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Fee Noir (by Hugh Taylor)

11-01-2007

Editor,

IMPACT FEE NOIR

There she was . . . Big, and blonde, and Norwegian . . .Inga.

I had called her from an ad in the News. It said "massages." I called because I was in a quandary. I need a massage soooo bad. I had heard all about impact fees and I needed some help: "Sooo, tell me, Inga. You do massages?"

"Yesss," she breathed, breathlessly. How she was doing this was beyond me.

"Well, actually, I'm in a quandary. These impact fees, y'know. I guess I need some numbers massaged."

"Well, I'm your boy," said Inga. Even though she was a girl. And big. And blonde. And could breathe breathlessly.

"What's all this stuff about impact fees? These numbers and arguments are really confu help me there?"

Wiggling like BillieTheDog wiggled with the worms that time, she made her way over.

"It's pretty simple you know. The county wanted to know the effect — the impact — of b homes so they hired a consultant to tell 'em. And the consultant said the impact was a I grand a home."

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"You mean, all the numbers are from someone who knows?"

"Yep."

"Ok then, big and blonde one, what does it all mean?"

"What the consultant said was we need a bit over 10 grand a home, for schools and othe to keep pace with growth. Otherwise the existing taxpayers pay, the infrastructure work work never gets done as needed."

"Like some of the needed infrastructure in places like Wakulla Gardens and other places

"You said it, big boy. And if we back out \$6,000 for schools and the current \$1,246 each pays, we still go in the hole about \$2,850 for each new home built.

"So, blonde one, that doesn't seem so much."

"Well," says she, "from the year 2000 to the year 2006, there were 3,357 new homes bui So you do the math."

"Come on, blonde one. I'm paying you for the massage."

"Ok, 3,357 times \$2,850 is a little over nine and a half million bucks (\$9,616,327.90)

"So you mean to tell me, whatever the BOCC doesn't vote on in impact fees, things don't pay higher taxes and hidden costs?"

"You sure do. You're the one that can't go swimming because the beaches are polluted protection or EMS service to your home because your dirt road's flooded, you can't turn book you want is checked out and the ball fields are all booked up, your commute's takir longer or your taxes keep going up."

"So what do you think about Wakulla county taxpayers, you big Norwegianette? What w the BOCC didn't institute 100% of the recommended impact fees? What would it mean i and m'taxpaying friends?"

"Honestly? If they didn't go 100% on the fees? No matter what they said or arguments matter what the rationale?"

"I would think you got, uh, massaged."

Hugh Taylor
Tallahassee and Crawfordville

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