

Capitola will collect own parking fines

Capitola will start processing its own parking tickets Jan. 1.

The City Council Thursday night approved plans by Police Chief Bob Allen to hire two new clerk-dispatchers to handle the extra workload. The council also OK'd an agreement with a computer software firm to write a new program to handle parking tickets written by the city's code enforcement officers.

In an outgrowth of a dispute between the county Board of Supervisors and the Municipal Court judges, the cities were notified earlier this summer by Presiding Judge John A. Marlo that the courts would no longer process the hundreds of thousands of parking tickets written in the county each year.

The judges had been lobbying the county supervisors for additional manpower in the Municipal Court Clerk's office. When supervisors refused to provide what the judges felt was adequate staffing, the judges exercised their right, according to Marlo, to discontinue processing the cities' traffic tickets.

Allen said the operation will cost about \$10,000 in start-up costs and \$60,000 in additional salaries. But most or all of those costs will be offset by the cities' not having to pay the Municipal Court to process parking citations.