



Gulf Breeze, FL



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**Front Page**

February 16, 2006

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**County denies impact fee waiver**

**BY FRANKLIN HAYES** Gulf Breeze News [franklin@gulfbreezenews.com](mailto:franklin@gulfbreezenews.com)

Santa Rosa County Commissioners stood by their guns Thursday, Feb. 9, shooting down a formal request to waive impact fees for a local business. Owners of Island Style Retail Center asked to have their impact fees waived because hurricanes delayed construction, costing the company large sums of money. The Board of County Commissioners unanimously denied the request. Board members explained that the request could result in hundreds of business owners seeking waivers, potentially taking more than \$1 million out of the county budget.

“I hate for you to have to be the sacrificial lamb. I think you’ve got a good case, it just seems that if we break the dam here and let the water flow, we could have a lot more problems than we initially thought we could have,” District 5 Commissioner John Broxson said. Commissioner Gordon Goodin gave the audience another example of why the decision was made.

“I think one of the important things that comes out of any of these requests is consistency. Just recently the Carlisle group’s, [whose] sole purpose for existence is to provide affordable housing, impact fees were in excess of \$300,000. If there is anyone who could make a compelling case [to waive impact fees] they are the ones. They didn’t ask and we didn’t offer,” Goodin said.

In other county news, the Board of County Commissioners voted to increase the Navarre Beach sewer usage rate. The new rate will cost builders \$900 per plat. This funding will go toward improving the wastewater treatment plant, and replace the 20year-old collection system on White Sands Boulevard in Navarre.

The board also approved an ordinance establishing the Shores of Santa Rosa Community Development District. The district, located between Smuggler’s Cove and Wes Vic Holiday Sands subdivisions on US 98, will help fund utilities for the neighborhood that would normally be

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provided by the county. The Community Development District, or CDD, will gain funding through assessment fees and other taxes to be applied toward development needs.

Feb. 12 through 18 was proclaimed Hazardous Weather Awareness Week to improve county awareness for hurricane season. According to the State of Florida, the Sunshine State lost a reported 82 lives in 2005 to dangerous weather.

Tourism moguls waiting for the county to increase the tourism development tax, better known as the bed tax, will have to wait longer. The county's proposal to raise the bed tax one percent has been put on hold for now. The tax would apply to any lodging money from people staying at a particular location for less than six months.

The board also voted to allow limited multi-family development within the Holley Field Military Airport Zone. The board of county commissioners said the airport was inactive, and a military representative clarified, stating the airport was unmanned, but not inactive. Aircraft do training exercises over the airfield, and the zoning move could impede upon military activities in the area.

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