

Marchi named to panel to avert strike by CSEA

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ALBANY — State Sen. John J. Marchi was appointed yesterday as co-chairman of a special legislative panel that will try to head off an April 18 strike by about 145,000 state employees.

The Civil Service Employees Association, which represents the state workers, has been involved in a protracted contract dispute with the state over pay raises for professional, administrative, operational and administrative employees, including several thousand on Staten Island.

Carey earlier this month asked the Legislature to step in and try to resolve the impasse, under provisions of the state's Civil Service Law. As in 1975, the last time a legislative impasse committee was formed, the new panel is headed by Marchi, Republican of Ward Hill, and by Assemblyman Stephen R. Greco, D-Buffalo.

A spokesman for Marchi said the committee will meet during the Legislature's spring recess, which is to begin tomorrow, and will issue a report when lawmakers return to the Capitol on April 18.

CSEA leaders have not yet decided whether to defer the strike date until

after the full Legislature has an opportunity to review the committee's recommendations, a union spokesman said yesterday.

The CSEA, in negotiations begun last year, demanded raises of 12 per cent or \$1,200 — whichever is higher — for all 145,000 employees covered in the ongoing contract talks.

Carey rejected that demand as too costly, and sent the wage question to the Public Employment Relations Board in January. Earlier this month, the board recommended wage increases averaging 8.5 per cent during the 1977-78 fiscal year beginning tomorrow.

While Carey agreed with the 8.5 per cent figure, he objected to PERB's proposal that the pay hike be carried out in two steps, with 5 per cent of \$500 payable beginning tomorrow and 3.5 per cent or \$350 effective next January.

The governor said the plan would cost about \$80 million, \$20 million more than has been budgeted for pay hikes.

In a message to the Legislature, however, Carey said an initial 5 per cent pay increase should be given to about 60,000 employees in the operational and institutional units, since they are among the lowest-paid state workers.

The governor said his plan, which would require that other workers settle

for 3.5 per cent raises now and wait until January for the extra 5 per cent, could be accommodated within the new state budget.

The CSEA has rejected both the governor's plan and the PERB recommendation on the ground that neither proposal provides large enough raises. The union represents several thousand employees at Island state-run facilities, including the Willowbrook Developmental Center, the Institute for Basic Research and the South Beach Psychiatric Center.

Vote to demonstrate

The Mid-Grant Civic Association, meeting last night in the St. Margaret Mary's R.C. Church hall, Midland Beach, voted to continue demonstrating against the proposed traffic light on Midland Ave., Grant City. The next meeting is April 27.

Gateway panel to meet

A public meeting of the Gateway National Recreation Area Advisory Commission will be Monday at 10 a.m. in room 203 of the Prudential Building, 745 Broad St., Newark. The development of the Gateway Park system will be discussed.