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School adds \$4000 more impact fees Fees will add thousands to construction costs By Melissa Burnsed

The Baker County School board met in workshop session, last Thursday afternoon and after serious discussion settled on a flat rate schedule of impact fees. The board members elected to impose a \$4,000 fee for new home construction within the county. Developers who construct duplexes, townhouses, condominiums or apartments will be charged \$2,000 for each unit and mobile homes will cost residents \$3,000.

When added together with the pending county impact fees, the total figure for a new residential home in Baker County will be at least \$7,432 if both governing bodies enact their proposed ordinances. The county will hold its' first public hearing on the issue on Tuesday, June 7 at 4:00 pm.

The school system and the board of commissioners are trying to insure that new growth in the county helps pay for the increased infrastructure demands. Nearly all other counties in Florida already have some form of levy to fund the rising costs of services.

Board members carefully reviewed studies presented to them by consultants and data from the University of Florida. The primary study done by Urbanomics Inc., recommended that the board impose a maximum of fee of \$5,051. The money would be used to fund new school construction and capital expansion needs. The study projected major increases in both the county population and within the school student body over the next twenty-five years.

"What I see is bricks and mortar," said Superintendent Paula Barton. "We have got to have a place to put these kids. Construction costs are going up, not down. We are going to have to try and get as much as we can to fund growth without unduly burdening current residents."

Board member Dean Griffis was equally concerned about the costs to lower income families. He feared that the higher fee would price them out of the homeowner market and successfully lobbied other members to allow a tiered system with a lower rate for mobile homes. The county ordinance relies on square footage as the computation quota for its' fee.

Both fees will be collected when a building permit is pulled, with the county acting as collection agent. That brings another dilemma to the board.

School board administrative staffer Marcelle Richardson has overseen most of the massive work in crafting the new ordinance and she had compiled a list of collection charges assessed by other Florida counties. Most are in the 3 percent range and according to several court cases, counties can only charge for what their

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actual costs incurred total. The Baker County commissioners impact fee draft ordinance sets out a administrative collection rate of 10 percent. The school system will try to negotiate a more reasonable figure when the two boards meet to iron out final language in the ordinances. That meeting is tentatively scheduled within the next two weeks. The current plan is to enact the impact fees by July 1.

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8'x12	\$35.00	10'x12	\$50.00	12'x12	\$62.00	12'x12	\$77.00	12'x12	\$92.00
8'x14	\$39.00	10'x14	\$54.00	12'x14	\$66.00	12'x14	\$81.00	12'x14	\$96.00
8'x16	\$43.00	10'x16	\$58.00	12'x16	\$70.00	12'x16	\$85.00	12'x16	\$100.00
8'x18	\$47.00	10'x18	\$62.00	12'x18	\$74.00	12'x18	\$89.00	12'x18	\$104.00
8'x20	\$51.00	10'x20	\$66.00	12'x20	\$78.00	12'x20	\$93.00	12'x20	\$108.00
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