

# Aptos/La Selva, Central fire continue merger talks

By ALYSSA D. CLAGG

REGISTER-PAJARONIAN STAFF WRITER

APTOS — Calling in the SWOT forces, members of the Central and Aptos/La Selva Fire Joint Oversight Committee have immersed themselves in the fact-finding phase of a possible merger between the two fire districts.

Five members from each department will visit the Clackamas County and Tualitin fire districts outside Portland.

Members gather information and data to determine feasibility of the

strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the merger.

"We're almost at the phase of developing goals, so it's coming to

WPR 7400  
partments to discover and question a merger the size of Central and Aptos/La Selva districts.

"We want to see what works and what doesn't," said Oversight Committee spokeswoman Charlene Ebey. "It's always good to get out there and see how things are and what might work for us. And

Page 8-- REGISTER-PAJARONIAN,

## FIRE

From page 1.

Five members from each department will visit the Clackamas County and Tualitin fire districts outside Portland on July 10 and 11. The two districts are similar in size to Central and Aptos/La Selva, which is why Smith said he suggested the excursion to board members.

"I was invited to serve on a review board there and thought there was an opportunity to learn a lot on how a mid-size organization worked that has consolidated," Smith explained. "They have much the same demographics, staff size and I'm sure, ups and downs."

The trip is expected to cost around \$200 per person — Smith said each department will pay for their employees to attend. Aside from Smith, three Central and two Aptos/La Selva Oversight Committee members will go along with labor and management representatives.

The executive director of the Local Agency Formation Committee, Pat McCormick, explained to committee members last week that the entire merger process will take between 6 to 12 months to complete. And although a public hearing would be held and SWOT analysis results will be made public, the committee has agreed to keep meeting closed to the public.

Despite concerns from the public and officials, committee members said that any merger plan wouldn't include reduced pay or fire station closures in the districts.

"So far I think it's going very well — we're moving right along," Ebey said. "I'm encouraged."