

Fire district merger

La Selva opposes LAFCO annexation plan

By BOB SMITH
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La Selva fire directors last week took a stand against a position by the Local Agency Formation Commission that they believe threatens their eventual consolidation with the Aptos Fire District.

Echoing the stance earlier adopted by the Aptos fire board, the La Selva board unanimously decided to tell LAFCO chairwoman Robley Levy and the other commissioners, by letter, that LAFCO's proposed restriction on the annexation is totally unacceptable. LAFCO wants to scale back La Selva's proposed annexation to a narrow connecting link between the two districts.

Levy seconded a motion two weeks ago by County Supervisor and LAFCO Commissioner Gary Patton to redraw the proposed annexa-

tion boundaries to include only a strip of land along the state-owned freeway and Larkin Valley Road interchange.

Patton's motion was unanimously approved by the LAFCO commissioners. Final action on the annexation is scheduled to be taken at the commission's September meeting.

La Selva, as part of a pending consolidation with the Aptos Fire District, wanted to annex a strip of agricultural land on the ocean side of the freeway between the two districts, as well as the NBC Ranch and surrounding land — proposed for rural-type subdivisions — north of the freeway.

"I could not believe what I was hearing," Aptos-La Selva Fire Chief Al Forbes told the La Selva board last week. "It seemed so contrary to what LAFCO was formed to halt (strip annexations) and con-

trary to anything that this LAFCO had previously allowed."

La Selva director Joanne Dlott said she was also puzzled by the move.

"LAFCO has been asking South County fire districts (including La Selva) to form joint powers agencies. Now we do it and they throw it in our faces by not approving this annexation."

La Selva Fire Chief Al Kinslow urged the board to write a letter to LAFCO "saying that we are in total disagreement with their proposed action."

La Selva director Bill Green wanted La Selva board chairman Francis "Burly" Burlison to use some of the same language that Aptos Fire District chairman Richard Duchscher used in a strongly worded letter to the La Selva board. In his letter, Duchscher told La Selva

directors that the Aptos board felt the present joint powers agency and the consolidation are being threatened by the LAFCO action.

"The proposal of LAFCO to deny the annexation of all lands except State Highway 1," Duchscher said, "thereby creating strip annexations and an island surrounded by the Aptos/La Selva Fire Protection Agency, is totally unacceptable.

"The Aptos board," Duchscher continued, "will only consider the original annexation as adequate to justify the continuation of the joint powers agency and ultimate consolidation.

"I would urge the La Selva directors to stand fast and insist on annexation as set forth in the current application. You may be assured that Aptos will fully support that position," Duchscher concluded.