

After 77 years, harbor district has proof of formation

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Sometime after he was elected to the board of the Crescent City Harbor District in 2016, Brian Stone learned that the organization did not have possession of its charter documents.

“Nobody knows when it was formed,” said Stone, who is now president of the board. “A 1931 election has been mentioned. But there’s no form to prove it.”

He began a search for the documents, which took on more urgency in late June when the organization needed produce the documentation as proof of the district’s legal ability to purchase a small property on Highway 101. The Harbor District wanted to add the two parcels valued at \$25,000 each the frontage to the harbor. Stone said harbor staff performed an exhaustive search of its then Del Norte County’s files. No copy of the formation documentation could not be found.

“According to county records, the Del Norte County Court House was destroyed by a fire in 1943 and the public records in the County Clerk’s office were destroyed,” Stone explained.

Meanwhile the escrow company signed off on the land deal, with the caveat the documentation would be found. And Stone ordered the search to go statewide.

“Knowing the historical value and legal significance of the missing documentation, the district contacted the California State Archives Office in Sacramento,” Stone said. Following a six-week search, the office of the California State Archives found the documentation that had been filed with the Secretary of State’s Office on July 6, 1936.

“After 77 years, the formation documentation for the Crescent City Harbor District were found,” he said.

On Aug. 6, Stone and Harbor Master Charlie Helms delivered a certified copy of the original formation documentation to County Clerk Alissia Northrup. She agreed the paperwork, while not uncommon, was an important piece of history.

“We have a lot of very old documents. I’m thankful they did all the work to get a copy of document here,” Northup said. “It’s nice have documentation of all the districts to look back to when the district formed.”