

Library closure discussion set

The possibility of closing libraries in Freedom, Soquel and Ben Lomond will be discussed Monday by the Santa Cruz City-County Library Board, but the chances of any closures are remote, Library Director Charles Atkins said this morning.

"There's little possibility it will happen," Atkins said. "I'm not recommending it."

The board meets at 7:30 a.m. in the main library in Santa Cruz.

At their last meeting, directors asked Atkins what it would take to increase the budget for new books by \$35,000, without increasing the total \$1.5 budget.

Atkins said the increase in the new book budget could be done, but it would mean closing three libraries. (Soquel, Freedom, and Ben Lomond have the three lowest book circulation figures in the system, he said.)

Atkins has proposed a \$195,000 budget for new books, an increase of \$60,000 from the Proposition 13-devastated 1978-79 budget. The 1977-78 new-book budget was \$175,000.

An additional \$35,000 would boost the figure to \$240,000, 16 percent of the total budget. Atkins said allocation of 15

percent of the budget is a general goal of most libraries.

Atkins said he doesn't think the board is seriously considering any closures, but was simply exploring ramifications of increasing the new book budget.

Atkins noted that his proposed budget calls for maintaining all libraries at their present level of service.

While the library board makes recommendations on the budget, final decisions are made by the Board of Supervisors and Santa Cruz City Council.

Nicki Pecchenino, a spokeswoman for the Freedom Information Committee, said this morning that the group would fight any closure of the Freedom Library.

The committee held its first meeting Tuesday night at the UFW Hall on Freedom Boulevard. About 30 Freedom residents as well as Pajaro Valley Supervisor Chris Matthews attended the session.

The group formed several committees that will, among other things, study state annexation laws and the feasibility of incorporating Freedom.

One committee will organize social events, Ms. Pecchenino said.

Charged with

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