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## DeSoto School District to go ahead with impact fees

Impact fees probable for DeSoto school system

DESOTO COUNTY -- DeSoto County commissioners Tuesday evening voted to set up an impact fee system to help fund impending rapid growth in DeSoto County. The DeSoto County School Board, meanwhile, was meeting to discuss the establishment of their own impact fee system to help the school district keep pace with anticipated growth.

The School Board has engaged a consultant to help with the proposed impact fees -- TischlerBise -- the same consultant utilized by the county to assist with its impact fee study.

Implementing school impact fees decreases the county's reliance on broad-based revenues, like property taxes, by adding a new revenue source that has a stronger connection between the fee payers and the demand for public facilities.

According to TischlerBise, in an impact fee study done for the School Board, as DeSoto County continues to grow, it is facing a revenue shortfall for school capacity needs. Like the county commission, the School Board thinks impact fees may be the answer to increasing revenues without raising taxes.

TischlerBise says that impact fees could provide significant funding for growth-related school capacity in DeSoto County.

Impact fees would apply only to new construction and could not be used for operating costs or the replacement of existing capital items, such as air conditioners.

After hearing a presentation from Duane Guthrie of TischlerBise, the board then voted to move ahead with its own impact fee system.

TischlerBise's study generated a proposed schedule of impact fees based on square footage of heated area for a residence. A new residence with 1,400 square feet of

heated area would be charged an impact fee of \$4,407. This school impact fee would be added to the county's impact fee to get a total impact fee to be levied on the new residence.

The next step for the school district is a public hearing on March 14 for a formal consideration of the impact fee system. Once approved by the School Board, the superintendent of schools will recommend the impact fee to the county commission, which must approve it.


"I will recommend that we establish an impact fee system," DeSoto County School Superintendent Adrian Cline said Wednesday.

A public presentation on the impact fee system by the School Board is scheduled for March 28.

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