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Santa Rosa OKs incentives

Louis Cooper • lcooper@pnj.com • February 11, 2010

The Santa Rosa County Commission approved new economic incentives to help lure new industries to Santa Rosa County this morning.

The new incentives will be based on the number of new positions a new or expanding industry is expected to create in a five-year period, and the quality of those positions as measured by the average wage.

The commission approved the new incentive program unanimously.

"I think this is a step in the right direction," said Commissioner Lane Lynchard. "In the past, our incentives have been limited. This really opens up our incentives to all areas of the county."

The new incentives will be offered to new and expanding businesses in Santa Rosa's target industries: aerospace/defense, logistics, information technology, human performance and renewable energy.

The incentives will be $200 to $500 per position, per year, depending on the wage of the position. The money will come from the county's economic development fund, which is generated through electricity franchise fees. That fund has about $500,000 in it this year.

The new incentives will be offered to companies that do not qualify for an existing incentive program in which the county offers discounts to the prospective industries that are buying land from the county for industrial development. Those discounts are also offered based on the number and pay rate of the new positions.

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Other items on the commission's agenda include:

+ Scheduling a public hearing on a proposed ordinance prohibiting
leaving tents and other temporary structures on Navarre Beach overnight.

+ Initiating the permitting process for the removal of a derelict
vessel in Navarre Sound just east of Navarre Beach Bridge.

+ Purchase 10 automated external defribulator units for $12,950 funded
by annual emergency medical services grant.

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