

Recall election takes more expensive route

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Inaction Tuesday by the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors to certify placing a recall measure on the Nov. 8 ballot against one of their own will prove more costly to taxpayers, but will not jeopardize placing the question before voters in the fall.

The board on Tuesday failed to muster a vote certifying the recall petition against District 5 Supervisor Steve Kearney. Board members Cliff Edson, Michael Oliveira and Chris Wright did not second a motion made by Supervisor Debbie Ponte to move forward with the election.

However, the county elections office will now take the necessary steps to call the recall election, said County Clerk-Recorder Rebecca Turner.

She estimates those steps requiring more staff time and posting of the election order will cost taxpayers between \$500 and \$1,000 extra than if the board had certified the recall petition. In addition, she has to wait another two weeks before calling for the recall election.

Despite the delay, Turner said the recall election would definitely be on the Nov. 8 ballot. In addition, the filing period for those interested in running to replace Kearney will have to be delayed by about 10 days and will not coincide with the Monday, July 18, filing period for a number of other office openings in the county.

Because of the delay, Turner will extend the filing period for the District 5 race to Aug. 25.

The board's hesitancy to place the recall on the ballot drew the ire of recall proponent Clyde Clapp.

"I'm appalled at the entire board," Clapp said Thursday. "They took an oath to uphold the U.S. and state constitutions and they ignored the right of the people to petition. They are all hypocrites and they are making their own laws. They don't deserve to be on the board. Every one of them should be removed from office for not doing their duty. The board works at the pleasure of the voters."

Recall proponents cite Kearney's votes on the proposed asphalt plant off Hogan Dam Road and terminating a developer agreement for State Route 26 and Olive Orchard Road intersection improvements as reasons for removing the first term supervisor.

Kearney, who has declined to comment on the recall, did not participate in Tuesday's discussion about certifying the petition.

The recall election will have two questions. One will be whether or not to remove Kearney from office. If a majority votes for removal, the second question will come into play. It will be a list of candidates, other than Kearney, who have filed to fill his remaining two-year term on the board. The candidate with the most votes- not necessarily a majority- would succeed Kearney.

Clapp said he plans to run for the District 5 board seat once the filing period opens.

The district covers the communities of Jenny Lind, Milton, Rancho Calaveras and a portion of La Contenta.