

~~THE~~ S.C. Budget Supervisors plan hearings on budget

6-19-83 ✓

SANTA CRUZ — The proposed \$110 million county budget for 1983-84 will be closely scrutinized during eight days of budget hearings starting Tuesday.

All the hearings, from Tuesday afternoon through noon on June 30, will be in room 525 of the County Center.

The budget proposed by County Administrative Officer George Newell is unique in that it's the first in county government history to be lower in actual dollars than the previous year's budget.

While absent of the drastic cuts in positions in county budgets of recent years, the proposed budget does continue employment cuts made midway through this fiscal year and recommends cuts in positions in the District Attorney's Office, the Agricultural Extension Service and the Pretrial Release Program.

District Attorney Art Danner is actively trying to gain public support to oppose the proposed cut of four positions from his office. He successfully fought the elimination of two attorneys, a criminal justice specialist and a legal secretary during the mid-year budget hearings.

Part way through this fiscal year, supervisors made large cuts to eliminate a \$5.7 million deficit. If the 1983-84 budget is adopted as proposed, the county will end up with 252 fewer positions than in 1981-82.

The county is now operating with approximately 227 fewer positions than it had in 1981-82.

Newell's budget recommends elimination of the Pretrial Release Program,

resulting in a cut of 6.5 positions. The program provides information on those in custody so judges can decide whether they should be released before trial.

Newell originally proposed elimination of this program during the mid-year budget hearings. But after calculations showed the program actually saves money by keeping people out of jail as they await trial, supervisors decided against the cut.

Newell is proposing a cut of 1.58 positions from the Agricultural Extension Service which undertakes educational and research projects and advises those interested in farming.

The following is the tentative schedule for the budget hearings:

TUESDAY — Report by the county administrative officer and auditor-controller of changes to the proposed budget, 1:30 to 1:45 p.m. Public hearing, 1:45 to 5 p.m.

WEDNESDAY — General government departments, 9 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 5 p.m.

THURSDAY — Justice system, 9 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 5 p.m.

FRIDAY — Land use, 9 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 5 p.m.

MONDAY — Health services, 9 a.m. to noon. Human resources, 1:30 to 5 p.m.

JUNE 28 — Catchup items, 1:30 to 5 p.m.

JUNE 29 — Catchup items as needed, 9 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 5 p.m.

JUNE 30 — Plant acquisition, community revenue sharing programs and contingencies, 9 a.m. to noon.