

Sentinel

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To Task Force

Zayante District Change?

The petition to reorganize the Zayante Fire Protection District by combining it with neighboring districts has received the required amount of signatures, a forerunner to possible dissolution of the district.

Duane Smith, executive director of the Local Agency Formation Commission, presented, and had the commission approve, setting up a task force to look into reorganization of the district.

"I made a recommendation to the commission that a task force be appointed to look at the question of the reorganization of the district which would inevitably mean the dissolution of the district," Smith said.

"The task force will consist of representatives from the Ben Lomond, Felton and Zayante fire districts, from the (county) fire marshal's office, the California Department of Forestry, from the county and from the LAFC staff," he said.

According to the election department, Smith said, there are 1,651 registered voters in the Zayante district as of Aug. 3, 1977. Since the petition requires signatures from 5 per cent of the registered voters, it needed 83 names.

Out of 123 people signing the petition, the election department certified that 87 names were those of actual registered voters, Smith reported, thus giving the petition four names more than what is required for the change.

The petitioners are suggesting that the district be reorganized into the Felton, Ben Lomond and Scotts Valley fire protection districts as recommended in a report put out by the Sierra Club.

Smith said that the involvement of Scotts Valley district in the matter is unnecessary because this district already has annexed the part of the Zayante district recommended in the Sierra Club report.

The Felton district's commissioners recently came out with a statement that "The Felton Fire District has not and will not seek any additional territory nor seek to expand boundaries at the expense of any other district."

The Ben Lomond Volunteer District has taken a "no comment" stand on the situation.

In other LAFC business, annexation of more than 200 acres to the western portion of Watsonville was delayed, although commissioners indicated that the annexation plan will be approved.

The annexation will be considered at LAFC's Sept. 8 meeting.

Originally, the annexation was to include 260 acres, but some of that area was excised from the plan. Part of the property that didn't make the cut was land belonging to Aaron Berman, which made headlines 18 months ago when a group of local Indians barricaded the area to protect an ancient Indian burial site.

Smith explained that the Ohlone Indians and their sup-

missioner Robley Levy. She moved, and Commissioner Gary Patton seconded, that the matter should be delayed so that commissioners can study Watsonville's sphere of influence limits in the area. They said that the annexation and discussion of sphere of influence should occur at the same time.

Two other commissioners, Joe Ghio and Joe Perry, disagreed with the delay, but ultimately supported the motion so as to not delay the annexation even further.

"It's a matter of procedure," Patton told the others.

The area at issue is between the western city limits of Watsonville and Highway 1 — except for the Berman property, which is west of Highway 1. Smith said that when the purchase of the Indian burial site there is completed, the Berman property may be annexed.