



Fire chief pitches new fees

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Beaufort Fire Department Chief Wendall Wilburn is floating the idea of collecting fire impact fees

The chief gave the Port Royal Town Council, which contracts with the department, a briefing on r and intends to talk to Beaufort officials about the fees, officials from both municipalities said.

Under state law, local governments can charge impact fees on new construction to offset the costs accommodate projected growth. The idea is to shift the burden of paying for new roads, libraries, onto developers and newcomers. The state does not allow such fees for school costs.

Currently, neither municipality collects impact fees of its own, though both have consented to coll Beaufort also collects the county's impact fee for parks. Officials from both municipalities said the

Home builders and real estate associations generally oppose impact fees because the fees inflate h housing advocates have also expressed concern over impact fees stifling their efforts.

Lt. Dan Byrne, a spokesman for the fire department, said the chief was deferring inquiries about f Willis.

"We're making plans one way or another so we have adequate fire service in the Town of Port Roy

No specific dollar figure has been proposed, though fire impact fees in other parts of the county ra Daufuskie Island.

However, there's a lot to be sorted out before an impact fee can be imposed. The town owns its ow contracts with the Beaufort Fire Department for staff, a pact that expires in 2010.

Also, far-flung annexations such as the Shadow Moss community on S.C. 170 are not served by th pays fire impact fees for the Burton Fire District.

For now, Port Royal Mayor Sam Murray and others on the Town Council are waiting for more spe reaction to possible fire impact fees.

Friday, Beaufort city manager Scott Dadson said the city intends to move forward with fire impac

"It is a desire of management, we just haven't prepped anything to put before council right now," l