

Cityhood study for Aptos OK'd

By ERIC BENTLEY JR.
STAFF WRITER

A movement to incorporate Aptos into the county's third largest city picked up steam last night.

Organizer Victor Marani said about 25 Aptos people decided to seek a preliminary feasibility study.

The decision was made at an organizational meeting for the recently revived incorporation movement.

Previous similar movements have failed — the most recent seven years ago — but organizers think this time they could be successful.

Marani said a wide range of the Aptos community was represented at the steering committee meeting, including the business and education communities and the majority of the improvement associations.

He said the steering committee has decided to solicit bids from incorporation consultants statewide for the preliminary feasibility study. The committee could choose a consultant by the end of July, he said.

Organizers have already received a bid of \$5,000 to \$8,000 from nationally recognized incorporation consultant Fred Christiansen, who spoke to the group at Cabrillo College last week. A study of this kind is expected to take one or two months and involves gathering estimates of first-year revenues and expenses from county and state officials.

Marani said a decision on the next step, the circulation of a petition of incorporation to Aptos-area residents, would be premature at this point.

"The fact that we're climbing a ladder doesn't mean we'll automatically just grab the next rung," Marani said. "We may decide to back off when we see the results of the preliminary study. The options are still wide open."

Last night, the steering committee also:

- Appointed Dr. David J. Montgomery, a Rio del Mar dentist, as finance committee chairman.

- Decided to participate in the Aptos Fourth of July parade to answer questions and solicit support.

- Set a limitation on contributions of \$100 for individuals and small businesses, and \$500 for organizations.

Organizers "don't want people to think there's a few wealthy individuals underwriting the effort," Marani said.

Organizers have said that the previous effort may have failed to generate popular support because of the perception that it was the effort solely of real estate developers. Organizers are determined that this time the effort will come from a broader base.