

# LSB agrees to merger with Aptos fire district

By BOB SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

La Selva fire district directors approved an agreement last week to form a joint powers authority and combine its fire department with the Aptos fire department.

The board unanimously approved the agreement with the Aptos district. The Joint Powers Authority, which will have two representatives from the La Selva board and three from Aptos on its board of directors, will officially become effective May 1.

The merger of the two fire departments, with around-the-clock, seven-day-a-week manning of the La Selva Beach fire station with two and sometimes three firefighters, will become operational on July 1.

If the JPA is successful, the two boards say they want to formally combine the two districts into one, tentatively named the Aptos-La Selva Fire Protection District.

Representation on the new board was an issue.

Director Joann Dlott told the other board members that it wasn't feasible to elect directors for a consolidated fire district from districts that represent the present Aptos and La Selva district. State election law, she said, allows district representation based on population, not on geographical areas, she said.

Aptos board members had originally suggested electing two members from La Selva and three from Aptos in an effort to preserve representation from the smaller community on the combined fire board.

Dlott suggested that La Selva agree to at-large representation

on the combined fire board when the two districts are merged. "It will be better to go for 'at-large' and take our chances," Dlott said.

La Selva, she said, will have two incumbents on the board of directors when it comes time to elect new members to the combined board and incumbents generally have the inside track to get re-elected.

Dlott and director Burly Burlison were chosen to represent the La Selva board on the JPA. Burlison was named unanimously in secret balloting among the directors. Dlott received three votes and director Roy Johnston two votes.

The only cautionary note came from director Bill Connell, who wondered if the JPA board, dominated by Aptos directors, will live up to the promises made in a feasibility study by La Selva chief Al Kinslow and Aptos chief Al Forbes — particularly a recommendation to man the La Selva station on a 24-hour-a-day basis.

Other directors reminded him that La Selva could pull out of the JPA if it wasn't happy. Connell didn't seem to be convinced, however.

"If you're happy with it, then I am but we have to go on a lot of faith," he told the other directors.

"If they don't treat the people right here then we say 'forget it,'" director Don Green retorted.

The La Selva directors also approved a series of motions that:

✓ Approved a series of changes to a new fire engine now being constructed for the fire district. The changes will make the new pumper compatible in its operation with Aptos

equipment. The changes will result in a net savings of \$1,380, Johnston told the board. A 1949-vintage fire truck with a disabled pump will not be repaired. Aptos has offered automatic aid to La Selva fires until the JPA takes effect. Estimates on repairing the broken pump range from \$3,000-\$10,000 and directors felt it was not worth the expense to put the old pumper back into service for just three months.

✓ Decided to ask the county Local Agency Formation Commission to modify its annexation proposals to include the area between the two fire districts south of the freeway, and the NBC ranch between the freeway and Freedom Boulevard. The annexation of the northern portion of Larkin Valley and the area along San Andreas Road between the district and Monterey Bay Academy will be dropped.

✓ Voted to drop the contract with the County Fire Marshal's office to offer fire protection in the Larkin Valley and San Andreas Road areas. The district had contracted to protect the two areas for \$6,000. The cancellation became effective July 1.

✓ Acknowledged a letter from the Freedom fire protection district, cancelling an automatic aid agreement with the La Selva district for adjoining response areas. The districts will maintain their mutual aid agreements. An automatic aid agreement means that fire dispatchers will automatically send units from both fire departments to an emergency aid. A mutual aid agreement provides for assistance by other fire departments only when requested by one department.