

More Capitola parking meters OK'd

CAPITOLA — About half of the proposed new parking meters here was approved by the City Council Thursday night.

Council members agreed to extend meters up Cliff Avenue to an existing parking lot adjacent the railroad tracks. At the same time, however, they declined to extend meters up Capitola Avenue to Bay Avenue as had been recommended by staff.

The decision to delay the Capitola Avenue meters was viewed as a compromise, of sorts. The council concurred with testimony from

Capitola Village business owners, who maintained employees need some place to park.

Installation of meters on Capitola Avenue will be delayed until the planned parking area in nearby Pacific Cove Mobile Home Park comes to pass. The city purchased the park last year and has plans to partially convert it into a lot for downtown businesses and their employees.

In all, 46 meters will be installed in the lot on Cliff Drive — up the hill from Capitola Wharf. Unlike the 200 other meters already operating

downtown, however, these meters would not have a two-hour maximum stay. Council members felt the lot should remain for long-term parking.

An additional 10 meters will be installed on Capitola Avenue, just past City Hall. Those meters are far short of the 60 recommended by City Manager Steve Burrell to extend all the way to Bay Avenue. These meters will have the same two-hour time limit as existing meters downtown. All new meters will have the same 25-cents per half-hour charge

presently in effect.

The council approved the new meters on a 3-2 vote, with Council members Stephanie Harlan and Dennis Beltram dissenting. They dissented, however, for different reasons.

Harlan preferred holding off on any new meters until additional parking is obtained in Pacific Cove. Beltram felt the 25-cents per half-hour at the Cliff Avenue lot was excessive.

Mayor Michael Routh argued that if motorists parking there stayed at the beach for six hours, they would only pay \$3. "I don't feel that's exorbitant for people spending a day in Capitola," he said.

The two vista point turnouts on the ocean side of Cliff Avenue will remain unmetered with no parking restrictions.

Bucher successfully pushed for the additional 10 meters on Capitola Avenue. That area up to Riverview Drive originally had been part of the pay-parking plan, but was deleted when the city scrapped its computerized parking banks for traditional meters late last year.

Business owners testifying to prevent expansion of meters included Wayne Hanson of the Bandstand Restaurant and Bob Patrick of Coffee, Tea and Things.

Hanson said his employees, many of whom don't get off work until late, "are afraid to walk back to their cars now." He maintained the expanded pay-zone would force them to park even further away.