system.

Among the speakers in support of full funding, Library Board Chairwoman Sara Bunnett pledged that board would make decisions based on continuing and improving the overall "system," without regard to whether its outlets are in the city or county areas.

After Forbus urged his board to borrow other money to pay the library costs, he was reminded that in approving the budget he had lost his leverage for dealing the Santa Cruz City Council.

He said, "You have to trust somebody and I've chosen to put my trust in the Library Board. But, I no longer trust the council to cooperate."