

New construction fees to go toward city emergency services facility

By **Brian D. Bridgeford**, News Republic | Posted: Thursday, July 29, 2010 3:30 am

With no debate, the Baraboo City Council gave its first approval to a \$2,630 emergency services impact fee Tuesday to support construction of a future police, fire and ambulance services building.

At their first meeting in July, council members delayed action on the proposed fee to give members of the public time to comment. The new fee would be charged to developers when they obtain a building permit for new residential construction. It joins impact fees to support the Baraboo Public Library and Parks and Recreation Department.

No interested parties spoke during a public hearing at the beginning of the council meeting. In addition, the city has not received any written comments concerning the fee, City Clerk Cheryl Giese said Wednesday afternoon.

The proposed fee schedule is: \$965 for the police department; \$870 to support the fire department; and \$795 for the Baraboo District Ambulance Service for each residential building.

State law allows communities to charge a one-time impact fee for new residential buildings if a municipality can show new development is putting additional demands on emergency services. The city had its financial consultants, Ehlers and Associates, conduct a public facilities needs study and it supported the city's need for the impact fee.

The impact fee was the last item on the night's agenda and the council approved it in a minute and with no debate. To become law, the impact fee ordinance must be approved by the council a second time, likely during the first meeting in August.

After they adjourned from the formal City Council meeting, council members and Mayor Patrick Liston held a special half-hour meeting for informal discussion of plans for future capital spending. That includes possible construction of a \$20-million-plus police, fire and ambulance building.

City officials say all three of the city's emergency services are short of office space for their day-to-day operations and garages to store vehicles such as ambulances.

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