$1.38 million more needed for Cajundome

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LAFAYETTE — An additional $1.38 million is needed to fully outfit the $60 million Cajundome, the Lafayette City Council was told Thursday.

Council members were informed of the extra necessities during a briefing session called by the city administration to outline expenditures of about $4.2 million. The council is scheduled to vote on the appropriations Tuesday.

Al Thierry, recreation and parks director, said the extra 560 seats should have been included in the original contract. But he said the city has only recently had a director in charge of the Cajundome to represent the city in identifying needs for the building.

Glen Weber, city chief administrative officer, said he's been assured that no additional expenses will be necessary before the Cajundome's opening date, now expected in November.

The list of additional purchases for the civic center included such items as 560 seats for $336,000, two elevators for $225,000, $70,000 for a 300-space parking lot, $100,000 for landscaping, $109,000 for exterior lighting of the building, $30,000 for closed-circuit television to executive suites and $387,000 for safety needs such as aisle lights, ramp lighting and crowd rails.

"Obviously there were a lot of things left out of the original design," remarked Councilman F.V. "Pappy" Landry.

But Councilman Al Simon said that, before state money was granted for the project, local legislators instructed architect Neil Nehrbass to keep the list of building improvements to a minimum to reduce the facility's cost.

Gerald Domingue, city finance director, said the city still has $489,000 in a bond fund established for the Cajundome. The remaining $891,000 for the additional equipment would come out of a $2.1 million fund balance in the capital improvements account and $424,000 in landfill revenue, Domingue said.

The administration also wants to set aside $350,000 for operation and maintenance of the dome through Oct. 31. Mike Barber, Cajundome director, said obviously most of the money won't be needed, but the leftover funds could be held for the dome's operation in the 1985 fiscal year.

Other major expenditures recommended by the administration for council approval include:

- $250,000 for replacement of the City Hall's 30-year-old air-conditioning system.
- $106,000 to establish two new police zones in newly annexed areas.
- $500,000 for a new city radio communications system.
- $200,000 to replace worn-out vehicles and construction equipment.
- $424,000 to upgrade the city's computer system.
- $100,000 to renovate vandalized restrooms at city parks.
- Miscellaneous items totaling about $220,000, including $50,000 to refurbish fire trucks, $43,000 for a police crime scene unit, $20,000 for half the cost of the May 4 election, $20,000 for the city court building, and $60,000 in police and fire department expenses.