

Libraries Stay Open, For A Month

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All branch libraries in the county survived in one fashion or another following Board of Supervisors' action Tuesday, but it will take a great deal of volunteer help and community support to keep them going.

Library branches at Capitola, Soquel, Freedom and Ben Lomond had been recommended to be closed by county administrators.

Of the \$1 million in support the county sends to the city-library system each year, the county was about

1/16/80
\$127,000 short this year because of Proposition 13 and the shortfall of state bailout funds.

After three hours of testimony by "friends" of various branches (called "stations" by library administrators), supervisors Tuesday granted Ben Lomond and Freedom stations a month's reprieve to convert to volunteer stations, outside the library system.

The Soquel library station was cut loose from county funding at the end of this month, after the board was told that it was ready to become a volunteer station in the next couple of weeks.

La Selva Beach also was told funding will stop at the end of this month as it will convert to volunteer status, but remain within the library system which will pay utilities, telephone and other overhead costs.

The fate of the Garfield Park and Capitola stations is in the hands of the two cities, which will determine whether they will pick up the costs to keep the library outposts going.

Librarian Charles Atkins said as far as he was concerned, the stations could keep their furniture and books for now.

Supervisor Pat Liberty initially urged the board to consider setting up a

"county library system," and said the county was not getting the service its funding deserves. It is estimated the county pays about 70 percent the cost of the city-county system.

However, Liberty supported Supervisor Dan Forbus' motion to fund the libraries through February and for the three branches get set up as a volunteer operation. Also, the county administrator was directed to ask the Capitola City Council to pick up costs of that station. The council is scheduled to consider the item Jan. 24. The board plans to review the library contract with the city in two weeks.