

Housing committee formed to try to solve Watsonville housing crisis

A committee of 20 to 25 people will be formed to deal with Watsonville's housing issues, the City Council decided last night.

Mayor Todd McFarren suggested the committee, which he said should "identify and prioritize the housing needs in the city and to translate this assessment into a vision for a renewal process."

The committee will include representatives of social service agencies, business, and local governments.

McFarren named Chuck Barr, a local commercial florist and former Santa Cruz County Planning Commissioner, to head the committee.

In other action, the council:

- Approved an agreement in which Goodwill Industries will take two warehouses full of earthquake relief supplies, almost all of it clothing. Goodwill will give the city \$5,000 worth of Goodwill gift certificates, which the city will give to social service agencies.

- Approved city support of efforts by the Salud Para La Gente health clinic's participation with seven other public health clinics around the state in a bond issue. The city's endorsement is needed for Salud's participation, but the city bears no financial responsibility. The state backs the bonds, but Salud will have to pay off the

debt.

Barbara Garcia, director of Salud, said after the meeting the clinic expects to get \$1.8 when the bonds are sold in the next few months. The money will be used for the clinic to move into the old California Furniture building at 204 E. Beach Street.

The move will give the clinic 24,000 square feet, triple the clinic's current capacity, which is spread around four sites.

- McFarren's suggestion to form a human relations committee to deal "with various tensions" that arise in the community. Each council member will be able to appoint three members to the commission.