

Council allocates federal revenue sharing funds

By BOB SMITH

Community groups will be receiving \$49,356 in federal revenue sharing funds from the city of Capitola this fiscal year, city councilmembers decided last Wednesday.

The city expects to receive approximately \$108,000 this year from the federal government — \$12,000 less than originally forecast by City Manager Steve Burrell. Burrell said the city's allocation dropped because the city's population dropped when compared to other cities and counties which also received the federal aid.

Burrell had originally proposed allocating \$12,000 to the Capitola-Soquel Community Activities joint powers authority — which manages the city's recreation activities, \$35,000 for repairs and remodeling at the city hall, \$74,000 to pay for street improvements in the Derby-Trotter area of the city, and \$36,000 to help build the new Jade Street Community Center.

The council stood firm behind Burrell's funding recommendations for the road work, the Community Activities support, and city hall remodeling. But the council split over support for the community center project.

Councilwoman Stephanie Harlan several times during the give-and-take discussions argued that first priority for revenue sharing should go to social service programs — citing the example of the Santa Cruz City Council. But on the other side of the coin, according to Councilman Bob Bucher, is Watsonville which spends all of its money on capital improvements.

The end result was a \$9,644 revenue sharing allocation to the Community Center project — which reflects the increased allocations for other projects and the \$12,000 cut in the city's federal sharing receipts.

The debate between the councilmembers was indicative of the growing philosophical schism in the council.

Until this year, the Capitola City Council has restricted its funding to a handful of local organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce, Begonia Festival, Food and Nutrition Services — which feeds several dozen Capitola seniors each weekday, the Cali-

fornia Grey Bears and some cultural organizations.

The rest of the money was used by the city for capital improvements or public works projects in the city.

Many groups that once sought city support have either closed their doors or have simply stopped seeking the funds from the Capitola City Council.

Beltram, in his two years on the Council, has maintained that organizations like the Chamber of Commerce and the Begonia Festival shouldn't be funded by the city.

Harlan, participating in her first budget session since being elected to the Council, advocated following the example set by the Santa Cruz City Council and funding "human services" completely with revenue sharing and cutting back on capital outlay expenditures. The social services vs. capital improvements debate erupted during a discussion of increasing the allocation for the Capitola Chamber of Commerce.

Councilman Dennis Beltram argued that the Chamber didn't need the \$3,500 tentatively approved by the council early last month. The Chamber, he said, "is an area we should consider reducing, particularly in light of the extraordinary event (the Capitola Art and Wine Festival June 23 and 24 in the Village). I congratulate them for it but if we are going to take any money from a group, this is one we should consider."

The Council initially split over Beltram's suggestion for reduced funding with Bob Bucher supporting the idea of reducing the Chamber's support and Jerry Clarke standing behind the idea of giving the Chamber \$3,500.

Harlan said she "would support full funding only if we can support the services that directly affect peoples' lives."

"The community," she said, "is critical of us for not supporting these (social service) groups."

"Anything you add here will come out of the general fund," Mayor Michael Routh reminded Harlan, referring to the Council's commitment to build the community center this year.

Clarke said the Council hasn't been hearing from the community center supporters

yet because construction isn't underway yet. "We haven't gotten a lot of feedback yet because we haven't started construction on the community center. If we don't build it in an expeditious manner, we will hear from people."

The debate over the Chamber was decided with Routh supporting continued financing of the chamber for one more year.

The Council increased its support for the California Grey Bears, the Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Youth Services and Open Channel — Capitola Community Channel 8.

The Council rejected renewed appeals from Senior Legal Services and the Santa Cruz County Convention and Visitors Bureau for support from the city.

They also adopted a suggestion by Mayor Michael Routh to defer a request from the Capitola National Begonia Festival for a \$1,000 grant to help replace floats burned by an arsonist in May. The city has already loaned the festival \$2,500 to buy new floatation and the city will wait six months before deciding if it wants to forgive all or a portion of that loan.

The biggest loser, in terms of past city support, was Senior Citizens' Legal Services whose attorneys have been representing several well-to-do residents of the Pacific Cove Mobile Home Park in efforts to get a mobile home park conversion ordinance that could block conversion of a portion of the park into a municipal parking lot if the city completes its purchase of the park this fall.

