

Councilman Smith fights to reduce gasoline prices

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Every penny counts, especially when it comes to soaring gasoline prices.

“It’s out of control, we’ve got to do something,” Crescent City Councilman Beau Smith, implored his council colleagues at Monday night’s meeting.

Smith said what everyone knows: that the recent run up in gasoline prices has created a serious hardship for everyone.

Smith wasn’t satisfied that the proposed action of sending letters from the city in support of pending legislation in Sacramento and Washington D.C. was enough. Instead, Smith pushed for an immediate suspension of the city’s one percent sales tax on gasoline.

It’s not that easy, other council members responded. The voters had recently approved the tax increase based on the promises as to how those revenues would be spent. Commitments for those expenditures have already

been made.

Any changes would have to be submitted to the voters, according to City Attorney Martha D. Rice. If successful, this process would not have any effect until next year.

And even if the city did take steps to reduce or eliminate the city's gasoline tax, such action would have no effect outside the city limits. Gasoline sales elsewhere in Del Norte County and throughout the state would not be affected.

Smith's frustration was evident, as was his concern for his neighbors who depend on automobile travel to get to work. What will the people think?

"What if we don't do anything about it?" he said.