

Santa Cruz Decides To Close Its Jail

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Santa Cruz won't have a city jail as of Jan. 1, 1976.

The city council voted Tuesday to end operating the jail then, rather than spend money trying to fix it up and train jail personnel, as is required by new, stricter standards mandated by the state.

This means city taxpayers will get more from their county tax dollar, because county jail facilities will be used for all persons incarcerated by the city police department.

Santa Cruz will join Capitola and Scotts Valley in using the county jail rather than their own city jail.

Chief Gino Pini, asking for the end of city jail use, said the jail is deficient in air space per person, lacks a day room and adequate shower facilities, and would require jail operation

training for at least 12 employees.

He said the city would have to hire more clerical help to maintain jail management records. Further, Pini doubted whether there is enough physical space at the jail to make the alterations required under the new standards.

Another problem faced by cities is that persons with mental problems who are arrested need special care, but proper facilities are often lacking.

"This problem has been magnified," Pini reported to the council, "since the closing of many state mental institutions and the failure of county governments to properly address the needs of persons requiring psychiatric detention."

The county is already providing food for city prisoners. John Donlevy, assis-

tant city manager, said the county is willing to cooperate with transporting prisoners from the police department to the county jail.

The county is trying to figure out what to do with its jail, deemed inadequate by a federal judge. A big "law enforcement

complex" has been under study — and under fire from some elements of the community — while at the moment an architectural study is looking at the cost of remodeling the Front Street facility.

Pini said Sheriff Al Noren believes persons detained by city police can be handled at the jail.

Noren said this morning he will go to county supervisors Tuesday to ask for more jail staffing, both civilian clerks and supervising deputies. Under state law the county sheriff must accept all prisoners arrested by city police, and the county must bear the expense.

Anne Garni warned the council against getting involved with federally-funded jail facilities, which she said may someday become federally-controlled prisons. She sees the prison

question as part of a "regional government" scheme.

Pini said this area is part of Region M, but added the county lost its bid for federal money earlier in the year.

Garni called the prospect of losing local control over jails "very frightening... some pretty weird things are going on in our jails today."

Among these, Garni said, are behavior modification experiments by research scientists.

The jail closing was passed with all ayes.

SL River Plan

Discussion of the San Lorenzo River management plan and the county watershed management plan has been set for Thursday at 8 a.m. in the public works conference room by the county watershed technical advisory committee.

Watercolor, Acrylic Display

A showing of 32 watercolor and acrylic paintings by local artists is now on view at the Aptos public library.

Sponsored by the county parks, open space and cultural services commission, and the arts committee, the show will run through Oct. 18.

Paintings are on view throughout the library.