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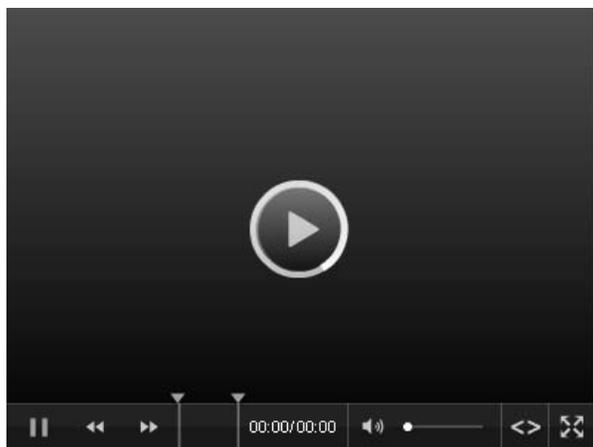
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Cape Coral city leaders look to lower utility rates and pay off debt

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CAPE CORAL, FL- City leaders are looking for ways to curb the proposed 92 percent utility rate increase that residents face over the next 5 years.

Council members requested city staff to come up with different scenarios to pay off the 400 million dollars in loans the city owes for the utilities expansion project while at the same time lowering the financial impact on the Cape's citizens.

Several scenarios will be presented at a workshop meeting on Wednesday.

Ideas range from a city wide utilities tax

where your cable, electric and natural gas could be taxed.

Councilman Bill Deile opposes that proposal.

Another idea would be to charge an impact fee to all residents and land owners not currently connected to the city's water system.

But there's a problem.

Councilman Deile says he's not sure if it is legal to charge the impact fee since the city would not be able to provide many of those residents with city water for years to come.

There are several other proposals city officials will be investigating.

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