

Library Board Here Opposed To Joining Regional System

BY JOHN UHRMANN

The Washington library board told the city council during a special informal meeting Monday night that the library group was unanimously opposed to joining the Scenic Regional library system.

A recent survey conducted by a St. Louis librarian for the state recommended that the library here become a part of the three-county regional system.

The council was also informed that the library board thought it feasible to relocate the Washington library, providing the library tax levy were increased to provide operating funds.

The meeting was arranged so the library group could bring all members of the council up to date on library activity and to brief the councilmen on the overall operation of the library.

A feasibility report compiled by a library planning committee recommended that a new library building be construct-

ed, if and when the library were relocated. The council had informed the library board earlier this year that the city hall space now occupied by the library would eventually be needed for other purposes.

The property now owned by the library board on Fourth street just west of the city hall was suggested as a possible site for a new library, providing several problems could be solved.

The library presently pays no rent or utility costs. These would be added expenses if the library were relocated. H. "Corky" Maschmann, library board president, explained.

Maschmann pointed out that the information contained in the feasibility study was based on estimates compiled by the committee. Based on these estimates, he said, a two mill tax levy would be needed to operate a library separate from the city hall. A bond issue would be needed for construction of the building.

A total of \$14,478.06 was spent the past year for operation of the library here. Of that amount, \$12,600 was provided by city tax money. A two mill levy would double the amount of tax money available through local tax sources.

Mrs. George Woolley, past-president of the library board, told the councilmen that the library circulation jumped from 46,000 books in 1962 to 55,000 this year. During the same time, the number of volumes increased from 16,275 to 19,500. A total of 2,700 worn books were also removed from the shelves during that time.

Tax money for the library totaled \$9,900 in 1962. Last year the amount received was \$12,600. The library tax levy here has been one mill since 1964, Mrs. Woolley said in her report.

Mayor August Strubberg said he was glad the meeting between the two groups was arranged. The council took the report of the library plan committee under advisement.