



**Highlands Regional MEDICAL CENTER**

**(863) 385-6101**  
**3600 S. Highlands Ave.**  
**Sebring, FL 33870**

mobile Friday, January 14, 2011

CLICK HERE! FIND THE LOWEST GAS PRICES IN TOWN!

SUBSCRIBE  
MANAGE WEB REGISTRATION

# newssun.com

**56°**  
 weather forecast

NEWS | SPORTS | OBITUARIES | OPINION | FEATURES | CALENDAR | SERVICES | ARCHIVE

JOBS | AUTOS | HOMES | ADS

HOME | LOGIN | Special Sections | e-Letter to the Editor | Contact | Advertise With Us | Classifieds |

Search powered by: [MIDFLORIDA](#)



**LAMPE & KIEFER**  
 HEARING AID CENTER, INC.  
 "Your ear care store"

**S series**  
 DRIVE ARCHITECTURE™

*Hearing aids designed to keep up with your life!*

STAY CONNECTED

- [RSS News Feed](#)
- [Follow Us On Twitter](#)
- [News-Sun Facebook Fan Page](#)
- [News-Sun On Facebook](#)

FEATURED AUTO

An **ALAN JAY** Exclusive

**20 YEAR / 200,000 MILE WARRANTY**  
 with EVERY new Ford we sell!  
**CLICK HERE for More Details!**

FEATURED ATTORNEY

**LILLY, O'TOOLE & BROWN LLP**

**Steve Brown**  
 Serious Injuries - Wrongful Death  
 2154 Lakeview Drive  
 Sebring, FL 33870 **863.471.0003**

FEATURED HOME

**SEBRING!**  
 Advertise Homes Here!  
**\$170,000**

**YOUR LOGO HERE!**



[VIEW ALL OF TODAY'S ADS >](#)

[Musselman's Appliance & TV](#)



Online ad expires 1/9/2011  
[VIEW ALL OF TODAY'S ADS >](#)

Print Story | Email Story | Discuss Story (0) | Recommend (0)

advertisement

published: Friday, January 14, 2011

ADD THIS

### AP tables water readiness fee idea

By ED BALDRIDGE

[ed.baldridge@newssun.com](mailto:ed.baldridge@newssun.com)

AVON PARK - Avon Park's city council voted 5-0 to indefinitely table the final reading of an ordinance that would charge each resident a "readiness to serve" fee for water that is turned off and asked staff to come back with more numbers about costs concerning water hook-ups versus the revenue generated by a readiness to serve ordinance.

If the measure passes in the future, residences inside the city will be charged a minimum of \$12.92 monthly for water service even if they disconnect their water service.

City staff determined, along with encouragement from City Attorney Gerald T. Buhr, that the reservation of capacity at the water treatment plant is still a cost for service, even if you do not get any water.

The only way to waive the fee was if all capacity rights were waived, which means that to turn the water back on will cost an impact fee in the hundreds of dollars, according to Buhr.

For those who live outside the city limits, the cost would be \$16.06, and the charges are in addition to the connect and disconnect fees of approximately \$40.

The ordinance had some in the rental business a little defensive, and ex-councilman George Hall spoke out against passage at this time.

"I am neither for nor against the ordinance," Hall said. "Two years ago we went out for a rate study and increased the billing 35 percent. Most of us have water on at our homes the whole time. I have an interest in the rental market and sometimes they sit off for some time. I am just questioning the timing of the fees. I encourage you to consider the timing of this ordinance."

"It will clobber our rental part of our city," Mayor Sharon Schuler said in agreement with Hall's plea.

Despite passing the first reading of the ordinance unanimously, other council members also spoke out against the ordinance.

"I agree with Mr. Hall," Councilman Terry Heston said. "People should have a right to turn their water off and not have a bill."

"I have got to agree with Mr. Hall and Terry in some ways. We have a lot of rental properties right now that are vacant," Schuler said. "If we pass this, does everyone who turns the water off receive a bill?"

City Manager Bruce Behrens told council that everyone would get a bill, even if there was not usage.

"If you are in the city, your readiness to serve bill will be \$12.92 (and) \$16.09 outside the city," Behrens said.

"To send someone a bill every month who is not using water is not fair," Heston

"I don't want to put any added fees to our citizens right now," Council member Brenda Gray added.

"My only concern are our business people who have rentals," Schuler said. "Our business people are already suffering. This effects those few people who are out there trying to keep rentals. They are getting slaughtered with all the new houses that are coming out there at North Central Heights. I don't think the city can impose another fee on the citizens."

The North Central Heights development includes 72 new low-income houses that will be rented out, luring some of the current renters across the city to move towards lower-cost housing.

The council directed city staff to return at the next meeting with solid numbers comparing the cost of connections and the estimated overall revenue of a readiness fee.



Subject:

Body:

Your Name:



Enter letters seen above:




**Click Here**

To Learn About Element K's Online Self-Study Courses



**Ap Video**



**Texas Senator Announces Retirement**



HarborPoint Network: The Daily Commercial • The South Lake Press • News-Sun

All Contents Copyright 2008, HarborPoint Media and The News Sun.  
2227 US 27 - Sebring, FL - 33870 -- 863-385-6155

Please read our Privacy Statement • Contact Us •