

# Child care fees, AIDS study, O'Neill Ranch on board agenda

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Santa Cruz County may soon begin charging developers yet another fee, this one for the establishment of child care centers.

County Counsel Dwight Herr has submitted a report to the Board of Supervisors, to be considered tomorrow, which says the establishment of child care fees would be legal if the county adds goals and policies regarding child care to its General Plan.

Prior to setting the fees, the supervisors must amend the General Plan — the county's blueprint for future development — and complete a study demonstrating a "reasonable relationship" between the amount of the fee and the cost of operating the child care center which can be attributed to the development, Herr wrote.

The fees would apply to developments in unincorporated areas of the county.

## "Blinded" AIDS study

A contract for an AIDS study is also on the supervisors' agenda.

Blood samples drawn from patients at Santa Cruz County's sexually transmitted disease and prenatal care clinics will be used in a "blinded" study of

HIV (human immune deficiency virus) infection rates.

A "blinded study" means the blood samples will not be traceable to specific patients, preserving the patients' anonymity, said Elinor Hall, director of the county Health Services Agency.

It also means patients will not know they are part of the study, she said, and will not have given consent to be part of the study.

HIV is known to be the predecessor to AIDS.

About 1,325 blood samples from Santa Cruz County will be used. The samples will become part of a statewide study to determine the rate of HIV infection in certain target populations, Hall said. Santa Cruz County will be part of a state-funded joint study with Monterey County. Santa Cruz's portion of the study will cost the state about \$25,000.

Monterey County will analyze about 4,000 blood samples, some of which will be drawn with the patients' consent and accompanied by a patients' questionnaire on sex and drug-use habits.

The information gathered in the study will be used to design AIDS prevention information and target it to appropriate groups, Hall said.

## O'Neill Ranch study

The supervisors will also consider approving a contract with a consultant to study how to use the O'Neill Ranch in Soquel.

If approved, Santa Cruz County will pay a consultant \$13,500 to come up with a plan for how to use the ranch, if a group of local agencies, including the county, Soquel School District, and Central Fire District, can come up with a purchase plan for the 97-acre property.

County Administrative Officer George Newell said he hopes the consultant can work out a combined use for the ranch which would include a park, a possible school site, and a possible new fire station.

So far, the county has set aside \$1 million toward the \$10.8 million the ranch's owner is asking for it. The county is hoping the school and fire districts will want to chip in.

Alexander Development Co. of Walnut Creek has agreed to sell the property, on Soquel Drive at the top of 41st Avenue, if the county, by itself or in partnership, can cough up the cash.

The consultant will be Jeff Oberdorfer and Associates of Santa Cruz. The study is to be completed by June 30, 1989.