

Fire districts' annexation, reorganization plans shelved

By BOB SMITH

Proposals by the La Selva Beach and Freedom fire protection districts to annex Larkin Valley, and a sweeping reorganization of the south county's fire services have been indefinitely shelved.

The two fire districts had filed annexation proposals that would have divided the Larkin Valley area between the two districts on the same basis as they now provide contract fire protection through an agreement with the County Board of Supervisors.

Pat McCormick, executive director of the county Local Agency Formation Commission, recommended that the commission continue the public hearings indefinitely

while the fire districts, including Aptos and La Selva Beach, study a number of options.

Aptos and La Selva are now pursuing the idea of either consolidating their fire districts or setting up a joint powers authority to operate a single fire department in the two districts.

Aptos Fire Chief Al Forbes said last Wednesday morning that a study completed by La Selva Beach Fire Chief Al Kinslow and Forbes will be presented to the two fire boards later this month.

If the reaction to the consolidation proposal is negative Forbes said, LAFCO will know in a couple of weeks.

If the boards want to pursue the idea of consolidation or a JPA, then it will take several

months to complete the legalities.

La Selva Beach board chairman Roy Johnston, who agreed to LAFCO postponing action on the annexations, said he believes some move towards consolidation will come out of the study completed by the two fire chiefs.

Freedom fire board chairman Norman Craven also agreed to the indefinite postponement of his district's annexation proposal.