

Flagler County workshop to address Palm Coast impact fees, Flagler Beach fire services

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Flagler County commissioners will spend a good portion of their time during a workshop Monday discussing city issues.

Two hot topics are on the agenda: a new interlocal agreement with Palm Coast regarding transportation impact fee money; and, plans, if asked, to take over Flagler Beach's Fire Rescue Department.

A little more than a month ago, Palm Coast threatened to sue the county over impact fee money it believes it is entitled to.

Mayor Jon Netts and fellow city council members on May 21 discussed whether a lawsuit should be brought to speed up the process.

County officials, by contrast, said they are not dragging their feet or spitefully withholding \$3.5 million in impact fees from Palm Coast, and that the county is not contractually bound to turn over money to the city.

County Administrator Craig Coffey, in a letter to city manager Jim Landon that was provided to commissioners along with the agenda, said "the structure of the agreement is to provide you immediate financial resources for the projects you are undertaking by reimbursing you" He further said he expects this to happen in the next six months.

Coffey, after the May meeting, said impact fee money will be paid in three increments. The first \$1.5 million will probably be distributed to the city by the end of June. In another six months, another \$1.5 million will be paid. The last \$500,000 will be paid to the city after the Old Kings extension is completed, he said.

In addition to the impact fees, the new interlocal includes language to turn over "the balance of the Matanzas Woods Parkway right-of-way, and the right-of-way for the Old Kings Road extension.

County Commissioners will also discuss the city of Flagler Beach and its Fire Rescue Department and the 25-page document that answers questions asked by the city should it merge its services with the county's.

Most answers, Coffey said, are "technical or administrative" but some are not.

"However, other answers hinge on whether we would consider taking on the city's department and approaches we might take." Flagler County Fire Rescue Chief Don Petite will attend the meeting to answer questions, and said consolidation would save both city and county taxpayer money.

“Any time we can provide better service and better coordination we should continue it,”
Petito said. “We are already sending 12 to 15 people (and equipment) to every call
there.”

Monday's workshop will be held immediately following the 9 a.m. regular County
Commission meeting. The regular meeting and this workshop will both be in board
chambers of the Government Services Building, 1769 E. Moody Blvd., Bunnell.

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