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\$8,596 fee on builders may drop

Polk considers the change after the county gets \$81 million for schools.

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Polk County's single-family-home impact fee for schools could decrease by more than \$2,000.

County commissioners recently agreed to consider reducing the fee from \$8,596 for a single-family home to \$6,006. They are scheduled to vote on amending the ordinance July 12.

The impact fee, which can be used for capital projects only -- not operating expenses -- has been recalculated because the Polk County School District received about \$81 million from the Legislature to fund class-size amendment requirements, said Bob Williams, assistant superintendent of facilities and operations for Polk schools.

Impact fees are applied to new construction.

Polk's school impact fee is the center of a lawsuit filed against the county by the Polk County Builders Association and Florida Homebuilders Association.

The builders have said the impact fee is unconstitutional because it includes funding for the class-size amendment.

County commissioners last year increased the school impact fee from \$1,607 to \$8,596 in a 4-1 vote.

At the time, Commissioner Randy Wilkinson said he voted against increasing the impact fee because it included funding the class-size amendment.

At Wednesday's meeting, the commission set impact fees on a single-family home at \$216 for fire services and \$278 for law enforcement.

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