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Judge to decide dancers' fate

On March 27, Maui Dance Advocates will have their day in court. Judge Cardoza will make a summary judgment deciding the fate of dancing in Maui County.

Currently, places that serve alcohol must have a permit from the Maui County Liquor Commission (LC) to have a dance floor. It is against the county's rules to dance off the dance floor.

In October 2006, Ramoda Anand and Anthony Simmons asked the LC what the definition for dancing was. In a letter, the LC stated they could not define dancing, but according to Webster's Dictionary, it is "to move the body, especially the feet, in rhythm, ordinarily to music."

Feeling that almost any movement could be considered dancing, the two formed Maui Dance Advocates and made efforts to change the rule. In 2007, Ramoda got 86 people to sign a petition to change the dancing rules and presented it to the Liquor Commission. The Liquor Commission denied that petition.

In the beginning of 2008, attorney Lance Collins joined the crusade and Maui Dance Advocates appealed the LC's ruling in court. Judge Cardoza ruled he did not have jurisdiction, but said that Maui Dance Advocates should ask the LC for a declaratory order, which can be appealed.

On March 12, 2008, Collins presented the petition for a declaratory order, and the LC unanimously denied the petition. Instead of appealing the LC's ruling, Maui Dance Advocates filed a complaint against the LC and the county.

Because all parties are asking for summary judgment, it is expected the court will make a final and determinative ruling at the hearing on March 27 at 8:30 a.m.

March 18, 2009

MAUI DANCE ADVOCATES

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