

✓ Capitola requires tokens for cigarette machines

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CAPITOLA — In a move to keep minors from buying cigarettes from vending machines, the City Council Thursday mandated such machines can be operated only with tokens.

Tokens can be sold only by adults to adults, under the ordinance passed by a 4-0 vote. Mayor Stephanie Harlan was absent.

In approving the ordinance, which will come back for a second vote before going into effect, the council follows the rest of the county in either banning or restricting use of the machines.

The law also is designed to prevent the sale of cigarettes in vending machines that sell other items such as candy. The tokens can be used only in machines that sell cig-

arettes; all other vending-machine sales of cigarettes are banned.

The city of Santa Cruz also requires tokens. But in that city, the machines can be located only in bars.

Despite some rumors to the contrary, Councilman Mick Routh said, machines can easily be converted to accept tokens. Rick Ortin-

ger, owner of Capitola Cafe, said his restaurant already has converted its machine to use a uniquely sized token. The cost, said Ortin-ger, was \$150.

The council also directed the Police Department to initiate a six-point program designed by Police Chief Don Braunton to halt over-the-counter sales to minors.

As part of the program, merchants will be required to post a copy of the law prohibiting sales to minors. Parents will be notified by letter when police officers catch their minor children with cigarettes.