

GREEN SHEET  
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## Aptos fire budget set

Aptos Fire Protection District commissioners gave approval Monday night to a final budget that reflects full-service level funding for next year.

The budget of approximately \$1,009,400 is \$20,000 less than the preliminary budget, and is essentially the same one begun last May before passage of Prop. 13. Retiring Apros Fire Chief Richard Chinn told commissioners the final document is comparable to the budget last year, adopted at \$988,563.

Regular cost-of-living increases are included in the budget, Chinn said, because while it is possible to cut funds from a larger budget, it is impossible to increase expenditures for one that is too small. While salaries have been frozen, there are court suits against the state charging a violation of contracts, and if these court actions are successful, Chinn said, it may

be possible to provide the salary raises if they are already included in the final budget. If salary raises can be made later but are left out of the budget, he added, the Aptos District may lose some of its firemen.

If the adopted budget proves too large, the district can drop its expenditures in certain areas. Chinn said cuts may be made from apparatus payments that can be paid on a yearly basis, and from contingency funding. "The amount can be tailored to what we can afford to pay, he said.

The Aptos District budget includes a \$200,000 reserve that can only be used for "dry-period" funding. Commissioners were told the reserve has been accumulated and set aside annually. Each July 1, the funds are transferred back into the general fund, and are later set aside once more in the next year's budget. As long as these funds

are in reserve, Chinn said, they can be used for no other purpose than dry-period financing.

There is also a larger-than-expected amount carried from last year, the chief said, because the district began to cut back spending as early as last March. This will provide \$123,367 in revenue for next year.

The budget includes a total of \$660,235 for salaries and employee benefits. The district anticipates expenses of \$156,057 for services and supplies; \$91,160 for long term debts; \$60,000 appropriation for contingencies and \$41,947 for fixed assets.

Commissioners said they are satisfied the budget reflects the amount of funding the district has been told to expect under the latest guidelines for appropriation of state surplus funds. "This is actually an austere budget," Chinn said.