

July 24 trial canceled in Austin voter fraud case; pre-trial date is scheduled

Written by George Browning
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The voter fraud cases filed this spring against Austin Mayor Douglas Campbell and a city department superintendent now have no trial dates scheduled.

The felony cases against Mayor Campbell and Sanitation Department Supt. Terry Danner are now under the jurisdiction of one judge, Special Judge Bruce Mactavish, according to court records. The cases had been separate until attorneys for both defendants requested in late June that they be combined.

On July 20, Special Judge Mactavish assumed jurisdiction on both; he had been the special judge assigned in Danner's case. The man selected as special judge for Mayor Campbell's case, Special Judge Bruce Markel, recused himself from that case on the same day.

Other action taken that date included setting a pre-trial hearing on a new day, September 18, and canceling the July 24 trials that were scheduled for both defendants.

The city officials are accused of taking two voters' absentee ballots completed for the 2011 Democrat Party primary election into their possession and mailing the ballots for the voters. Indiana state law prohibits such action, making it the voters' sole responsibility to complete and sign the forms, place them in provided envelopes and mail them back.

At the time of the alleged actions, Mayor Campbell was running for his second four-year term as Austin's mayor. He beat a Democrat opponent in the primary and then won over a Republican candidate in the fall of 2011.