

Third Mutual board changes leader

Feldstein supporters vow recall

BY CHERYL WALKER
THE LAGUNA WOODS GLOBE

The Third Board Monday removed Stanley Feldstein as president and elected Cynthia Conners in his stead.

The move prompted Feldstein supporters to vow to recall directors who took the presidency away from Feldstein.

The action was taken at a special meeting called by a quorum of the board that included Conners, Bob Hatch, Jim Matson, Isabel Muennichow, Larry Souza and Gunther Vogt.

The six vote majority spelt the end of Feldstein's reign as president. His board supporters included John Paulus, Carol Moore, Don Lippert, Dominic Burrasca and himself. When the vote was counted Feldstein said "I am deposed."

Conners said she found comments from critics made at the meeting helpful, like being chastised by a drill sergeant during her military days.

She said all the directors were concerned with the welfare of the community.

And she promised to work with members of the board to hold town hall meetings on issues of concern to all residents, to explore a complete audit of the community and to ensure the residents were having their dollars well spent. ("Trust, but verify").

She said she thought the reason she culled the most votes in the recent Third election is because she had no agenda or allegiances and was willing to work hard.

She said she originally voted for Feldstein as president because he was Director Moore's recommended choice over Jim



PEGGY BLIZZARD, GLOBE STAFF

Cynthia Conners is Third Mutual's new president

Matson.

She began to rethink her vote when she saw Feldstein in action and the "precipitous manner" in which he was willing to act without really thinking through the immediate consequences: changing the current bank, attorney, confidentiality policy and more without a fallback position for the mutual.

She also thought it ominous when the rest of the corporation presidents left a presidents' meeting; when advisors felt left out; when he cut off corrections, made by other board members; when he treated staff with contempt; when he said the board was violating the law even though he was told by saying so he was putting directors at risk of losing insurance coverage.

She said many went to Feldstein to ask for moderation to no avail. So it was decided a change was needed.

She said she was a "president of last resort" and knew both the board and residents were divided on the issue. Quoting Thomas Jefferson she added, "not all differences of opinion are differences of prin-

ciple."

The first part of the meeting was taken up with a discussion of a replay of the Nov. 28 residents' forum which was cancelled at the 11th hour. Conners explained the cancellation was due to several factors: the disagreement among members as to the validity of the closed session meeting that prompted the forum; the fact that neither the Golden Rain nor the Third board had authorized the replay; and concerns about liability.

Feldstein contended the legal review wasn't needed and that no board had asked for cancellation of the gathering which he contended Channel 6 advertised itself as routinely covering.

Director Don Lippert said Third should stop funding Broadband unless it complied. He also contended the board should have community attorney Bill Hart of Hart, King and Coldren do his review of the residents' forum in a particular time line.

Director Dominic Burrasca suggested the meeting be edit-

Feldstein vows to continue his agenda

BY CHERYL WALKER
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Stanley Feldstein was removed as president of Third Mutual Monday at a special meeting of the mutual board.

But he laid the groundwork for what he plans to do next at the Garden Villa Association meeting last Thursday.

He told the gathering Nov. 29 that no matter what happens, he will still move forward with his promised agenda

He said, "It's the words and acts of a man that determine

his place in the community not the seat he occupies."

Feldstein said he knew he might lose his officer's post but that fact wouldn't deter

him from trying to formalize board procedures, renegotiate the management contract, get to the bottom of the employee benefit plan, improve communications, have a bimonthly forum to resolve issues of the governing documents, enforce compliance with all provisions of the Davis-Stirling Act (that portion of the state Civil Code that regulates common interest developments), effect changes in accounting (particularly in the area of check signing and separate accounting for mutual reserves), improved oversight, conserve and maintain and get details of mutual payments to the Golden Rain Foundation.

Feldstein said Third is out of control. He said there was something wrong with spending \$500,000 to fix up gate houses and have water pipes



Feldstein

Conners

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ed to cut out the questionable statements but Third member and former United Treasurer Connie Grundke pointed out no such thing is done at monthly board meetings.

Conners worried about exposing the directors and through them the residents to high priced lawsuits but her motion was eventually defeated

Golden Rain Foundation Director Noel Hatch said his board could bring the issue to the floor when it was scheduled to meet Tuesday.

There was discussion about

whether the board should allow residents from other mutuals to speak. It was finally decided to allow residents of other mutuals to talk.

Denny Welch contended freshman directors should take the time to learn the ropes before trying to change things.

Feldstein quipped he was (at 85 years) the oldest freshman and a specialist on law and accounting.

Susan Lackay asked for the resignation of Conners who attempted to have attorney Hart set the record straight about the validity of the special meeting.

Feldstein, however, didn't allow the exchange because he didn't want the meeting to become a "legal debate."

Bud Nesvig, who with for-

mer Third Director John Heiney, is spearheading the recall campaign, asked why attorney Hart was present. "I would like to see Hart find a seat somewhere else." When the attorney didn't budge, Nesvig questioned "Are you stuck in the chair?"

When disparaging remarks were made about Conners religious affiliation, resident Barbara Marsh asked Feldstein to stop the exchange, "Please!"

Director Carol Moore asked if the residents could be less personal in their comments and Feldstein said, not without a touch of irony "maybe you can remove me without mentioning my name."

Lucy Falk commended Feldstein's experience as an ac-

countant and lawyer and begged the board to: "Give the man a chance."

The motion to remove Feldstein from the president's chair was made nearly two hours after the meeting began. Board members proposed voting without comment, but Feldstein said he was entitled to know their reasons

Hatch said he wanted it known that the directors of the board do care about the community and try to keep costs down sensitive to the fact that most residents are on fixed in-

comes yet the cost of living keeps going up. "This is not a passive stupid board," he said.

"What will take our ship down is dissension in this community - all of us are entitled to a peaceful life ... cooperation is vital."

Director Muennichow said she agreed with Feldstein on the need for openness, not to sell land and more, but not his methods.

Souza said he deplored what was happening, adding, "It's pretty sad."

BULLETIN BOARD

~~INFORMATION CENTER: LWV Community Center switchboard operator is available weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 597-4369.~~

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Classes are on Mondays and Tuesdays, Dec. 10 and 11, and Saturdays, Jan. 19 and 26, from

~~meetings are: Friday, Dec. 7, United Mutual (Co ops); Friday, Dec. 14, Third Mutual (Condos). Reservations are required. Call 268-2271 or 597-4369.~~

~~RESIDENT INFORMATION: Third Mutual, Wednesday, Dec. 12, 10 a.m. in the Birch Room. United Mutual, Monday, Jan. 28, 1 p.m. in the Birch Room. Residents can meet with a board member and PCM about property service questions and concerns.~~

SPOTLIGHT

Q: I cannot locate my United Mutual Membership Certificate. What shall I do?

Feldstein

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bursting and ruining manors.

He concluded by saying he would not fight on technicalities, "that's for little people."

He also offered to provide copies of documents supporting his arguments to anyone who sent a request to his e-mail: slfeldstein@gmail.com.

TV

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~~ed not to insist on the latter Monday.)~~

~~Ridgeway explained the boards' reasoning as follows.~~

~~1. Neither the Third Laguna Hills Mutual Board nor the Golden Rain Foundation Board had voted to OK the showing. 2. Ridgeway said GRF erred on~~

~~the side of caution because of liability concerns and wanted the additional review by counsel before moving forward.~~

~~3. Also there were concerns about the nature of the gathering which certain members of the Third Board didn't even call a meeting or residents forum. Ridgeway stressed that if counsel had no concerns and both the Third and GRF Boards approved the showing of the Nov. 28 residents' forum it would be aired.~~