

mail service 7-27-67

City Employees 'Explore' Union

Santa Cruz city employees, incensed at a budget cut in their proposed salary raise, are exploring the possibility of joining a union.

Police Lieutenant Ken Doler, chairman of the employees' association salary committee, said the association would meet with union officials "as soon as possible" to discuss affiliation. The decision came at a meeting held last night to discuss the city council's action in trimming the wage hike.

"We've been going through this thing (wage and benefit negotiations) for so many years, year after year, it's gotten to the point where we have to battle for every little bit we get," Doler declared. "We want to reach the point where somebody will listen to us and pay us a fair wage."

It was further decided at the meeting to write a letter to the council petitioning for passage of a previously proposed 5 per cent wage increase.

That amount was trimmed to 3.75 per cent by the council

during a preliminary budget hearing.

The letter will ask the council to base its salary deliberations on a survey of comparable cities, which showed Santa Cruz municipal wages to be 6.1 per cent below the median. The council actually based its decision for a 3.75 per cent increase on a cost of living index report which showed a 3.6 per cent increase.

More than 100 employees turned out for last night's meeting, and a goodly number of those are expected to appear before the council tonight at the final budget hearing. If tonight's appeal fails, Doler declared, the association will ask the Santa Cruz City Civil Service Commission to reaffirm its recommendation for a 5 per cent raise.

"The position we're in as city employees is that nobody listens to us and nobody pays attention," Doler concluded. "All we are trying to do is bring this thing before the people and make the council listen to us."