

City Council Gearing Up to Fight Unionization - Again

Thursday, 02 September 2010

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

For the second year in a row, residents of the city of Kodiak will vote on whether to remove the roadblocks to allow city employees to explore unionization. A ballot measure initiative last year failed by just 17 votes, despite the city spending \$40,000 fighting it.

At a special meeting of the Kodiak City Council called for tonight, the council will vote on again authorizing a contract with an Anchorage-based public relations firm to fight the ballot initiative. The council is also scheduling a closed-door meeting with Bradley-Reid and Associates to discuss strategy in opposing the ballot measure.

The special council meeting will be at 7 o'clock tonight downstairs of the borough building in the conference room.

Jim Duncan is the business manager of the Alaska State Employees Association, which has backed the initiative last year and again this year:

-- (Duncan 1 21
sec "We
brought it back again ... advocate for its passage.")

The measure
is needed to change city law, which currently bars employees from even
considering collective bargaining. If the ballot initiative passes, all
it does
is allow city employees to vote on whether they want to unionize. Duncan
says
it's not something new in the community:

-- (Duncan 2 34
sec "It's
worked well for the ... neighbors do in the borough.")

Duncan said
the ASEA (A-S-E-A) will mount its own public information campaign
advocating
for passage of the initiative, but does not have the resources to match
the
city's expected expenditure.

A year ago,
Councilmen Tom Walters and Charlie Davidson debated the expenditure of
public
funds on the information campaign:

-- (Council 1 1:07
sec "You
ask what the impact ... that's right, private money.")

has since retired.

The
municipal election is on October 5th.