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School Board to appeal ruling on impact fee

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DeLand -- The Volusia County School Board on Tuesday voted to keep fighting opponents of a new \$5,284 impact fee for schools.

The School Board unanimously agreed to appeal a ruling earlier this month by Florida Administrative Law Judge Don W. Davis, who sided with the Volusia Home Builders Association, foes of the new fee.

Home builders said the fee, which jumped from \$1,139 to \$5,284 on June 6 at the request of the School Board to help pay for growth, was procedurally flawed.

When School Board members selected a fee proposed by their consultant in January, they effectively created a "rule" under Florida law without following the mandatory steps under the state's Administrative Procedure Act, Davis said in his ruling.

Not so, School Board members said Tuesday.

The consultant only provided information and the School Board acted legally, Chairwoman Candace Lankford said.

Kevin P. Connolly, Erika Hobbs, Kristen Reed, Jeff Libby, Terry Roen, Sarah Lundy, Amy L. Edwards and Mark Andrews of the Sentinel staff contributed to this report.

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