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## Charter govt., impact fee rollback in spotlight Tuesday

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Hernando Today

Charter government and impact fees are among the hot-button topics awaiting county commissioners when they meet Tuesday.

Commissioner Jim Adkins broached the subject last month and wanted it put on the agenda for discussion. Commissioner Jeff Stabins also showed interest.

This won't be the first time commissioners have discussed it. In October 1997, then-commissioner Nancy Robinson asked the board to spend \$34,530 for a private company to conduct a review of the idea.

The idea was shot down in August 1998 when then-County Administrator Bonnie Dyga suggested the county would not be best served by charter government.

It again came up in April 2001 when the Good Government League proposed the concept. No action was taken.

But now, Adkins believes the time is right and said the public should have more decision-making powers.

"It gives more authority to the people to set their own form of government instead of the government pushing on the people," Adkins said recently.

Charters are formal written documents that confer powers, duties, or privileges on the county. They resemble state or federal constitutions and they must be approved, along with any amendments, by the voters of a county, according to the Florida Association of Counties.

Charter government removes the resolution of local problems from the state legislature's agenda and gives the local electorate greater control over regional affairs.

Also Tuesday:

Commissioners will consider rolling back impact fees for residential and commercial construction to 2001 levels — from the current \$9,200 to \$4,848.

The rollback would last one year, after which commissioners will review its effects.

Commissioners hope the rollback will prompt new home construction and put contractors and trades people back to work.

County commissioners are being advised by their legal office to "vigorously oppose" a move by Skyland Utilities LLC to seek permission from the Public Service Commission to operate a private

water and wastewater utility system in portions of southeastern Hernando County and northeastern Pasco County.

The properties encompass some 791 acres and are designated rural on the county's comprehensive plan, which raises questions regarding future development patterns and consistency with that plan should water and wastewater utilities ever be built there, a staff report said.

Pasco commissioners have already voiced strong opposition to the plan and have requested Hernando County join them in opposing Skyland's proposed request before the PSC.

The county commission meeting will begin at 9 a.m. Tuesday at the Hernando County Government Center, 20 North Main St. in downtown Brooksville.

For a complete look at Tuesday's agenda, go to <http://www.co.hernando.fl.us/> and click on board meetings and agendas.