Mayor Michael Routh and councilmen Jerry Clarke and Bob Bucher, voted to cut off funding for the organization. Bucher was the most vehement

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in his opposition.

"It is a total misuse of funds," he said, referring to the Senior Legal Services' appearances before the City Council.

"They aren't spending our money for people who need it," Bucher added, referring to the Service's normal role in providing legal services to senior citizens too poor to afford legal advice in cases involving Social Security, disability, Medicare, etc.

"The conversion ordinance is an example," Routh added. "That group (the Pacific Cove residents) didn't need to be represented by an attorney given the past relationships of this Council with mobile home park residents," Routh added.

Councilman Dennis Beltram said at first that he was willing to give Senior Legal Services \$1,000 "if I knew that the time they spent on the conversion ordinance was not taking away from their work on Social Security cases."

Bucher reminded him that "that extra \$1,000 will go a long way in the new Community Center and that is where it is coming from."

"Bob is right," Beltram conceded. "It all comes out of the community center fund. But, still, we aren't dealing with large amounts of money."

Routh said he was willing to spring for an extra \$3,000 to be split between Capitola After School Day Care and Youth Services, which provides counseling and guidance to wayward and troubled youth in the county and Senior Legal Services. "I would like to see \$1,000 for Youth Services and \$2,000 for Day Care," Routh said, leaving nothing for Senior Legal Services. The rest of the Council agreed.

Capitola After-School Day Care will see its city support rise from a previously approved

\$3,000 to \$5,000 — a level still short of its \$6,800 request.

Youth Services will be getting \$4,000, half of what it had originally sought from the city, but \$1,000 more than its previously approved request.

When it came to reconsidering the council's earlier decision to not support the Santa Cruz County Convention and Visitors Bureau, their only supporter was Clarke. "I'll make a pitch to blind ears," Clarke said, invoking a malapropism worthy of former Mayor Ron Graves who was noted for his twisted phrases.

"We should partially fund them for their off-season tourism campaign," Clarke said.

"Do we need any more visitors after this last weekend?" Bucher asked.

The other councilmembers agreed with Bucher that the city didn't and Clarke's plea fell on deaf ears.

Stuart Hurt, director of the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program, was successful in getting the Council to allocate \$1,500 to her organization which subsidizes the travel and meal expenses for seniors who volunteer their time to community organizations.

The Council originally turned down Hurt's request for \$2,250 because they believed the seniors were being paid to volunteer.

Hurt explained last week that seniors receive reimbursement only for their lunches and up to \$10 a month gasoline money.

"Many of our volunteers are frail, widows and the reimbursement we offer is enough to keep them involved in the community," she said. That involvement, she believes, keeps many seniors active enough to stay out of convalescent homes and living independently.

Advocating some funding for

the RSVP program, Beltram said that 30-35 volunteers live in the city and many work with city-funded groups like Food and Nutrition Services and the California Grey Bears. "If this program is cut back, then next year the needs of these other programs (for money) will increase," Beltram said.

But referring to Hurt's statement that 60 percent of RSVP's annual budget of \$53,000 went to overhead costs, Routh asked, "wouldn't it be more efficient to fund those programs directly and eliminate the 60 percent overhead?"

Beltram deflected those comments by saying the RSVP program "is more of a clearing house for programs needing volunteer assistance."

The council settled on \$1,500 for the program, which received nothing last year.

Greg Becker of Capitola Community Channel 8 submitted a proposal Wednesday night for \$4,249 to buy new equipment for the Capitola cable television station.

The City Council approved Becker's suggestion that the city buy a \$1,700 three-quarter inch video tape deck.

The council decided not to buy a \$1,250 one-half-inch deck, a \$799 low-light color television camera, or finance the repair of an older camera, estimated to cost \$500.

The amounts approved by the Council are:

Calif. Grey Bears.....	\$5,000
Capitola After-School Day Care.....	\$5,000
Capitola Chamber of Commerce.....	\$3,500
Cultural Council.....	\$2,250
Food and Nutrition Services.....	\$24,056
Retired Senior Volunteer Program	\$1,500
Senior Citizens' Legal Services	\$2,400
Youth Services	\$4,000
TOTAL.....	\$49,356