

Backers Say Aptos City Financially Feasible

By MARK BERGSTROM

Sentinel Staff Writer

Projected revenues and expenses show that the proposed city of Aptos would be financially feasible, an incorporation proponent told a meeting of residents Thursday night.

Glenn Specht, chairwoman of a Chamber of Commerce committee studying incorporation, said estimated total revenue (not counting property tax) would be \$1.5 million.

Expenses, not counting administrative costs, would be in the neighborhood of \$1 million, she said.

Specht explained she had not calculated administrative costs, which would vary according to the form of city government selected if the area does incorporate.

Even though she said that cost would be a "biggie," it would not push the expense side of the ledger higher than income.

City government, she said, would be small and would be expected to operate in rented offices rather than in an expensive city hall, and would be premised on retaining the present fire, water and sanitation service, currently provided the area by special districts. Police protection, she said could be provided under contract by the county Sheriff's Office at considerably less cost than setting up a city police department.

Several in the audience at the Aptos Library questioned the figures presented. Some questioned the need for incorporation itself, and at times the comments were angry.

"This sounds like a gas line," Sheriff Al Noren quipped when he began outlining the police protection plan he had worked out with Specht.

For a projected first-year cost of \$256,740, he said, the Sheriff's Department would provide one deputy in the proposed

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city limits 24 hours a day. In addition, Noren said, his office would provide support services, such as detectives, the bomb squad and scientific investigation.

In answer to a question, however, Noren pointed out that a city of Aptos would lose traffic patrol services from the Highway Patrol, except on Highway 1.

Other projected expenses would include \$550,000 for public works (street maintenance, construction and engineering), \$40,000 for a planning department, \$45,000 for a building (inspection and permits) department, \$27,000 for parks and recreation and \$23,000 for animal control.

Some of those figures, Specht said, appear high, but are based on certain revenue sources which must be used for specific purposes.

For example, she said, the city could expect to receive \$20,000 annually in park dedication fees from new residential construction and \$500,000 in various revenue sources for public works.

Estimated revenues would include \$300,000 projected sales tax, \$1,027,706 in state grants and subventions (cigarette and gas taxes, etc.), \$100,000 from public utility franchises, \$250,000 from

licenses and permits, \$100,000 in fines (speeding tickets, building violations) and \$40,000 from room rental taxes.

Again, she said, the projected revenue does not include a property tax provision since the state still has not devised a formula for apportioning it to new cities. And, she said, she has not counted in possible revenue sharing funds.

Boundaries for the proposed city, she said, would start at Park Avenue, take in Porter Gulch and then travel southerly down the old Rancho Aptos line. The boundaries would encompass Seacliff, Aptos, Rio Del Mar and Seascape to Los Barrancos (near La Selva Beach).

Population in the area is approximately 27,969, she said. Assessed value is estimated at \$96 million.

Once the group gets updated figures, based on an adopted proposed city limits, the state Franchise Tax Board will provide updated revenue figures, Specht said.

Those figures will then be forwarded with a proposal for incorporation to the Local Agency Formation Commission, which must decide whether incorporation is feasible.

If it rules it is, the proposal will go to the county Board of Supervisors, who would set an election date on the issue of incorporation.

In order to start the proceedings with LAFC, Specht said, the proposal must be accompanied by a petition by at least 25 percent of the registered voters in the proposed incorporation area.

The earliest she envisions an election on incorporation would be November, but more probably in June 1980.

If passed, the city could begin to function the following July. During the one-year lag time, it would accumulate its revenues to insure financial stability when the city begins operation.

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