Cajundome could be self-sufficient in 2 years

By Kent Davidson
Staff Writer

The city's subsidy of the Cajundome is continuing to decrease. The city expected to contribute about $535,000 to the facility this year, with $236,000 of that figure going for capital improvements, leaving an actual subsidy of about $300,000.

In the past, the city's subsidy of the Cajundome was greater than $500,000. Over the next two years, the facility should become self-sufficient, Cajundome director Mike Noah said.

“Then you won't have to come here at all,” said Council Clerk Dee Stanley.

Despite being “the worst year in entertainment history,” as far as the number of musical events available for booking is concerned, 1991 was the “best year the Cajundome has ever had,” Noah said. “I really can't explain it.”

The $236,000 in capital improvements funds will go towards maintenance projects with the dome's parking lot, lights and sidewalks, Noah said.

Dome officials originally requested the $236,000, but the city's administration recommended a $100,000 allotment instead. Council members, however, decided Wednesday to provide the full amount requested.

The higher figure would allow dome officials to better address maintenance needs, Noah said. “We're still taking the Band-Aid approach,” he said. “As I've said all along, that's not the way to do things, you've got to look down the road.”

Noah told City Council members during a budget hearing Thursday, “We're still taking the Band-Aid approach. As I've said all along, that's not the way to do things, you've got to look down the road.”

Council member Nancy Mounce agreed that the money could be better spent for preventive maintenance.

“It seems to me that giving the $200,000 this year might be better than providing them more next year,” she said.

Also Thursday, council members went over the proposed budgets for the zoning department and the civil service system.

There were few questions about the civil service budget, which were covered in a five...
There was more discussion, however, about the zoning department’s budget.

The main question concerned the creation of a new ombudsman position. That person, as a sort of mediator or go-between, would help citizens who get caught up in the red tape of permitting procedures.

Currently, new construction sites must be cleared by zoning officials, Metro Code officials, fire inspectors and the Lafayette Areawide Planning Commission.

When there are problems, the zoning department is called in to handle the situation, said Zoning Director John Raines.

“The mayor’s office calls me and says ‘figure out what’s going on,’ ” Raines said. “People are looking for a solution instead of hitting a bureaucratic dead end.”

The $30,000 per year position is needed, he said, because “we don’t have enough staff to do what we’re doing now.”

That person could also work toward coordinating the efforts of the various permitting agencies, said Chief Administrative Officer Glenn Weber.

“I think that we can solve a lot of problems by having that person to quarterback the various city departments,” he said.

“Our office has tried to serve

Yale University in New Haven, Conn., which opened its doors in 1701, had an enrollment of 10,967 during the 1989-90 academic year.