

Clerical error costs city thousands

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Topic Our Towns

Cedar Hills Council members have fixed a clerical error that has cost the city tens of thousands of dollars over the past four years.

Following an ordinance passed in 2001, city staff were collecting an \$841 water impact fee for each home built in the city, but reimbursing developer Lone Peak Links \$934, due to a contractual agreement. The developer installed the infrastructure.

The water impact fee went into effect at the end of October 2001 and the reimbursement agreement with Lone Peak Links started at the end of November in the same year.

In December 2001, the then-city manager resigned and Konrad Hildebrandt took over the position in January 2002.

The discrepancy simply fell through the cracks in the change of city managers.

"I'm sure it was just an oversight, as he went to his new job. I'm sure if he would have been here, he would have seen it. But I didn't have that history," Hildebrandt told council members in a recent meeting.

City staff found the discrepancy early this month because Lone Peak Links planned to seek final approval for the final phase of its subdivision project in the Cedars West subdivision.

"We went through all the agreements with LPL and that's when it surfaced. And we said, 'Wait a second,' " Hildebrandt said.

After some discussion of the discrepancy, council members voted to amend the city's fee structure to charge future home builders in the Cedars and nearby subdivisions \$1,020. This will cover the \$934 the city reimburses LPL, with an additional \$86 for operating costs.

The new fee should allow the city to recoup some of its losses, Hildebrandt said.

"It's not a reimbursement to us, it's a legitimate systemwide cost that has already been spent," he said.

Councilman Jim Perry said he was glad the mistake was found now.

"I understand how the mistake was made," he said. "That's just sadly unfortunate."

Hildebrandt commended his predecessors for getting this particular agreement down on paper.

City Engineer David Bunker asked council members to order a review of all the city's impact fees.

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