

## Board waives impact fee for non-profit group

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By Joyce Owen

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At the Aug. 6 South Walton Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners meeting, Michael Grantham requested an exemption of the district's impact fee for Caring and Sharing of South Walton. Grantham represented Grantham Construction, the company building a metal addition for the facility on Lynn Drive in Santa Rosa Beach.

In the past, Chairman Maurice Gilbert said exemptions were offered to community organizations such as Sacred Heart Hosp or Regional Utilities.

"If non-profits ask for relief, we give it to them," Gilbert said.

The request was considered in light of previous exemptions for non-profit organizations and unanimously approved.

Fire Chief Rick Talbert and Assistant Chief Marc Anderson gave board members, staff and the media a tour of the Station 3 construction site. Talbert said the Design Build project was ahead of schedule.

The renovation of two bays at the station will provide two floors of space that will be used for administrative offices, training facilities and the relocation of the 911 call center.

"While there are times when it is warm, when there is no water and there's lots of noise, the staff agrees this is the sound of progress," Talbert said.

In other business, Talbert presented the budget calendar, which included special meetings on Sept. 12 and 26, both beginning at 5:01 p.m. At the Sept. 12 meeting, after a public hearing on the matter, the board will vote on a tentative millage rate. The Sept 26 meeting will follow the same procedure as the board votes on the final millage rate, operating and capital outlay budgets.

Due to the Labor Day holiday, the regular meeting will be held on Sept. 10 at 4 p.m.

All meetings are held at Station 3/Headquarters, 911 County Road 393N, Santa Rosa Beach.

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