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# CAO's jail remodeling plan didn't get far with board

By JOAN KLINGENBERG

Santa Cruz County supervisors did not come any closer Tuesday to solving the problem of what to do about the county's overcrowded jail.

Although the county is under a court order to reduce the population at the Front Street jail by half within 30 days, supervisors balked at a proposal by county administrative officer Ted Durkee that the jail be remodeled at a cost of \$460,000 to serve as an interim facility until a permanent solution could be found. Even if the interim medium security dormitory was built, however, Durkee said, it would not completely alleviate overcrowding problems.

Overflow of male prisoners and all women prisoners would still have to be bused to the San Francisco jail at a cost of \$16 per inmate per day, Durkee added.

Supervisors voted to start procedures for the busing proposal. Federal district court Judge Robert Peckham has ordered the inmate population be reduced to 52 inmates. Yesterday, 112 inmates were housed in the jail.

The cost of busing 42 inmates to the San Francisco jail for one year would be \$304,400, according to Durkee's figures. The cost of the interim facility would be \$459,800, including design, construction and staffing for one year.

Supervisors toyed with the idea of defying Judge Peckham's order altogether. Supervisor Cecil Smith wanted to know what would happen if the supervisors told the judge the county did not have enough money to solve the jail problem.

"It's going to increase the jail population for one thing," Supervisors' chairman Gary Patton quipped, implying the supervisors would end up in jail if such action were taken.

"We'd be in a very awkward position," Assistant County Counsel Terry Slocum said. He said he did not think the judge would grant the county a stay of order on the ruling.

Slocum said there was a possibility that the plaintiffs in the jail order suit that prompted Peckham's ruling would take issue with a stay. Lawyer Sara Clarenbach, who represents the plaintiffs, said this

morning that she could not guarantee she would not argue against a stay of order.

"If the population at the jail was 50 at this time, instead of 112, my response would be different," the lawyer explained.

The supervisors asked Sheriff Al Noren if he had any recommendations about whether the jail should be remodeled or the busing program undertaken.

Noren said he did not like either option, and added the remodeling plan would not meet jail needs.

"We're going to need more space," the sheriff said.

He added, however, that reduction of the jail population through busing could reduce the number of maximum security prisoners at the jail. He said the overcrowding situation is sometimes responsible for violence at the jail.

Supervisors also questioned whether busing prisoners was legal. They said public defender Larry Biggam had reported that the busing of inmates would cause "severe constitutional problems." Biggam had Patton prisoners who were bused might be deprived of their legal right to counsel.