

Park district board adopts impact fee schedule

By TONI SCOTT - Staff Writer

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OROVILLE -- Marking the end of a two-year long debate with city officials over impact fees, the Feather River Recreation and Park District board officially adopted a fee schedule Wednesday that district officials say will benefit the parks as well as the entire community of Oroville.

During its regular board meeting, the FRRPD adopted Resolution 1050-09, a document reaffirming the Oroville City Council's May 8 decision to collect impact fees from those seeking city building permits.

The fees which range from \$793-\$1,196, depending on the type of structure built, will be distributed to the park district in an effort to mitigate the costs the agency will incur from city residents utilizing the district's facilities.

Although Wednesday's decision was a formality, it was also significant, as it marked the end of what has been a contentious struggle between the city and park district.

Although the park district currently receives impact fees from Butte County, the City of Oroville did not provide the same fees to the district, even though the majority of the district's facilities are within the city boundaries.

Bob Sharkey, FRRPD General Manager said the district came to the city in 2007 requesting they adopt the exact same fee schedule that was approved Wednesday, but rather than an agreement, the two entities engaged in a legal battle the past 24 months, with the city refusing to collect impact fees for the district.

A settlement agreement was reached

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in early April, with the city council officially adopting the fee schedule May 8, and the district ultimately seeing its original request met -- two years later.

"I'm so sad this has gone for as long as it has at everyone's expense," said Board Chairwoman Jan Hill. "This is pure justice for the betterment of the community."

Although Wednesday was bittersweet for board members, Bob Sharkey said despite the long journey, he was pleased with the city and district's ultimate agreement, saying the decision was a "benchmark" for park districts around the state.

Sharkey said park districts statewide have endured the same struggles trying to collect impact fees, and said he hoped the settlement will encourage other cities to work with, and not against, their park districts.

And though he admitted the long process was less than ideal, Sharkey said the greater Oroville community will prosper now that the city and park district's battle has finally reached a conclusion.

"This allows us to provide excellent facilities for the community," Sharkey said. "This is a great day, a really good day."

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