

CSEA workers OK contract

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — One month after they stood ready to shut down the state to get their contract demands, state civil servants have overwhelmingly approved a new contract giving them their first salary increase in three years.

The Civil Service Em-

ployes Association, which represents 140,000 workers, announced Friday that union members approved the contract by a margin of 48,703 to 15,174 votes. About 62 per cent of those eligible cast ballots.

State and union negotiators reached agreement on the contract April 17, hours before the CSEA was scheduled to go out on strike. But continuing confusion over contract terms delayed a vote on the pact by the union's rank-and-file.

A court order that temporarily bars the union from formally signing the contract with the state remains the only obstacle to the new contract. But CSEA officials say the suit that prompted the order is

groundless, and they expect the court ban to be lifted.

The new contract, which gives state workers their first increase since Gov. Hugh Carey took office in 1975, is estimated to cost the state \$220 million over the next two years.

Every state worker in the bargaining units represented by the CSEA will get a wage boost of 5 per cent or \$500, whichever is greater, retroactive to April 1. The workers will get 4 per cent or \$400, whichever is greater, on Oct. 1, and another 5 per cent or \$500 next April 1.

There is confusion, however, about the increments traditionally paid to state worker in their second, third, fourth, fifth, 10th

and 15th years of state service.

The contract approved by the workers departs from usual past practices by not boosting the basic state salary schedule by 14 per cent, just individual employe wages.

Not raising the basic schedule denies raises to new employes and it also means that some employes will immediately be raised beyond the top scale for their grade.