

# Plan to reshuffle library system delayed

*Libraries 1980-1989*

By Don Wilson  
Staff Writer

**SANTA CRUZ** — The city council Tuesday refused to approve a reorganization plan that would have given the county board of supervisors more power in setting the annual budget of the city-county library system.

The county board of supervisors already has approved another facet of the plan, although it postponed for one month a proposal by its chief administrative officer to close some branch libraries in the county because of a shortage of money.

The delay was intended to give other agencies a chance to work out plans for keeping alive some of the doomed branches in the library system.

The system grew from a single library in Santa Cruz to a county-

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wide system with branches in Soquel, Freedom, Ben Lomond, La Selva Beach, Aptos, Boulder Creek, Branciforte, Felton and Scotts Valley. Many of the branches already had existed as independent small local units but were adopted by the countywide system.

When the system was set up nearly 20 years ago, the county merely agreed that it would help pay for the city library system. As the system began to expand outside the city boundaries, the agreement developed to where the county was to pay a share of the total cost of the library system based on the proportion of in-city and out-of-city patrons.

That percentage has grown

steadily and today the county pays two-thirds of the library cost but has little voice in setting library policy.

When the management reorganization plan was handed to the council Tuesday by City Manager David Koester, he said that City Attorney Rodney Atchison has some reservations about it because it conflicts with the contract between the city and the county.

Sara Bunnett, head of the city-county library board, said she doesn't like the proposed management plan at all. It takes the administration of the libraries out of the hands of either the city's elected representatives or their delegates, and it puts the policy-making duties into the hands of administrators.

The council unanimously agreed to hand the proposal over to Ms.

Bunnett and her library board for comments and alternative suggestions.

The reorganization plan presented to the council Tuesday by Koester had two major points:

✓ Increasingly limited financing requires the closing of branch libraries in Soquel, Freedom, Ben Lomond, Capitola, and La Selva Beach, as well as the Garfield Park library in Santa Cruz.

✓ The county would speed up its budget process, and take an active part in developing the library system budget rather than sitting back as it has in the past and letting the library board and the city council develop the budget and then present the county with a bill.

As the cutbacks in branches are proposed, Koester noted, plans call for actually expanding the operation of the library's bookmobile,

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