

Picking name for new youth center could draw crowd to council meeting

A heavy turnout is expected at tomorrow night's Watsonville City Council meeting, where the council could select a name for the city's new \$1.3 million youth center.

The youth center, which is expected to open sometime next month, was the center of attention at a crowded Feb. 17 meeting at City Council chambers, where the seven-member Recreation and Parks Commission heard recommendations on what to name the center.

Some of the names proposed before the commission at that meeting included the late farm labor

leader Cesar Chavez; Gene Hoularis, a former director of Watsonville Boys Club and longtime volunteer working with Pajaro Valley youth; Norman "Sig" Lien, a former Recreation and Parks commissioner and county superintendent of schools; Waldo Rodriguez, one of the plaintiffs in the landmark case that brought district elections to Watsonville; and the Rev. Jose Rojas, founder of St. Francis Youth Center's Penny Club.

Another suggestion was to name the building after Jessica Cortez, the 9-year-old Pajaro girl who was shot to death, along with her 16-year-old brother, Jorge, near their

home on the evening of Feb. 10.

Chavez and Hoularis had the largest and most vocal group of supporters.

After hearing about two hours of public input, commission members decided by a 6-1 vote on Watsonville Youth Center as the name it would recommend to the City Council. Commissioner Pedro Castillo cast the "no" vote.

The commission also recommended creating a "Wall of Fame" in the building's foyer. This wall would have the names of people recommended to the commission.

The City Council meeting will be tomorrow at 4 p.m. at 250 Main St.