

Name Committee To Form Plans For Davenport Fire District

A six-man committee will handle all matters leading to the formation next year of the proposed Davenport fire protection district.

This was decided last night by members of the Davenport Improvement club at their monthly meeting at the Ocean View hotel. President Elio Orlando had charge of the session.

It was pointed out that time will not allow formation of a tax district and have budgeted funds for 1953-54.

The six-man committee, composed of two each from the Davenport, Swanton and Laguna areas, will have ample time to prepare carefully necessary plans for a district which could begin operations in the 1954-55 fiscal year if the program is approved by residents of the areas involved.

The committee, which will be named shortly, will contact all property owners and residents in the Davenport district concerning the proposed district.

In order to organize a fire protection district, 50 or more taxpayers of the unincorporated area must sign a petition and present it to the board of supervisors. The supervisors then advertise a public hearing at which time pros and cons on the proposal are heard. If approved by voters of the area involved, the supervisors appoint the first commissioners. In future years, the commissioners are elected by district residents.

The many suggestions presented at the public mass meeting at the Ocean View hotel March 25 were reviewed last night. That session was called by the club and the Davenport volunteer fire department to discuss fire problems which arose as the result of the disastrous fire March 21 which destroyed the Coast Dairies and Land company building which housed T. A. Morelli's Davenport Cash store and the Davenport postoffice.

State, county and city fire and water officials were present at the mass meeting to discuss the proposed fire protection district, improved water supply, adequate fire hydrants, new and permanent fire station and standard fire equipment.

Fire Chief Francis Gregory last night was authorized to purchase at least six smoke masks for the department. He said that masks were needed badly at the March 21 blaze.

Chief Gregory also reported he had talked again with Fred Pfyffer, manager, and Louis Palletti of the Coast Dairies and Land company regarding a proposed site for the new fire station.

President Orlando reported that he had contacted Lester H. Gum, chief state forest ranger at county headquarters of the state division of forestry at Felton, and had been assured that the division will cooperate wholeheartedly with fire protection plans, especially during the summer. Gum also expressed his gratitude for the letter of thanks received by his office from the Davenport firemen regarding state assistance at the March 21 fire.

A similar expression of appreciation has been received from the Santa Cruz office of the telephone company, it was reported.

Charles Bella said that the Boulder Creek fire district commission has made an outright gift of its former fire siren to the Davenport volunteer department. Club members and firemen were high in their praise of the cooperation of the Boulder Creek commission.

Anthony Lockhart, foreman of the General Petroleum plant in the Davenport area, again offered cooperation of his concern in fire problems. Various firefighting equipment will be made available when needed. Lockhart also donated five gallons of gasoline for the Davenport fire truck.

Mrs. Lockhart will assist the fire department through handling of correspondence, it was announced.

The improvement club donated material for the sign, made by President Orlando, denoting temporary location of the Davenport postoffice in the Ocean View hotel.

The bulletin board, also prepared by the president, containing pictures of the March 21 fire and other items of importance to the district, will be presented to the Pacific school in Davenport.