

# Council calls in the cavalry for pier fund effort

By Robert Barker

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**HUNTINGTON BEACH** — With some reservations, officials have turned to professionals to raise \$2½ million to \$3½ million for a new city pier.

City Council members voted to pay the Robert B. Sharp Co. of Santa Ana \$250,000 to collect money for a new pier from major donors throughout Southern California.

Cost for the pier and its buildings is estimated at \$12.7 million. The city is more than \$4 million short of its goal after vigorous hometown fund-raising efforts and contributions from city, county, state and federal sources.

City officials also voted to delay demolition of the old pier until Sept. 4, a day after Labor Day.

Merchants asked for the delay, initially slated for early August, so they can take advantage of the last busy beach days of the summer season.

Councilman Jim Silva said Tuesday that a professional fund-raising campaign is a gamble because the city has no guarantees of success.

"The city should put out fliers in the water bill," Silva said. "If everyone gave \$20, we'd get \$2 million out of our community."

Councilman Don MacAllister also said he believes top priority should be given to asking residents for donations, but voted to hire the consulting firm.

MacAllister recalled a fund-raising drive several years ago for a YMCA building and pool in Central Park. A company was hired for fund-raising, but a drive for about \$1.4 million came up empty and construction plans were scrapped, he said.

Mayor Tom Mays said he

thought the outside firm would generate enthusiasm, publicity and dollars for the project.

"I hope we don't have to go to a bond issue, it's a last resort," he said. "We've need to justify that we've done everything we can do. We may not get what we want, but we've got to try."

Former Mayor Ron Sherkman predicted the campaign would be successful.

"The economic viability of the  
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entire downtown is at stake and everyone will step up to the line for their own interest," said Sherkman, who helped direct local fund-raising events since the pier's closing in 1988.

Rich Barnard, assistant to City Administrator Mike Uberuaga, said it's likely that residents will be asked in one form or another to contribute the remaining money needed for the pier.

Barnard said he expects up to 1,000 athletes to compete in the June 2 Run for the Pier, an event that's expected to raise \$15,000 to \$20,000.

Barnard said the Robert B. Sharp Co. has raised money for

the Orange County Performing Arts Center, the Santa Margarita Catholic High School and the Girl Scouts.

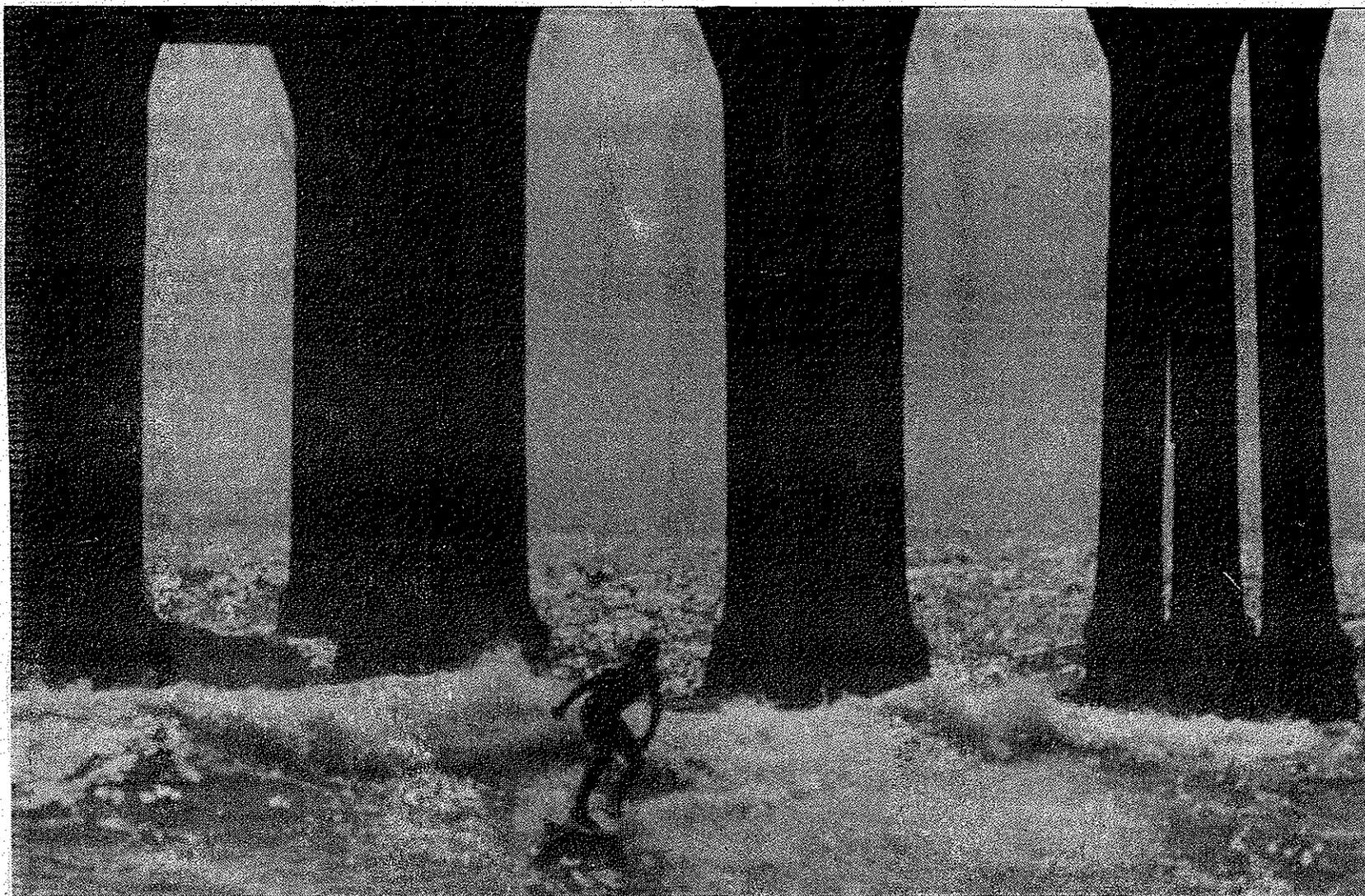
The pier, located at the head of Main Street, was built in 1914 and was damaged in a January 1988 storm. It was closed the following July for safety reasons.

The new pier will be 1,834 feet long, 30 feet wide and 38 feet above the water. Unlike the original pier, which is constructed of wood, the new pier will be concrete.

The pier is estimated to cost \$11.2 million. An additional \$600,000 to \$1 million will be required for structures on top of the pier.

Completion is targeted for May of 1992.





**The demolition of the Huntington Beach pier is now slated to begin after Labor Day, and the city council has hired a fund-raising firm to amass the rest of the money needed to build a new one.**