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Desert Hot Springs Mayor Yvonne Parks to seek vote recount

Initial tally has her losing the job to rival Adam Sanchez by 12 votes



Incumbent Desert Hot Springs Mayor Yvonne Parks and City Councilman Adam Sanchez. / Desert Sun file

DESERT HOT SPRINGS — Desert Hot Springs Mayor Yvonne Parks will request a recount of the election tally that has her losing her seat to Councilman Adam Sanchez by 12 votes.

Parks said Thursday she made her decision based on advice from “all the people that have contacted me, supporters, some who didn’t even vote for me.”

She plans to make the formal request by 5 p.m. Monday, the final day anyone can request a recount of the Nov. 5 election.

“The consensus was from everyone: Pursue a recount. What will be will be,” she told The Desert Sun. “We’ll see how it turns out. It’s going to be in God’s hands.”

The [Nov. 5 election results](#), certified Tuesday, showed Sanchez received 1,042 votes, or 43.2 percent, to Parks’ 1,030 votes, or 42.7 percent. Economist John-Paul Valdez received 340 votes in the Nov. 5 election.

Estimates show a recount of the mayoral election will cost about \$2,274 a day, and the ballots could be tallied in about two days.

Whoever requests a recount must pay for the costs of it. A recount would start within seven days of Parks’ request.

Sanchez had trailed Parks in the initial election night counts, but pulled ahead as the registrar continued counting vote-by-mail and provisional ballots.

Sanchez has repeatedly expressed confidence in the votes.

“I’m not surprised by it,” Sanchez said Wednesday when asked about the possibility of a recount. “Mayor Parks said she was considering doing it. Let it take its course.”

Parks first hinted at a recount last Friday.

“I will challenge them. If the final vote comes ... and he overtakes me, there will be a challenge,” Parks told The Desert Sun.

“I want them to check the signatures. ... I don’t trust him. There’s just something fishy.”

Desert Hot Springs municipal code states a council seat vacated within 90 days of an election is filled by the person who received the next highest amount of votes.

So if Sanchez’s mayoral victory holds up, his council position would be filled by Councilwoman Jan Pye, who lost her seat to challenger Joe McKee last week.

Parks, Pye and Mayor Pro Tem Scott Matas all campaigned together in this election.

“There is a percentage of electronic and human error in tallying the votes in any election. (Twelve) votes is certainly within that questionable range of error,” said Mark Anderson, a political consultant who worked with Parks, Matas and Pye.

“A recount makes prefect sense.”

Desert Sun reporter Dave Nyczepir contributed to this story.