

Local

✓ CR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS RP 3/21/89 Supervisors vote to trim amount of annual raises

By KATHARINE BALL
STAFF WRITER

Santa Cruz County supervisors today unanimously voted to reduce the amount of their automatic annual pay increase.

For the past two years, the supervisors have received an annual raise equal to the dollar amount of the raise given by the state to Superior Court judges. Now the supervisors will take 45 percent of that amount, under a plan proposed by Supervisor Robley Levy.

The raise will still be automatic, and supervisors will not have to take any subsequent votes to get it. Thus, the raise will occur without the supervisors having to draw public notice to it.

The supervisors currently are paid \$42,072 a year, plus health benefits. Their last raise, which became effective Jan. 1, 1987, amounted to \$3,260. While that dollar amount represented a 4 percent raise for the judges, who make about twice what the supervisors do, it was an 8.4 percent raise for the supervisors.

Newly elected Supervisor Jan Beautz protested Levy's measure, and tried to substitute one of her own that would have

called for the supervisors to vote annually on their raise.

Beautz would also have had the supervisors set the amount of any annual raise each year, rather than tying it to the judges' salaries.

"We should not have our raises tied to some other entity. (The amount now is) set by the state Legislature. We have nothing to do with it. It's not logical," Beautz said.

"Since I've been here, I've heard nothing but we have these severe budget restraints," she said.

She said at the very least, the supervisors should hold a public hearing on Levy's proposal to reduce the amount of the automatic raise.

Again, however, Beautz could not get a second to her motion.

Saying Levy's proposal was "better than what we have now," Beautz then joined the other supervisors in approving it.

Supervisors in other counties have recently met with public outrage when they tried to raise their own salaries. San Mateo County supervisors backed away from a proposal to increase their current \$50,584 salaries to \$61,917 a year after public protest of the proposed raise.

Last fall, Alameda County supervisors voted to give themselves a 71 percent salary increase, from \$37,000 a year to \$63,000, but later voted to rescind their own raise after public outcry.

The U.S. Congress also backed away from a proposed raise last month after learning many of their constituents did not support it.