

City Employees Get One-Step Pay Hike

Increase To
Cost City
About \$51,000

Moderate pay increases for all city employees were approved by the city council last night when members accepted a set of recommendations which will be embodied in a new salary ordinance.

Roughly, the effect of the measure will give the equivalent of one-step increases to most employees. The new ordinance, expected to be submitted and passed during the next few weeks, is scheduled to take effect on July 1.

Because of the job classifications, the pay increase will vary considerably between various employees. Roughly the pay hike will range between \$10 and \$20 per month for city workers.

Thomas M. Kelley, president of the Santa Cruz civil service association, stated today that his organization is appreciative of the council's efforts to ameliorate the plight of city workers, but that the one-step increases voted last night could not be regarded as sufficient in view of the high cost of living, and that further requests were almost certain to be submitted by the group.

Kelley welcomed the job classification system as worked out by experts of the state personnel board and due to be embodied in the new salary ordinance.

One of the features of the proposed new ordinance would be a change in "anniversary dates"—i.e. dates on which employees would become eligible for seniority promotions—to July 1. At the present time, the actual anniversary of the worker's employment with the city is used for such purposes. The council voted to grant anniversary increases due between now and July 1, inclusive, regardless of the overall raises embodied in the new plan, but later anniversary dates would be moved up to July 1.

A report submitted to the council by the administrative assistant showed that the salary plan currently in effect would cost \$728,079 for civil service employees and \$77,328 for non-certificated workers, a total of \$805,407 in the next fiscal year, counting such merit increases as would normally be granted when due.

Under the new plan, civil service employees would receive a total of \$776,928 and non-certificated workers \$79,782, and total of \$856,710. The pay increase plan would thus cost \$51,303 in excess of the current plan, representing a 6.3 per cent total overall increase.

During the lengthy discussion of the various features of the salary plan, Councilman Sam C. McNeely asked that a two-step increase, as requested by the employees, also be considered in the light of expected revenue, but arrived at the conclusion that the cost of such a plan would necessarily curtail funds available for maintenance and operations, probably leading to a reduction in working staff as consequence.

None of the affected 225 civil service employees or 88 non-certificated workers offered any comment during the meeting.