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City eyes cutting impact fees in bid to lure businesses

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BELLEVIEW - The Belleview City Commission held a public hearing Tuesday on a possible impact fee waiver for water and sewage.

The commission originally planned to pass a resolution, but on City Attorney Fred Landt's recommendation decided to address the matter by ordinance instead.

An ordinance addressing a moratorium on impact fees would be necessary because the waiver will not be granted to all properties. The moratorium will be applied to for-profit businesses with a few exceptions, such as car washes, where the city feels the loss of funds will not be balanced by potential job creation and profit for the city.

During the hearing, the commission learned how the moratorium will help one business expand and keep another in city limits.

"It's very encouraging," Commissioner Kenneth Nadeau said, viewing public feedback as evidence the impact fee waiver will stimulate Belleview's economy.

The commission voted unanimously to approve the findings of fact regarding the ordinance. They scheduled a second reading and public hearing on the moratorium for the first meeting in March. There will be a vote on the ordinance at that time.

Also on Tuesday, Helen Painter, a CPA with Purvis, Gray & Company, prepared and presented the 2008 city audit for review.

The only note of concern was a first-time loss in the pension fund for the police retirement fund. This was primarily due to the downturn of the stock market, but the chief of police will be looking at ways to mitigate the loss.

"I am very proud of the staff we've got and how they are managing our funds," said Nadeau. Commissioners Wilma Loar and Michael Goldman voiced their

agreement. The commission unanimously adopted the audit.

IN OTHER MATTERS, THE COMMISSION:

-- Heard a presentation about the Marion County fertilizer ordinance the county hopes municipalities will pass.

-- Voted to proceed with survey and design of collection lines to the south along U.S. 441 with current available grant funds.

-- Voted to approve a topographical survey of 27 acres of city property for public works development, at an estimated cost of \$16,000.

