

## Commissioners agree to return unspent impact fees to group of Vero Beach property owners

By Henry A. Stephens

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INDIAN RIVER COUNTY — The last Vero Beach property owners who paid into a \$132,159 traffic-impact fee fund will see refunds in the next three months, county commissioners agreed Tuesday.

In a 4-1 vote, commissioners agreed to return the unspent fees, which have been sitting in a county fund since 1999, plus the appropriate portions of a \$991,273 collection of interest compounded on the fees since 1986.

Commissioner Bob Solari dissented, saying the entire block of interest should be refunded, not just the portions connected to the remaining fees.

Former political candidate Charlie Wilson, a director with Vero Beach's Asset Research and Recovery Inc., has been trying in recent months to get the commission to refund fees collected from his 128 clients between 1986 and 1999 in a district on the barrier island, stretching from Beachland Boulevard south to the Indian River-St. Lucie County line.

The commission had no further right to the money, Wilson argued, since it wasn't spent within the first six years the fees were collected.

Commissioner Peter O'Bryan said the county will start the refunds with the last fee paid in 1999 and work backward until they are all exhausted.



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