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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Jim Bohl
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Three of Four Stores Found Selling Stolen Gold & Jewelry Surrender Licenses

Stores faced Revocation Proceedings at Tuesday's Licenses Committee Meeting; Troubled Questions Nightclub also on Panel's Agenda

Three of four stores where Milwaukee police seized 1,200 stolen jewelry items valued at more than \$75,000 in October today surrendered their precious metals and gem dealer licenses, according to Alderman Jim Bohl, chair of the committee.

Reflections Jewelry at 1306 W. Forest Home, Cash N Gold at 1214 S. Cesar Chavez Dr., and Star Jewelry at 1212 W. Lincoln Ave., surrendered their licenses today. John's Jewelry at 1119 W. Mitchell St., the other store that was busted, faces revocation proceedings at the committee's meeting at 8:30 a.m. Tuesday , January 19, 2010 in room 301-B at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St.

According to Milwaukee police, officers at District 2 on the city's south side were alerted to stores buying gold jewelry without asking any questions about the identity of the seller. City ordinances and state statutes require the stores to maintain certain records of the transactions, including identity of the seller, documentation of the sale, and a written declaration of ownership of the jewelry. In October, undercover officers sold jewelry to the four stores, and all of the stores violated the ordinance, so search warrants were obtained to check the records and inventories of the stores.

According to the MPD, officers from District 2 then searched the four stores and found approximately 1,200 pieces of jewelry that the stores bought without following proper procedures. Police confiscated the jewelry, valued at over \$75,000, and several pieces were linked to burglaries and thefts in the Milwaukee area. MPD issued 85 citations totaling more than \$41,000 to the four stores.

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Licenses Surrendered/ADD ONE

The licenses for the stores expired December 31 but were already scheduled on the Common Council grant list. In order for the city to pursue sanction of the licenses, there would have had to have been police reports from the early December police bust that would have been completed and sent to the businesses as part of their advanced notice for a hearing. The timing of the bust and the ongoing nature of the police investigation prevented this from happening; so legally, each location (unless a store decided to voluntarily close) remained licensed and each had its license renewed automatically at the December 22 Common Council meeting.

The revocation process for the stores was initiated by a sworn complaint brought by the Milwaukee Police Department, Alderman Bohl said.

In other business at Tuesday's meeting, the committee will take up the Class "B" tavern and tavern/dance (cabaret/night club) license renewal application of Devon Reid for **Questions nightclub**, 3041 W. North Ave. The club has been operating for a year under a judge's temporary restraining order after efforts failed last January to impose sanctions for incidents, disturbances, traffic problems, and repeated police calls. Reid is reportedly proposing a change in the entertainment offered at the location.

Alderman Tony Zielinski has brought forward a complaint requesting revocation of the tavern license of **The Brew House**, 2936 S. 13th St., located in the 14th Aldermanic District.

Also, the Class "A" liquor and malt and food dealer's applications for **Big Jim Liquor**, 2161 W. Hopkins St., in the 6th Aldermanic District, will be reviewed at the request of Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs.