

City Council 1989

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Kennedy raises issue of new mayor's selection

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SANTA CRUZ — Santa Cruz City Councilman Scott Kennedy's efforts to hold a public discussion on how the next mayor of Santa Cruz will be selected were mostly quelled by his council colleagues Tuesday.

"Good luck figuring something out," said Mayor Don Lane. "The problem is that I really don't have a clue what the answer is."

Mayors and vice mayors are selected in Santa Cruz by a vote of

the seven-member City Council, but for the past 15 years, a tradition that goes beyond those guidelines has been used.

According to current council members, that tradition calls for the person who received the most votes in the previous election and is a member of the majority party to be voted into the mayor's seat.

Last year this tradition was brought into question by District Attorney Art Danner, who said council members had broken public meeting laws by pre-planning the selection.

"I do think things are going to be a little more confusing this time," Kennedy said.

He noted that in years past, the person who was going to be elected mayor came with a prepared speech. If there were no advance planning, he said, perhaps it would be inappropriate to expect speeches on the night of the selection.

"Conceivably, all seven council members could come prepared," Kennedy said.

When Kennedy asked his colleagues if any of them were inter-

ested in commenting on the process, Councilwoman Jane Yokoyama suggested that maybe Councilman Neal Coonerty, who would be the next mayor according to the tradition, would like to speak.

"Not really," Coonerty replied, but he added that there is a law that enables the council to choose the mayor and vice mayor, which he expects will continue to be followed.

Four of the seven council seats are up for election this fall, and Lane suggested that the new mem-

bers discuss the issue after the Nov. 3 election.

Yokoyama suggested that at the November meeting where the new members are seated, anyone interested in being mayor could talk about what they would do in the position.

"I believe any single person who sits among the council should be able to be mayor," she said.

Although no action was taken, Kennedy said he would give the issue further consideration and possibly bring it up again.

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