Petition Certified for Movie Theater Alcohol Ban

The City Clerk's Office has finalized certification of signatures for an initiative petition to prohibit "family oriented" movie theaters from serving alcohol.

The proposed ordinance originated with the Springfield DWI Task Force, which is an independent advocacy group, and is not a standing board or commission created by the City of Springfield.

The petition needed 1,181 valid signatures in order to be certified. As of Dec. 22, 1,184 valid signatures were verified. Under the rules established by the City Charter, City Council now has 30 days to either adopt the proposal as an ordinance or place it on the ballot for the April 5, 2011, municipal election.

It is anticipated that City Council will take public comment on the proposed ordinance at its Jan. 10, 2011 meeting, with final action taken by its Jan. 24 meeting.

The rules for an initiative petition are outlined under section 14.1 of the City Charter, which states: “The electors shall have power to propose any ordinance, except an ordinance appropriating money and to adopt or reject the same at the polls, such power being known as the initiative. Any initiated ordinance may be submitted to the council by a petition signed by qualified electors of the City equal in number to at least ten percent of the total number of persons voting at the last general municipal election in April.”

Springfield’s last April general election was held in 2009. The City Clerk uses the race with the highest number of total votes. In this case, it was the mayoral race, which garnered a total of 11,809 votes cast. Ten percent, rounded up to the nearest whole number, is 1,181. Signatures must be those of registered voters living within Springfield city limits. Signatures are certified by the City Clerk's office.

For more information, contact: City Clerk Brenda Cirtin, (417) 864-1650.