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CSEA to decide next week on strike

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ALBANY — Negotiators for the Civil Service Employees Association will decide next week whether to delay an April 18 strike date so the Legislature can come up with a plan to resolve a salary dispute between the union and the state.

Republican State Sen. John J. Marchi of Ward Hill and Assemblyman Stephen Greco, D-Buffalo, the co-chairmen of a special legislative impasse committee, asked union leaders yesterday to push back the strike deadline so a compromise pay plan can be developed.

The two legislators also asked state and CSEA officials to submit briefs on the wage dispute by April 13, and they announced that public hearings on pay hikes would be held here on April 18 and 19.

Roger Cole, a spokesman for the 145,000-member union, said the decision on whether to defer the strike deadline will be up to a 48-member negotiating team representing professional, administrative, operational and institutional employees from around the state.

"We plan to call the team members in, early next week, and present the Legislature's request to them," Cole said. "Any further action will then be up to them."

The CSEA last year demanded that workers be given raises amounting to the higher of \$1,200 or 12 per cent of their current salaries, effective today.

Gov. Carey, however, has refused to consider anything more than a two-step raise working out to \$850 or 8.5 per cent. Under Carey's plan, lower-paid operational and institutional employees would be given \$500 or 5 per cent immediately, and \$350 or 3.5 per cent on Jan. 1.

Professional and administrative employees, who generally earn more than \$10,600 a year, would be given \$350 or 3.5 per cent now and the balance next year.

Carey's plan would cost about \$61 million in additional wages, and such an amount was set aside by the Legislature yesterday as it approved the state's new 1977-78 budget. It has been estimated it would cost about \$100 million to meet the CSEA's demands.

The CSEA represents about 5,000 state workers on Staten Island, with about 3,300 of those employed at

the Willowbrook Developmental Center, Cole said. The rest work at such facilities as the Institute for Basic Research, the South Beach Psychiatric Center, the Arthur Kill Correctional Facility and the Department of Motor Vehicles office in Tompkinsville.

Most of the state workers on the island fall into the operational and institutional categories, Cole said.