CONSTRUCTION FEAT — Workers installed a compression ring today which will help support the roof of the Cajundome. Architect Neil Nehrbass said the ring, which is 50 feet in diameter and weighs 85,000 pounds, will serve as a connecting point for 48 trusses that will hold up the roof. The center erection tower shown will be removed, after all the trusses are in place, to leave the building’s interior open. The Cajundome is expected to be completed in 1985. (Staff Photo by P.C. Piazza)

Cajundome Board Ready To Hire Facility Director

The stage is set to possibly hire a manager for the Cajundome without going through the Civil Service process.

William Broadhurst, chairman of the Cajundome Management Board, said local legislators have introduced a late bill at his request, which would change a 1958 law requiring a municipal auditorium manager to be a Civil Service employee.

The Board has not yet officially decided if it wants to recommend hiring a manager independently, but members voiced no opposition to that proposal during a meeting at City Hall yesterday.

There is some question, however, about whether the city’s home rule charter would also have to be changed if the Civil Service law is amended. A referendum must usually be called to alter the city’s charter.

‘Civil Service Constraints’

Broadhurst told members yesterday he believes “this job would be better…if it did not have Civil Service constraints on it.”

Broadhurst, an attorney, also believes the city charter cannot be any more restrictive than state law. In other words, if the 1958 law is changed, the public would not have to vote on a subsequent amendment of the charter.

“I don’t think that’s necessary,” Broadhurst said. He suggested that the Board “give ourselves the option” to recommend hiring a non-classified Cajundome manager.

The proposed bill, Broadhurst said, would exclude the Cajundome manager from Civil Service.

Pursue That Option!

Mayor Dud Lastrapes told Broadhurst: “I would say pursue that option.”

Broadhurst said local legislators asked whether the City Council seems interested in changing the 1958 law.

City Clerk Glenn Dubon said today Council members prefer that a Cajundome manager be a non-classified employee.

The Cajundome Management Board listened to presentations about the Cajundome and Municipal Auditorium given...

by city Chief Administrative Officer Glenn Weber and architect Neil Nehrbass, who designed the Cajundome.

Weber told the group that hiring a manager should be a top priority. He also recommended that job should have a “produce or perish” philosophy.

Large Deficit

Weber told the group that although the Cajundome is facing a $500,000-$700,000 deficit each year for its operation.

“We basically built a building that we have no money to operate,” Weber said.

In addition, the city must provide an extra $1.5 million for the Cajundome construction, about $7 million worth of “supportive” roadways and contingency funds.

Possible ways to help finance the Cajundome include an additional sales tax, an additional hotel/motel tax, special box seats, an additional property tax or a cut in other city services, Weber said.

Weber told Board members the city must have developed an additional revenue source by the time the Cajundome opens in 1985.