

Mike Newton who has worked for six years. Newton commented, "The change is already in the people," indicating

Libraries 1970-1979

Who's running, who's paying for libraries?

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Fiscal responsibility, questions of authority and lack of county funding were topics debated Monday morning at the monthly meeting of Santa Cruz Library Board of Trustees.

Charles Atkins, city-county librarian, said the library can expect serious problems if the county fails to fund 85 percent of its share of library costs. A meeting has been held between the Santa Cruz city council and county supervisors, but the session produced no resolution to the fiscal problem.

Atkins said that because the bill that would provide funding for special districts, SB 2223, was killed in the Senate, the county must now find sources other than the county library tax in order to meet the 85 percent obligation.

At the moment, the library is subsidized for both the city and the county through the budget passed by Santa Cruz city council.

Atkins also told trustees Monday that Santa Cruz city council decided to reopen the Garfield Park branch library three days per week, and has added \$26,000 to the budget for this purpose.

Robert Ginsberg, an Aptos resident seeking to reopen La Selva Beach library, then asked which government agency holds the responsibility for operation of the library system.

Atkins explained that all money for the libraries is funded through the city budget. The county is billed three times each year for its share of the cost. Additional money to reopen county branch libraries must be supplied through the county budget, but approved in the city budget.

Santa Cruz Mayor Larry Edler said funding is still more complex, since the city's budget is fixed at 85 percent of its full-funding share. Even if the county could pay 100 percent, he said, it is doubtful more money would be added to the city's allotment.

Before any action can be taken to reopen any of the county branches that were closed last June, Atkins said,

the library must wait for the county budget.

Leonard Greenberg, board member, then raised the issue of library board authority, and said he is concerned that actions regarding the library system have been taken that by-passed the board.

"As long as we allow this to go on," he said, "The less efficient we are as administrators of the library system."

Board member C. Vernon Berlin said the library city and county board of trustees is an advisory body without any real power. And Edler argued that it is the city who owns the library system.

Greenberg said he believes the library system is owned by people in the city and county of Santa Cruz. Board member Mary Ann Kaplan said she feels it is unimportant who holds the purse strings, when both city and county residents are served. As a county representative, she added, she does feel some resentment when the county is told the library is run at the whim of the city.

Trustees also took a look during the meeting at a line-by-line budget containing the \$215,000 in cuts made in order to meet the 15 percent deficit created with the passage of Proposition 13. Atkins said the cuts have been made throughout the budget.

Greenberg pointed out that more than 65 percent of the cuts have been made in two areas — people and books. Some \$88,000 was cut for staff, while \$45,000 was reduced for books. If the cost for a book is estimated at \$10, he said, this represents a cut of 4,500 books this year.

The budget will be the document presented to trustees for approval if the county adopts a budget with 85 percent funding for the library. "This is the budget we will have to live by, unless more money becomes available," he said.

The county's share of the library bill is estimated at \$803,500. These funds are needed by a deadline of Sept. 30, before funding from the city's budget is depleted.