

Service

City Employes Prefer Money

Strike Talk Gives Way To Salary Hike

By Wallace Wood
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Strike talk arose at a meeting of Santa Cruz City employes and a union official this morning, but it appeared to lose ground to a new chase for higher salaries.

A small group of city employes met at the city's corporation yard to see "where we go from here" after city council action last week on pay increases averaging 4 per cent. About 30 employes showed up.

Some still called for a walk-out of a single department where it would hurt the city most, such as in the area of garbage collection. But there was doubt even such limited action would stick if city offi-

cials called in substitute collection crews.

Instead, union representative Robert McLane brought up the idea of trying to get the city council to convert some \$70,000 it put into a retirement fund this year into direct salary benefits.

There was little doubt the loudest grumbles over city pay came from workers who got no pay increases. The extra retirement money could mean 2.5 per cent across-the-board increases, and the city civil service commission had recommended the money go for the hike.

McLane told the group today that they have a little time to organize more union support to

aim for the retirement money.

"You have strike sanction (from the union), and you'll still have it two months from now," he said.

The issue may come up at

Felton Station Hit By Burglars

Weekend burglars hit the Ted Rolff Auto Garage in Felton, sheriff's deputies report.

Thieves broke a window to enter the building. They took an assortment of items, including \$60 to \$70 in change, and motor oil, tools and tires.

the regular union meeting next Monday.

"If this is all the employes we can get to come to meetings, we might as well forget the strike," said one worker who got nods and murmurs of agreement.

Another employe faction, however, still was adamant for a selective walkout. "If the refuse workers don't pick up for a week, we'll have our pay raises. The public in this town won't put up with that kind of thing," the leader of the group said.

McLane had held out for a total of 10 per cent raises during city salary hearings. Even that amount brought criticism from some employes. "We're

25 per cent below other counties. We should have asked for 25 per cent," one said.

The retirement system change was a surprise at the salary hearings. McLane explained it would change the retirement age and benefits available under the state retirement program for public employes.

"How many of you think you'll be sticking around to benefit from retirement?" he asked, and was answered with laughter.

Union members agreed before the meeting broke up to try for a larger turnout for next week's regular meeting, in order to discuss further the retirement issue and possible strike.