
LAFCO is holding the key

Five men will decide East Palo Alto's future

For now, East Palo Alto's future rests in the hands of five men.

They are the ones who decide whether cities should be formed or their boundaries changed.

They are the members of the San Mateo County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

LAFCO has jurisdiction over the creation of new cities and the annexation of unincorporated areas to existing cities. It also has jurisdiction over the creation of special districts and annexations to special districts.

Each county has a formation commission. The agency's basic purpose is to prevent urban sprawl and aid in the orderly formation and development of local governmental agencies.

When Foster City was incorporated in 1971, it was with LAFCO's approval.

The annexation of the 25-acre Horgan Ranch to Redwood City in May of this year also required LAFCO's approval.

If the Redwood City and Menlo Park fire districts choose to consolidate later this year, they will have to have LAFCO's approval.

Without LAFCO's approval, East Palo Alto's bid for incorporation might never be reviewed by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, or be voted upon by East Palo Alto's citizens.

All LAFCOs have one "public" or citizen member, two members who serve on city councils and two who serve on the county Board of Supervisors.

San Mateo County's public member and the commission's chairman is John P. Lindley.

Lindley is an engineer with Lockheed. He lives in an unincorporated area, La Honda.

The commission's city representatives are Jeannine Hodge and Arthur Lepore.

Hodge is a member of the Brisbane City Council. She is a teacher in the Jefferson High School District.

She is an alternate commission member, serving in the stead of commissioner Malcolm Dudley, the mayor of Atherton.

Dudley will be serving in the Naval Reserve during the hearings on East Palo Alto's incorporation.

City member Arthur Lepore is the mayor of Millbrae. He was appointed to the commission in May of 1978.

Supervisors Arlen Gregorio and John Ward are the commission's county representatives.

— Phyllis Brown