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## polk county commission

# Panel Votes Not To Increase Impact Fees

By [Tom Palmer](#)  
THE LEDGER

Published: Thursday, June 5, 2008 at 6:01 a.m.

Last Modified: Thursday, June 5, 2008 at 6:53 a.m.

IN OTHER ACTION

In other action Wednesday, the Polk County Commission:

Agreed to investigate a proposal by Commissioner Bob English to approve tax breaks to encourage redevelopment of downtown areas around Polk County.

Approved changes in the county impact fee ordinance to revise language on liens and impact fee credits.

Approved a \$189,018 agreement with Superior Paving for the construction of the new Crystal Lake Fire Station.

Approved a \$1.1 million contract with PB Americas for a water plant in the Four Corners area.

Set a hearing date for June 18 at 1:30 p.m. to consider a water-allocation ordinance for the Four Corners area.

Appointed Monte Goodman, Frances Howell-Coleman, Pat Kelly, Paul W. Thomas and Ronald Tomlin to the Lake Access Advisory Committee.

Recognized Col. William A. Whittle's induction into the U.S. Army Force Development Hall of Fame at the Pentagon on May 15.

Approved an agreement with the Southwest Florida Water Management District for the Lake Gwyn project in Wahneta.

Approved a \$45,300 Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Grant for Sheriff Grady Judd to protect power plants in Auburndale.

Set a hearing for 1:30 p.m. on July 23 to amend and consolidate a county ordinance establishing curfews for minors.

Heard a presentation on the revamped county Web site, which will debut Saturday.

Approved a permit for a water plant for a planned upscale RV park next to Saddle Creek Park so the project can be developed without having to connect to the Lakeland water system, which will not commit to guaranteeing water capacity.

Voted 4-1 to appoint Ken Schultz and Shawn Sherrouse to the Polk Commerce Center CRA Board.

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- [✂ 2007 Polk County Annual Report](#)

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- [✂ County's Annual Report Available Online](#)

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- [✂ South County Jail Will Double Capacity](#)

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- [✂ Town Hall Meeting Is Set for Today](#)

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BARTOW | County commissioners voted unanimously Wednesday to hold off increasing Polk County's impact fees.

Commissioners had been considering a plan to increase impact fees to keep up with inflation, indexing the fees based on the construction cost index. The proposed increase was 2.66 percent.

Impact fees are charged to new development to recover the costs of providing services to serve the occupants of that development.

Commissioner Jack Myers, a consistent opponent of impact fees, moved to reject indexing this year, citing economic conditions. Commissioner Randy Wilkinson seconded the motion and Commission Chairman Sam Johnson signaled majority support.

"This is not the time to increase prices," Johnson said.

Commissioner Bob English, who strongly advocated indexing last year, reluctantly agreed to go along.

"We have a 10-year plan and we cannot have a knee-jerk reaction to ups and downs, but there is flexibility in the plan and we can get by this year without indexing," he said.

Commissioner Jean Reed said she was uneasy, too.

"It really concerns me to get behind," she said, but added, "This is a difficult year to index."

Assistant County Attorney Linda McKinley said county staffers are in the process of getting updated studies to determine what the county should charge.

She said those studies should be completed by next summer, when the indexing decision would normally occur.

[ Tom Palmer can be reached at [tom.palmer@theledger.com](mailto:tom.palmer@theledger.com) or 863-802-7535. ]

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