

Unionization Signature Drive Winding Down

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Erik Wander/KMXT

The deadline for a petition that would put the issue of union representation for Kodiak city employees, including employees of the Kodiak Police Department, on the fall general election ballot is approaching. And according to one of the petition's main sponsors, it has enough support to succeed. KMXT's Erik Wander has more:

The Alaska Public Safety Employees Association, or PSEA, is the union that represents public safety groups across the state. PSEA's executive director John Cyr (Seer) made a presentation to the Kodiak City Council in February explaining why some members of the police department were interested in forming a union, and urged council members to put an ordinance in place that would allow that to happen. However, the council took no action at the time. Cyr said the next step was a public petition drive, which is currently underway, to put the issue before voters. He believes the chances of the petition succeeding are good, and he said there are currently two possibilities for those who support unionization to see it become a reality.

-- (Cyr
1 15 sec. "We have way more ... will be on
the ballot.")

Cyr
(Seer) said he doesn't believe people who work for the police department and support unionization are necessarily dissatisfied, but rather that they are looking for consistency and certain assurances for the future.

-- (Cyr
2 21 sec. "They have been real happy ... no hidden agenda here.")

Cyr

(Seer) described his experience working with KPD employees and city officials as positive thus far.

-- (Cyr
3 8 sec. "The public support has been
... all been real helpful.")

Dick

Ross of Kodiak is among those helpful people. He took out one of the 13 petition packets currently circulating. He said that when he was approached to gather signatures, the issue of unionization struck a nerve.

-- (Ross
1 27 sec. "I'm kind of a student ... my way or the highway.")

Speaking

as a retired city employee, Ross said he always wished they had union representation in his day, although he had no specific grievances with his employer.

-- (Ross
2 32 sec. "The city always dealt ... is a valid, good thing.")

Ross

believes the petition has enough support locally to go before voters. He said after that, it's anybody's guess, and he doesn't dare make a prediction.

-- (Ross
3 16 sec. "I think it's going to ... both statewide and municipally.")

The petition is sponsored in part by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, with which PSEA is directly affiliated. According to City Clerk Debra Marlar, all 13 petition packets must be submitted together with a total of 225 signatures by July 21st. The city council will hold a special meeting and executive session July 20th to discuss the matter.

I'm
Erik Wander.

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