

# Council Is Divided On Fringe Benefits Plan

City councilmen gave a mixed reception this morning to a \$37,000 fringe benefit package recommended by the city civil service commission for city hall employees.

The package, called a necessary measure to permit the city to compete with the county and surrounding cities and counties, will total about 9 cents on the city's present tax rate of \$1.66½.

Assistant City Manager Pete Tedesco emphasized not all of the costs would be covered through tax increases, immediate or later. Only \$16,000 of the benefits would take effect this year with the remainder moving into the city budget after the massive payments for flood control are passed.

Although no action was taken and not all councilmen were present, the proposal apparently will be subject to two strong and somewhat conflicting pressures.

While the councilmen generally agree that low turnover in personnel and competitive wages with other public agencies in the area and over the state are needed, they also indicated they would be hesitant to make the employees' wage and benefit position higher than the local industry and labor market.

## SCHS Groups Plan Concert For Tonight

An 80-voice a cappella choir with the Santa Cruz high school orchestra, will present a condensed concert version of the opera "Carmen" tonight as a part of an all-around musical concert at 8:15 o'clock in the civic auditorium.

Admission is 75 cents for adults and 50 cents for students.

The program is as follows: Band, under the direction of Merle K. Good; "Break Forth, O Beauteaus" by Bach - Latham; "American Jubilee," by Wagner; "Seranta", by Anderson; and "River Kwai", by Arnold-Osterling.

Girls glee club, directed by Marion Whitesell; "The King and I", Rodgers and Hammerstein; "Charlie is My Darling".

Band, "Fantasy for Band", Erickson; "Haskell's Rascal's", by Yoder; "My Fair Lady", by Loewe-Bennett; and "Flash of Crimson", by Finlayson.

Orchestra and a cappella choir, directed by Norman A. Walters; "The Shepherd King," by Mozart; and "Carmen" by Bizet.

Tickets may be purchased at the door.

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The benefit package as recommended by a majority of the commission headed by Chairman Tom Twohig included:

1. Health insurance benefits totaling \$7000 during the last half of the coming fiscal year and \$14,000 per fiscal year minimum in the future. City employees currently have only plans financed by themselves. When dependents' costs are included, premiums are as high as \$14.42 per month, according to Tedesco.

2. Fire and police uniform allowance totaling about \$9000 per year. Currently clothing destroyed or damaged in the line of duty is repaired or replaced out of a city fund. The plan would call for \$125 per year going to the emergency employees for uniforms and the present fund being discontinued.

3. Liberalized vacations costing an estimated \$14,000 beginning fiscal year 1959-60. Currently employees with 15 years' service are given three weeks vacation. Under the package submitted today, employees with five years' service would receive the three-week vacation. Presently 41 persons get three-week vacations and under the new plan, an additional 94 persons would be included.

In the discussion on the plan, Chairman Twohig said: "While I am not much in favor of a general wage increase this year, I think fringe benefits are something else and provide added incentive to the jobs."

Commissioner Bob Lyons said, "If we are going to fight turnover, we have to compete with comparable jobs in other areas."

Tedesco, however, said last year's turnover, except for laborers, was slight due to progressive and aggressive measures to recruit and retain personnel.

Commissioner Eugene Prolo claimed, "We should realize that some city positions are already paying more than offered by local industry which does not have the security of a civil service position."

Councilman Paul Forgey reminded the group, "Employees here in many cases are just as well off as they would be in San Jose with a higher salary. Keeping up with the Joneses has ruined a lot of families and a lot of communities, too."

Tedesco said following the meeting that the question of increased benefits would probably not be resolved until the June budget hearings when the money to meet the proposals would have to be earmarked.

In addition to the fringe package, the council may be asked to consider upward adjustments in salaries for several job classifications which are termed out of step with general wages, according to a report soon to be submitted by Salary Consultant Louis Kroeger of San Francisco. Kroeger is retained by the city to make a yearly study of the city's salary structure.