



Aptos group launches fire board recall

Critics of the strict new fire code in the Aptos Fire District are launching a move to recall the five board members, according to a spokesman for the group.

Al Schwartz, a business consultant, said the group, called the Aptos Committee for Effective Government, will charge the board members with "not acting in the interest of their constituents" in their support of Fire Chief Richard Chinn.

Although the recall move is aimed at the district directors, the real target is Chief Chinn. Schwartz accuses him of "overbearing politics... harassment... of the fire department."

The board, Schwartz said, "has not realized the problem that has existed and the polarization in the Aptos Community." Schwartz said the board "has been a 'yes' vote for the chief's whims. You can go through the (board meeting) minutes and see that he gets a 'yes' vote for anything he desires."

Schwartz said the group's attorney, Tom Wichelmann of Scotts Valley, is researching the recall procedures and preparing the petitions and other documents necessary to get an election called.

The group will also offer a slate of five candidates for the board to replace the current members, but he said he could not divulge their names at this time.

The existing fire board members are the chairman, Richard Duchscher, Walter Jordan, Stewart Davis, Emmett Lynch and Don Eddleman. Jordan, Davis and Lynch were re-elected to new terms in November.

The storm over Chinn has been brewing for some time — generated principally by the new fire code which was adopted last year after being widely publicized and after hearings by the board. Among its more controversial aspects are the requirements for smoke detectors in commercial buildings and in two-story and all mobile homes by 1977.

A more recent fuss concerned the use of candles — in a cafe in one instance and in a nunnery in the second.

The fire chief has taken the operators of the Old Country Pizza, located in the old post office building, to court over a violation of the fire code. The complaint charged that the operators were using candles that violate the code, but the operators, Chuck and Garry

Jilka, say the type of candles they are using are in wide use elsewhere and the chief's demands are unreasonable.

The case will come up in Santa Cruz municipal court Jan. 12.

And recently, the department inspected the Poor Clares' convent in Seacliff and left behind a long list of violations that have to be corrected. It also put a ban on the use of candles in religious processions. That stirred up a spate of critical letters to the newspaper, which Chinn answered with a detailed explanation of the kind and magnitude of the violations.

Chinn is Schwartz' principal target in all this. He says Chinn is not providing fire protection to the community "but enforcement to the point of malfeasance."

Schwartz fought the candle battle because the Jilkas are clients of his, he said. He has also vowed to take the matter of the requirement for heat detectors to court, and that the lawyer is now researching it.

As for the recall, it could be a long procedure, as much as three or four months, according to county elections chief Alice Myrens.

Mrs. Myrens said Schwartz contacted her Tuesday and that

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Recall

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she had to spend the day before New Years researching the procedures.

To begin with, she said, the group must inform the directors of their intentions to recall them. This must be followed by the publication of a notice of intent in the newspapers and posting the notice within the district. The directors have an opportunity to answer the charges made against them.

Then, petitions may be circulated, with it required that the petitioners get signatures of 10 per cent of the registered voters within the district as shown on the latest list of eligible voters submitted to the secretary of state.

If enough signatures are gathered, then the election may be called.

Schwartz said the Aptos Committee for Effective Government has about 20 members at this time, which include the Rev. Francis Markey, Mrs. Terry Stirellar, Wes Thomas, the Jilkas and Lawrence Page.

Demonstration on floral landscaping

An indoor demonstration and discussion on problems of fitting rhododendrons into landscaping plans will be subject of the Monterey Bay Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

APTOS FIRE DISTRICT

5:30 p.m. False alarm, 7960 Soquel

5:36 a.m. Smoke alarm, 7960 Soquel

11:27 a.m. False alarm, 7960 Soquel

11:30 a.m. False alarm, 7960 Soquel

12:00 p.m. Public alarm, 7960 Soquel

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