

11-18-85 Cable TV bidders will face off

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SANTA CRUZ — Bidders for the lucrative county and Santa Cruz city cable TV franchises will make their pitches at a joint hearing before county supervisors and Santa Cruz City Council members starting at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday.

The second in a series of evidentiary hearings on the CATV franchise question, Tuesday afternoon's session will be limited to testimony from the city's and county's

cable consultants and from franchise applicants — Greater Santa Cruz Cable TV Associates (GSC), Cable Cooperative of Greater Santa Cruz, Public Service Cable Co., and Group W, the county's and city's current CATV franchisee.

Public testimony will be taken during an evening session, scheduled to start at 7:30.

County and city officials last week recommended that the board and the council schedule a third hearing on the cable issue for January. The January hearing will focus ex-

clusively on Group W's franchise renewal application.

Group W's franchise with the county expired in October 1984. The firm's franchise with the city is due to expire next July. Group W contends that the current bidding procedure is illegal and has sued the city and county to prevent them from awarding the cable franchise to another firm. The lawsuit is still pending.

The consulting firm hired by the city and county to evaluate the competing cable bids recently revised its

assessment of the competitors, giving top ranking to GSC, over the Cable Cooperative. The consultants ranked Public Service Cable Company's bid third and Group W's, fourth.

County Administrative Officer George Newell and Santa Cruz City Manager Richard Wilson said last week that by the time the January hearing is completed, the Board of Supervisors and City Council will have enough information to make a final decision on the cable question.