

1983

Mayor says Santa Cruz is

By PAUL BEATTY
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'in good shape'

SANTA CRUZ — As for the city of Santa Cruz in these hard times, "It's in good shape," says Mayor Bruce Van Allen.

He said it to lunching Santa Cruz Area Chamber of Commerce members at Pasatiempo Inn Wednesday as part of the mayor's annual state of the city message.

About 30 members attended and listened politely as the socialist mayor told them, "I have a vision of the city in which business has a very important part."

He reminded members that a couple years back Councilman Spiro Mellis and former chamber president told them he wanted a return to the days when business people were considered first-class citizens.

Van Allen said, "I feel let's have everyone, including business people, be first-class citizens of Santa Cruz: business people, students, environmental activists."

At the conclusion of his talk, he was confronted by questions from accountant Bob McKenzie who wanted to know why cable television companies had been singled out as targets of a city-county ordinance that forces disclosure of their activities.

McKenzie asked, "Have these companies come down at any time and paraded around with bags full of money?"

Van Allen said it "a fear thing" based on the record of cable companies in other cities where franchises were up for bid.

He said there had been instances where local hearings were stacked with people on the cable company's payroll.

McKenzie said, "Vaguely resembling the rent-control hearings?"

Van Allen, "I don't understand the question."

McKenzie repeated it.

Van Allen, "They were all local people."

McKenzie, "I'm sure they were."

Van Allen said that rent control, which his liberal majority on the council supported, "is off the agenda" and not expected to be at issue again in the near future.

A rent control referendum in the city lost in the June election when the opposition got 56 percent of the vote.

Van Allen said the liberal majority approved a budget based on keeping the year's spending within the year's income. He said that's a better record than former conservative boards have.

Future budgeting will be long and difficult, but he predicted the council will maintain the level of services in the city, including the increase in social programs. The board escalated its support from about \$150,000 to community programs to about \$300,000 this year.

Of the "big issues" in the city, Van Allen started off with water production, telling the chamber he knew among its members were those who disagreed with the council over its approach.

The new council put the proposed Zayante Dam on the shelf while it got together with eight other agencies — water districts, the county, Scotts Valley and Capitola — to study future courses of water development.

The multiple-agency approach has included every major agency controlling the north county watershed, Van Allen pointed out.

"I know you will come to see it's the most intelligent, effective and economic attempt to deal with water," he said.

He expects other cities and water districts in the state and nation to fail to meet needs where expanded enterprise is not undertaken to solve the nation's water crisis.

He also said that studies may show the Zayante Dam and proposed mid-county Glenwood Basin Dam are needed and "I feel I'm risking a political position on this one," Van Allen said.

In spite of growth management, the city has more building permits than people who want to build right now, Van Allen said, because of the hard money times.

Of the Santa Cruz police department, which saw six of its officers charged with brutality last year, Van Allen said, "I'm the first to say that acts of brutality and excessive force are intolerable."

"While I can be critical of the practices of a few officers, I'm supportive of the force."

He said the fire department, finance office, city clerk and council staff are all doing a great job and that the 500 city employees nearly to a person believe "We should be an agency to facilitate not to

violence toward women and told chamber members to search their own thinking to eliminate attitudes that may encourage sexist violence.

He also urged the chamber to do what it can in the coming year to support racial equality, as the blacks and Hispanics "have told me they feel invisible."

They were certainly invisible at the chamber luncheon, and Van Allen said, "I'm asking that during the new year we all find ways to acknowledge them and we all find a way to do better on the racial question."

hinder.

"An agency to allow things to happen, to do things for the people and not to the people."

Public works should have a boom year, he said, with \$2 million in projects under way, including development of parking downtown and major improvements at the Santa Cruz wharf.

He warned the money pinch is coming home and let it be known it may hit the city's park maintenance service.

Van Allen said "We may be headed toward volunteer effort, which I don't

much like because people should be paid for their work, and we may have to lower our standards of park maintenance."

Concerning the city-county library board issue, where it remains unclear how much authority the library board can exercise, Van Allen didn't give much hope the issue will be resolved easily.

He said he knows the city can't solve the housing crisis. There are more people who want to live here than can be provided for, he said but added the city should work to develop more housing.

REFERENCE

APTOS BRANCH
LIBRARY

7695 SOQUEL DRIVE
APTOS, CALIFORNIA 95003