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# Council Moves To Increase Minority Hiring

Santa Cruz City department heads will have 10 top job applicants from which to choose instead of the present five under a rule change intended to bring more women and other minorities into the city workforce.

Councilmembers John Laird, Mardi Wormhoudt and Bruce Van Allen and Mayor Michael Rotkin gave their ready approval to the expanded list, saying it could help in promoting affirmative action for minorities.

Councilman Joseph Ghio noted that the Police Management Association and the Santa Cruz Management Association all opposed the expanded list and that 10 choices "would dilute the ability (element of applicants) and give preferential treatment to some because of an intangible."

Wormhoudt said the management groups "have the least number of women and people of color" and Van Allen said the "miscellaneous employees" had not taken a public position "and they are our largest group."

The council majority agreed the rule of 10 wouldn't bring equity into the hiring place on its own "but it is a first step," according to Wormhoudt.

Rotkin said the rule of five was arbitrary, as is the rule of 10, but that the larger pool of applicants can lend itself to an improved workforce.

He said that the objective tests used to select the top five aren't the best method of selection.

Rotkin indicated he doubted the tests' objectivity.

The council approved the rule, 4-2, with Ghio and Councilmember Spiro Mellis against.

The majority told staff to also seek other ways to improve minority hiring practices.