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# County to pass any reduction in impact fees to permit holders

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Coweta County soon will be guaranteeing anyone who pulls a permit in the next few months that, if the county reduces impact fees in the near future, the difference between the current impact fee and the new impact fee will be refunded.

The county has been pursuing a new impact fee schedule for the past several months. The Coweta County Board of Commissioners was set to approve a new schedule in early October, but county officials sent it back to the consultant, Bill Ross of Ross and Associates, for more work.

"Bill Ross is coming back with yet a third set of criteria we are going to be looking at hopefully in the next couple of months or so," said County Administrator Theron Gay at Tuesday night's county commission meeting.

However, "we have gotten some calls from some businesses saying, 'Hey, we're thinking about getting started, but we're a little bit concerned,'" Gay said.

The businesses don't want to start construction now, and pay current impact fees, only to see the fees dramatically lowered a few months down the road.

"I know with the economy like it is, we all want to do all we can to stimulate activity," Gay said.

"Does the board want to consider saying to businesses out there that may be on the verge of getting started" that they can get a refund of some of their fees if the fees are subsequently lowered? Gay asked.

"I'd like to go ahead and do that. Because we need jobs, and I'd like to encourage businesses to come in and open up," said Chairman Paul Poole.

"We could hold the money and not spend it," Gay said. "The money is actually kept separate and segregated."

The commissioners voted to offer the recalculation to permits pulled between Oct. 1 and March 1. If the

new impact fee schedule isn't quite ready by then, the timeline can be extended, Gay said.

In other meeting business:

n The board heard a "spotlight" presentation on the Newnan-Coweta Airport from Airport Manager Calvin Walker.

Walker talked about some of the things going on at the airport, and was asked how many people work at the airport.

There are 162 people employed at the various businesses at the airport, as of July, Walker said.

"We have pilots and mechanics and all that," of course, Walker said. But that's not all. "There's a lot of support people that go into keeping these things in the air. Bookkeepers, receptionists, anything you need to run a business," he said.

Speaking of business, many use the airport. "We want to be their destination of choice," he said. Some of the businesses that have used the airport in the past year include Belk, PetSmart, Kroger, Food Lion, Cargil, Campbell Soup, Hastings, Sherwin Williams, Target, and Hobby Lobby. "Hobby Lobby flew in a lot when they were setting up," Walker said. A lot of other companies have used the airport, too. "That's just a few that people would probably identify with," he said.

The airport is ripe for expansion, he noted.

"We've leased every available spot that we have for hanger development," Walker said. The airport authority has "really pushed" the FFA and Georgia Department of Transportation "to give us more grants so that we can develop our east side. They have committed to building the taxiway in 2010," Walker said. "We're already talking to potential tenants about leasing that property. We're probably going to sign some leases before we even move the dirt."

Commissioner Al Smith asked how many corporate jets are housed at the airport.

There are nine, right now, Walker said. In 2001, there were no corporate jets and about 45 single-engine planes.

"As of this morning, we have 153" single engine planes, Walker said, and the Falcon Aviation Academy will bring 40 more.

n The board approved sending out a request for proposals for the construction of the new health department facility on Hospital Road.

n The board approved the proposed road rehabilitation list for 2010.

n The board approved a request for emergency placement of a camper on property on Trammell Road. The home on the property burned on Oct. 11, and the homeowner is currently staying in a hotel.

"He is asking permission to be able to park a travel trailer until he can either replace his home with manufactured home or build a home," said Gay.

Second District Commissioner Tim Lassetter was not in attendance at Tuesday's meeting, but Gay said he'd spoken to him.

The planning department is recommending temporary placement. The board voted to allow the placement of the camper through the end of January.

n The board approved the purchase of a heavy rescue truck for the Coweta County Fire Department.

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