



## Council gives nod to impact fee increase

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Posted on Wednesday, December 17, 2008

URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/nwat/News/72221/>

Developers and residents have until March 31 before Fayetteville's new impact fee rates kick in.

Aldermen voted 7-1, with Ward 3's Bobby Ferrell the lone holdout, Tuesday to see the water and wastewater impact fees jump by \$700 for the construction of a singlefamily home.

"If you need water, and you're going to have an additional strain on the city, you're going to have to pay an impact fee," City Engineer Ron Petrie told the council.

The idea is to phase in the impact fees over the next three years. Ward 2 Alderman Kyle Cook said the water and sewer committee would examine the fees and decide each year if they needed to be raised and if the state of the economy made it feasible.

The proposal to add \$700 to the current fees has \$663 of it going toward the water system and \$37 going toward the sewer system. The fees are needed to pay for improvements to pipes and lift stations due to increased capacity demands by the new wastewater treatment plant.

The original decision by the committee to phase in fees came in June when a study conducted by Duncan and Associates identified \$2,954 as the maximum water impact fee for a singlefamily home in Fayetteville and \$2,631 as the maximum wastewater impact fee. That translates to a maximum total fee of \$5,585 for each new single-family home.

Fayetteville's current water and wastewater impact fees are \$1,143 combined.

Petrie added that citizens who use septic tanks for sewer service and want to get on the city's system would not have to pay an impact fee because Fayetteville is trying to encourage its citizens to get off septic tank service.

The council also voted 7-1, with Ferrell holding out again, to pass a resolution stating Fayetteville's

stance against the construction of new coal power plants in Arkansas.

"I thought this would be a good way for (Fayetteville) to make a stand on one of the No. 1 issues.," Mayor Dan Coody said. "If we just focused on energy efficiency and reducing waste, we wouldn't have to burn coal. Arkansas doesn't have to be the last state in the country to figure this out."

Tommy Dewese, past Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce chairman and a representative for American Electric Power, said that the council has coal to thank for keeping Arkansas residents' power bills 30 percent lower than the national average.

He stated that clean coal technology had made the plants more environmentally friendly and asked the council to take a tour of the plant in Gentry before making any statements.

"I strongly suggest we go up there and go through it," Ferrell said after pointing out he had served in the utility industry for a while.

The other seven aldermen stated that there was no need to look at the existing plant, though Ward 4 Alderman Shirley Lucas said she'd like to see it and learn about it, but it would not have any effect on her support for the resolution.

Finally, the city said farewell to two of its aldermen, Ward 2's Nancy Allen and Ward 4's Lioneld Jordan.

Allen chose not to pursue re-election this year, and her spot will be filled by Matthew Petty.

Jordan recently won the mayoral runoff election against Coody and will be leaving his ward seat to take the city's chief executive spot in January.

Coody handed both aldermen a plaque with the key to the city attached, thanking Allen for her two years of service and thanking Jordan for his eight.

At the end of the meeting, Ward 1 Alderman Adella Gray thanked Coody, who presided over his last City Council meeting Tuesday.

"I thoroughly appreciated his work," Gray said.

Other aldermen shared their appreciation, and Jordan ended the honoring by giving the exiting mayor a standing ovation for his eight years of service.

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