

Beaverton City Council to hold hearing on fee increases, elect new council president

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System development charges are one-time fees, generally for new construction, to hook up to services like the city's water system. *(Molly Smith/Oregonian)*

Kari Bray | kbray@oregonian.com By **Kari Bray** | kbray@oregonian.com

Email the author | **Follow on Twitter**

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The Beaverton City Council will elect a new president and hear public testimony on proposed fee increases at its Tuesday, Jan. 7, meeting.

Councilors will meet at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall on Griffith Drive.

Proposed increases to the city's water system development charges, which were postponed by city leaders in 2009 due to harsh economic conditions, will come before the council again.

A **system development charge** is a one-time fee for new customers to hook up to city water. The money is meant to offset the cost of expanding the city's water system and adding capacity as Beaverton grows.

A standard meter for a single-family home (a 5/8-inch by 3/4-inch connection) currently requires a \$3,433 one-time fee to hook into the citywide pipeline, according to the city. Under the proposed new fee schedule, that charge would increase to \$5,293.

The pricetag goes up based on meter size, jumping to more than \$13,500 for a 1-inch and more than \$30,000 for a 1.5-inch connection.

Costs for larger hook-ups, such as those required by some industrial businesses, would be determined based on the average daily demand, peak daily demand, peak hourly demand and the demand in case of a fire.

The city council originally reviewed these possible increases in 2009. However, councilors decided not to pass the new fees "in light of economic conditions at the time," according to council documents.

Red Oak Consulting, a firm that evaluated Beaverton's system development charges several years ago, recommended the increases in a December 2008 study.

The fee changes would also allow for annual increases based on the **Engineering News Record Construction Cost Index** for Seattle, Wash., starting Feb. 1, 2015.

If passed, the new prices would take effect on March 1.

According to a city staff report, the fee hike would place Beaverton closer to the 2013 system development charges in neighboring cities: \$5,889 for a standard single-family home in Hillsboro, \$6,083 in Tigard and \$6,725 in Sherwood.

Aside from system development charges, councilors will also elect a new president and cement priorities for 2014.

The city's charter requires the council to select one member as president at the first meeting of every year. The current president is Cate Arnold, who has been on the council since January 2005.

Councilors will also vote on their priorities for 2014, **which were brainstormed at a December retreat** and put onto paper by city staff for approval at the first meeting of the year. The council's top priorities include: working with TriMet to redefine public transit in Beaverton; moving forward with funding and building a public safety facility; acquiring new city properties; building up the city's reserve funds; and encouraging and marketing more performing arts opportunities.

--Kari Bray