

Extension Period Likely

Aptos Cityhood Petitions Submitted

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A move to incorporate Aptos remains alive today, despite backers of that move recognizing they may have come up short on the required number of signatures to put the issue on the ballot.

According to incorporation committee chairwoman Glenn Specht, she will turn in an estimated 2,000 signatures to the county Local Agency Formation Commission this afternoon. She believes that figure is "probably short" of the required 25 percent of the registered voters within the proposed incorporation boundary area needed to put the matter on the ballot.

However, since the specific number of registered voters in the area is unknown, Assistant County Counsel Jim Ritchey this morning said an additional 15 days would be given to incorporation supporters to turn in supplemental signatures.

According to the state Municipal Reorganization Act, explained Ritchey, the county Elections Department will have 30 days to determine the number of voters in the area, as well as whether the incorporation petitions turned in are sufficient.

The 15-day supplemental period, however, said Bill Davis, director of the county Local Agency Formation Commission, will not begin until after the Elections Department makes its decision. He believed the department "may well need the entire time," therefore, giving incorporation backers a maximum additional 45 days to collect signatures.

The incorporation drive won't wait, said Specht. "We will begin gathering supplemental signatures this afternoon right after we turn in our initial petitions," she said. "I would personally feel guilty if we didn't follow through after all we've gone through."

If the move continues to incorporate what would be the second largest city in the county — with some 27,000 residents — LAFC would begin the lengthy incorporation procedures. Davis estimated 70 days of public hearings with LAFC, 60 days with the Board of Supervisors, with the election coming at least 75 days after the final public hearing.

The target date for starting the new city is July 4, 1981. To reach that, the election would have to be held in November.

Specht said the number of signatures collected were hampered because of recent bad weather.

The most accurate figure regarding the number of registered voters in the boundary area, added Davis, is 8,432. However, that does not include voters from two precincts which have some voters inside and some outside the proposed boundary.

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