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March 4, 2005

Brevard votes to keep school impact fee plan

Commission's move retains \$4,445 fee on new homes

By *JEFF SCHWEERS*
FLORIDA TODAY

The debate over school impact fees is over.

Brevard County commissioners voted 4-0 late Thursday night to leave the one-time \$4,445 fee on new homes in place so that the school board can plan a school construction program to accommodate the anticipated student population growth over the next 20 years.

The motion was made by Commissioner Truman Scarborough and seconded by Chairman Ron Pritchard after Commissioner Jackie Colon said the county should move forward on it so the school board could plan its construction budget.

The school board is planning a seven-year, \$625 million construction program to accommodate student population growth. Impact fees - estimated to bring in \$24 million a year - are integral to the school board's ability to pay for those schools.

County commissioners approved the impact fees last August, after two years of consultants and discussion. But newly elected Commissioner Helen Voltz in January asked to revisit the impact fees to keep a campaign promise she'd made.

Voltz said she was not present for Thursday's vote because she was traveling from Washington D.C. on county business.

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