

Want Higher Increase For County Workers

County employees do not feel a one-step salary increase for next year is adequate and are requesting a straight \$30 monthly cost of living increase for all employees and department heads.

The request was made today in a letter to each supervisor from the Santa Cruz County Employees' association board of directors following a special meeting called to discuss the matter Wednesday night.

"We respectfully wish to call your attention to the recent increase in withholding taxes, the rise in consumers price index and a continuous series of salary increases being granted employees throughout the nation in private industry and closely associated government bodies. In particular, the recent reclassification of all positions recommended for the employees of the city of Santa Cruz, thereby placing them upon an equitable basis with neighboring cities," the communication states.

The letter pointed out a large number of county employees are property owners. Citing a few examples there was 58.1 per cent at the county hospital, 64.3 per cent in the sheriff's office and 88.85 per cent in the county garage.

"We believe that the board of supervisors is well aware of the fact that Santa Cruz county has, for some time in the past served as a training ground for other counties, losing many of our valued employees to those other counties in view of the higher salary scales existing.

"We also believe that the board recognizes the fact that such a practice is quite expensive to the county and ultimately the taxpayer," the directors continued.

Earlier this week, Board Chairman Alvin Gregory announced supervisors would give county employees one-step raises in accordance with the salary ordinance. This was on the condition an employee had been in service for one year and that he received the written recommendation for a raise from his department head.

Persons currently in the fifth or last salary bracket would receive no increase under this plan.