

Group explores Nipomo cityhood

By Todd Cralley/STAFF WRITER

A clearer picture of the cityhood that may be in Nipomo's future is beginning to take shape, according to the Nipomo Incorporation Committee for Education.

The nonprofit group that meets regularly to inform the community about the pros and cons of incorporation has posted what it believes would be the city of Nipomo's boundaries on its Web site, www.nipomoincorporation.org.

“The boundaries were originally created in 2005 with the help of San Luis Obispo's Local Agency Formation Commission but were amended to include Blacklake and The Woodlands in Nipomo's future sphere of influence,” said Mike Eisner, president of NICE. “At this time it was suggested that we keep our boundaries tight.”

The organization also is trying to answer the question of population growth over the next five years. Based on those figures, Guy Murray, vice president of NICE, has reason to be happy.

“If we incorporate by the year 2012, we'll be the largest city in South County,” Murray said. “Our population will be right about 20,000.”

That figure was determined by using available census data combined with anticipated development and growth for the area over the next five years, according to Dan Gaddis, who presented the figures.

The group also received a presentation from Paul Hood, executive officer of LAFCO, at the committee's meeting May 12.

“I thought it was important for people to understand LAFCO's role in incorporation and ask some questions,” Eisner said.

LAFCO is the agency that will determine whether Nipomo is ready for cityhood and will handle the application for incorporation.

“There are 58 LAFCOs in California,” Hood said. “We help communities understand the process and decide what they need to do next.”

While it may seem Nipomo is getting close to incorporation, Eisner admitted that incorporation is a long way off.

“This is a year of gathering information and putting together the data,” said Eisner. “This is a year of getting organized. 2008 is the year we'll be out on the streets educating, distributing information, answering questions and raising money.”

Part of the process of incorporating is raising the necessary fees to pay LAFCO. Typically, that's \$200,000, according to Eisner, to pay for the two-year application and review process.

“We're looking to put together the facts and information the public needs in order to make an informed decision,” Eisner said. “Our desire is to do what the public desires.”

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