

Transportation

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(35)

Santa Cruz gets a bargain

Contracts for beach shuttle bus service in Capitola and Santa Cruz will be submitted to the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District Friday morning.

But there are major discrepancies in the contracts, as now proposed by the Transit District staff.

The Capitola City Council has already approved a contract with the Transit District to operate a beach shuttle bus service between the old Disco store and the Esplanade this summer.

Cost per day of the Capitola shuttle bus operation, under terms of a contract already approved by the City Council, will be \$153 a day for a nine-hour operating day, plus an additional \$3,000 for promotional expenses.

With the bus operating on weekends and holidays through May 18, and daily May 24 to Sept. 7, the city will

pay \$22,737 for the service this summer.

It now appears that Santa Cruz will be getting its shuttle bus service considerably cheaper than Capitola.

And agreements prepared for Friday's transit directors meeting show that the Santa Cruz County Transportation Commission, which pays all of the Santa Cruz costs and only half of Capitola's, will be billed double the quoted rate of \$142 a day for 82 days' operation in Santa Cruz.

A copy of the district's budget for the Santa Cruz beach shuttle bus details "shuttle operation" for "82 service days at \$142 (for a 10 hour day)," costing \$23,371.

However, simple arithmetic comes up with a total cost, based on the daily rate of \$11,644.

An additional \$7,000 was budgeted for promotional

expenses, bringing the total claim to \$30,371.

The Transit directors are also being asked to approve a claim to the Santa Cruz County Transportation Commission, which controls large amounts of gas tax and sales tax money, for \$23,371, payable Sept. 7, when the shuttle bus program concludes.

Capitola City Manager Steve Burell reiterated Monday that he had been assured by transit district employees that the small city would be charged the same rate as the Santa Cruz program.

Transit District general manager Scott Galloway, contacted at a convention in Monterey Tuesday morning, said he had no direct knowledge of the claim then, explaining he had been prepared in his absence by subordinates.

"But the costs [between Capitola and Santa Cruz] should be the same," he said, promising to review it when he returns to Santa Cruz Thursday.

He had no explanation as to why the County Transportation Commission was being billed for more than double the normal rate.

The Transit District directors Friday are also being asked to approve a bus fare subsidization program for Capitola residents, offering free bus service to Capitola residents and visitors riding the bus inside the city of Capitola.

The District estimates the program would cost \$15,000 for the trial period, with the money paid from the County Transportation Commission's revenues.

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for the trial period, with the money paid from the Transportation Development Act funds administered by the county.

The district will also probably provide the buses for the federally-financed Live Oak beach shuttle bus.

But Galloway warned the transit board "external factors may delay the program until the summer of 1981."

The Live Oak shuttle program calls for leasing parking lots outside the congested beach areas, and then operating shuttle buses from the free parking lots to the beaches for tourists.

Beach area parking would be restricted to residents and their guests only, with heavy fines for violators.

The program is being funded 100 percent by the Urban Mass Transit Administration.

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