

City moves forward on tobacco retail license

April 6, 2023



The Crescent City Council moved forward on writing a tobacco retail license ordinance.

Councilors, on a 4-1 vote, gave direction to staff to develop a more restrictive retail tobacco ordinance. Voting in favor of a discussing a more restrictive ordinance were councilors Kelly Schellong, Blake Inscore, Ray Altman and Mayor Isaiah Wright. Dissenting was councilor Jason Greenough.

Amber Wier of NorCal4Health presented round 2 of a request to pass an ordinance to discuss the potential development of a tobacco retail license ordinance, similar to the unsuccessful presentation she made, one year ago to a slightly different group of councilors.

The main driver of both presentations is and continues to be the growing vaping attraction among Del Norte youth and the charge of the tobacco industry targeting youth with flavored tobacco products.

California voters passed an initiative outlawing the sale of flavored tobacco products to anyone under 21.

Weir argued the need for restricting retail tobacco sales is profound. Crescent City has twice the number of retailers vending tobacco, per population, than the state average, according to Wier.

Greenough expressed his opposition to the new ordinance and vowed to vote no on any new government regulation on any business including those businesses which sell tobacco products. Greenough also expressed his disappointment the city did not address similar restrictions on marijuana sales.

He continued, "...there are highly restrictive measures already in place at the federal, state and county level. More government is not the answer. Education is the most appropriate manner to communicate with our youth. Tobacco education starts in the home."

Schellong voted for a more restrictive ordinance. "People are dying," she exclaimed.

Motion maker Inscore exchanged some testy conversation with Greenough, stating, "we need city-county-school board 2X2X2, city, county, school board meetings to address the health of our youth. We need to create a healthy community."

The new points of the TRL are:

- Prohibits the sale of any tobacco in any store that contains a pharmacy
- Limits the issuance of tobacco retail licenses that were in business on July 1, 2022, and provides said licenses are not transferable between locations or persons
- Prohibits advertising of tobacco products within 500 feet of schools, playgrounds, child daycare facilities, community center or public library
- Prohibits advertising or placement of tobacco products with five feet of candy, snack, or non-alcoholic beverages unless the product is limited to persons aged 21 or older.
- Violation of any state or federal law an administrative violation subject to fine and automatic revocation of the TRL license. 60-day wait period to re-apply.

The city council meets the first and third Monday of every month at 6 p.m. at the Flynn Center.