

Indian find costs Scotts Valley

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SCOTTS VALLEY — An additional cost of \$70,000 was added to the renovation and refurbishing of the new city hall Wednesday night as council members agreed the city has to pay the cost of sifting disturbed soils for Indian artifacts.

The city building, named Friend's Hall after former City Administrator and Councilman Friend Stone, sits on one of the oldest Indian sites in Central California.

City Administrator August Caires told the council the \$70,000 budget could increase by as much as \$40,000 for the archeological work, added to the present \$700,000 to make the building liveable for city staff and to provide the council with a permanent place to meet.

Archeologist Robert Cartier said the only way the city could avoid paying the \$70,000 was to follow the process laid out by state legislation that allows a community to hold public hearings and seek volunteers to sift the soils for artifacts.

He said the process could take months before the work begins.

Mayor Phil Liberty said that wasn't a good option — "We wanted to get the hall open this summer."

During construction of the hall in 1981, then-Mayor Stone ordered bulldozing to pave a parking lot. His decision resulted in crude exhumation and destruction of thousands of pieces of Indian tools and weapons.

The city faced a court suit from local archeological groups but settled out of court with a guarantee the council would enact a preservation ordinance and set up a preservation committee, which it has done.

The artifacts were taken by archeological groups for cleaning, sorting and recording.

The council agreed to pay the \$70,000 with little discussion. They will pay local architects to sift through soil that will be removed to build a driveway to the new hall.

Mayor Phil Liberty wanted to know if any of the artifacts expected to be found were worth money "so the city can be compensated."

Cartier said the artifacts would be "precious" and "of great antiquity."

He said they could be sold by anyone of a mind to look at them "monetarily."

But he assured the council the city it is being compensated "in scientific wealth ... for the artifacts are scientifically priceless."

Cartier said 70 cubic yards of earth would have to be carefully sifted and "much more" would have to be checked out for possible finds.

Liberty asked him for assurance that anything found at the site

belonged to the city.

Cartier said they did. He also said that artifacts found when the building was built belong to the city. When those artifacts were found, they were removed to laboratories in San Jose, where Cartier said they are being carefully preserved. "I'm responsible for them," he said, assuring the city could have them back upon request.

From the audience, Planning Commission Chairman Hal Medo advised the council to avoid paying the money by simply building the driveway and paving over the artifact-rich ground.

He said the city could preserve the site until science has better tech-

nology for archeological digs. "Let our children do it," he said.

Cartier agreed with him, that some sites are better paved over and preserved for future generations to discover and uncover.

However, that couldn't be done for all of the city hall site as engineers were saying some of the ground had to be dug and the soil removed or the driveway would be too steep.

Cartier said the work of sifting the soil would take at least three months.

Caires said the sifting of soil wouldn't delay completion of Friend's Hall as contractors would run a temporary work-road down the center of the property.