

The Morning News

Local News for Northwest Arkansas

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Bentonville Council Considers Broadening Use Of Impact Fees

By *The Morning News*

BENTONVILLE -- The Bentonville City Council will determine Tuesday whether to establish new impact fees for library, parks and police.

The council also will review whether to increase existing fees for fire and water service.

Aldermen discussed the fees during an impact fee study in May. An impact fee is a one-time charge to developers to pay for growth-related infrastructure, such as new water lines and fire stations.

The fees offset capital improvement costs and help departments maintain service levels across the city even as boundaries expand, city officials have said.

Bentonville already charges impact fees for fire, sewer and water service. The city has collected more than \$7 million in impact fees since 2002. Schools, homeowners and hotel builders all pay the charges.

Residential developers could be subject to \$644 to \$898 worth of park fees, \$308 to \$428 in library fees and \$47 to \$66 in police fees.

Council members can pick and choose which fees and what rates to approve.

Impact fees collected toward parks would help pay to develop Price Coffee park land, and the library impact fee would help the city recoup the \$2 million it put toward building a new library. The additional impact fee money would provide funding to add material to the collection.

The police fee would let the city improve police facilities to accommodate the demands created by new development, according to the proposed ordinance.

Fire fees now range from \$373 to \$504 for residences and are proposed to increase to \$548 and \$762, and water fees would be based on meter sizes.

An increase in fire fees would help the city buy land and build a new central fire station. Officials have said the water fees will help pay down loans taken out for a new 13-mile, 48-inch water line.

The council has decreased the impact fee for sewer service.

MEETING INFORMATION

Bentonville City Council

When: 6 p.m. Tuesday

Where: Council chambers, 115 W. Central

On the Web: www.bentonvillear.com

On the agenda:

- * Awarding a bid to Decco Contractors for \$351,550 to do asphalt paving for the street, police, electric and wastewater departments
- * Approval of an agreement with Cherokee Builders for construction of the westside taxiway project for the Bentonville airport for \$593,210