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Feelings fill fee showdown

A large crowd turns out as the Lake County Commission debates a big increase in road-impact fees.

Christine Dellert



es -- descended on the round courthouse for a meeting that took on the feel of a rally and underscored just how important growth is to Lake County.

Some groups were bused in. Others parked behind the barricaded signs set up near lots for extra parking along tiny side streets. People started trickling into the commission chambers at least two hours before the meeting started shortly after 5 p.m.

The chambers, capacity 259, filled quickly, and hundreds more found seats in the rotunda outside, watching the proceedings on large flat-screen TVs. More visitors ringed the two floors above the rotunda floor, peering down on the screens.

Commission Chairman Welton Cadwell attempted to quell the controversy with a proposal to create a citizens task force to search for alternatives to fund new or improved roads necessitated by growth.

Commissioner Linda Stewart wanted an answer Tuesday night -- about whether fees should be raised in the future.

Ro-Mac Lumber & Supply vice president Don Magruder said, "The reason for this economic decline is simply Lake County has priced itself out of the market. We are no longer competitive."

County commissioners were still discussing the impact-fee proposal late into the evening. Latest details, Local & State

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