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County to Consider Impact Fee Increase

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The Ledger

BARTOW - Taxes may be going down this year, but impact fees could be going up.

Today the County Commission is scheduled to consider a resolution adopting the annual indexing of impact fees. The vote would raise an estimated \$1.5 million more in 2008 than in 2007.

Impact fees are assessed against new construction to cover the costs of improving traffic, parks, police and other public services required by the new development and its residents or customers.

The indexing provision is designed to increase impact fees to keep up with the cost of inflation so that the fees cover the cost of building roads, schools and other public facilities.

Under the ordinance approved earlier this year, commissioners have the option to approve or reject the proposed rate increase. The resolution will take effect Oct. 1.

County Manager Mike Herr told commissioners during Monday's agenda study session that it's important for them to support the resolution.

"We need to take indexing seriously," Herr said. "It (construction costs) ain't going to get any cheaper."

The resolution will cover impact fees for roads, schools, the jail, ambulances, libraries, parks, fire and police.

The road impact fee, which is \$6,247 for a new home, will account for \$1.1 million of the recommended increase. It is projected to increase from \$34.5 million to \$35.6 million. School impact fees are projected to increase \$206,801, from \$6.3 million to \$6.5 million.

The estimated increases for revenue from the other impact fees will range from \$41,999 for jails to \$14,480 for libraries.

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