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Voter fraud alleged in Desert Hot Springs

DESERT HOT SPRINGS, Calif. -

In the midst of a potential \$7 million budget shortfall, another problem was brought to the attention of the city of Desert Hot Springs. Claims of voter fraud in the tightly-contested race for mayor have surfaced and it's causing some to believe politics are taking precedent over real problems. "Why is it in Desert Hot Springs that we keep digging and digging and digging after the results have come in," said mayor-elect Adam Sanchez.

The digging is coming from former councilman Karl Baker. The self-proclaimed close friend to incumbent in last week's election, Yvonne Parks, is crying foul. Baker believes the twelve vote margin that gave Sanchez the mayoral win over Parks comes with a big asterisk. "I think the law is flawed," said Baker. "If somebody is registered in one county for example and you file for registration, how is he or she purged from the other county, or are they?"

Baker alleges several claims of voter fraud including voters registered in two counties, non-residents voting in the DHS election and even felons voting. Baker says he's shared his concerns with the candidates and plans to go to the police and county registrar next. "After every election, there's going to be people that are upset because their candidate did not win and that's the same case here," said Sanchez. "There's a lot of people who really haven't gotten over the fact that the election's over."

Still not over in Baker's mind. If the voter fraud's proven true, he says it would supersede the need for a recount. "It could be enough to throw in doubt the validity of the election which could then force the registrar to negate the election and start the whole process over again," said Baker.

The Riverside County Registrar tells us the certified results will stand, declaring Sanchez the winner. Should there be legal action, that would be dealt with through the courts. Yvonne Parks did not respond to several requests for comment from our newsroom. Sanchez maintains she will, at some point, still need to answer to the people of Desert Hot Springs, why the city is in the position its in. "Through her leadership, we ended up with a close to \$7 million budget deficit," said Sanchez.

The Riverside County Leadership Forum had initially said they would fund and seek out a recount, but they have since backed off. The director told us they stepped away at the request of Parks. She has until Monday at 5 PM to file for a recount.