



We're here when you need us most. Subscribe to NJ.com »

Advertisement

Middlesex

Judge orders new election for 1 council seat in Perth Amboy, finds fraud

Updated Mar 29, 2019; Posted Mar 26, 2015



Superior Court judge voids election of one Perth Amboy council member and orders new election.

By **Sue Epstein | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com**

NEW BRUNSWICK — A judge in New Brunswick ordered a new election Thursday for one seat on Perth Amboy's city council, finding there was voter fraud that led to at least 13 ballots illegally cast.

Superior Court Judge Heidi Willis Currier vacated the election of Fernando Gonzalez and ordered the Middlesex County Board of Elections to hold a new election in 45 to 50 days.

Advertisement

Currier ruled in favor of Sergio Diaz who filed suit contesting the election, in particularly the handling of the mail-in ballots, after he was declared the loser in November.

The results certified by the Middlesex County Board of Elections showed Diaz with 2,288 votes and Gonzalez with 2,297. The big difference was in the mail-in or voter-by-mail ballots where Diaz had 423 and Gonzalez had 634.

The law suit was tried on March 2, 3, and 4 by Judge Currier in New Brunswick, who announced her decision Wednesday and issued her order Thursday, overturning the election results and requiring a special election for the now vacant position.

"I am grateful and pleased that the court has ordered a new election in Perth Amboy," Diaz said. "More than a personal victory for me, it is a victory for all law abiding voters in Perth Amboy and a victory for the rule of law."

Neither Gonzalez nor his attorney, George B. Forbes, could be reached for comment.

Perth Amboy Mayor Wilda Diaz blamed the judge's ruling on Leslie Dominguez Rodriguez, the chairwoman of the local Democratic organization, and called for her to resign.

"A Superior Court judge ruled that there has been rampant voter fraud committed in last year's council election at the direction of and with the full participation of (Dominguez Rodriguez)," said Diaz, a Democrat, adding, "I am disappointed that this kind of fraud occurred in our city."

Calling on the party chairwoman to resign, the mayor said, "as a lifelong Democrat, I am appalled that someone who has engaged in voter fraud is the leader of our party."

In his summation brief to the judge, Diaz's attorney, William Northgrave, claimed that at least 13 of the mail-in ballots were either tampered with or people's names were on them who did not vote.

He reviewed the witnesses called in the trial, including a woman who said she did not know her address and did not recall applying for or voting on a ballot in the election despite records she did apply, receive and vote on one.

"It is undisputed that illegal votes that exceeded the margin of victory were counted in this election," Northgrave said in his brief.

The judge's decision did not apply to the other two council winners, Joel Pabon Sr. and William Petrick.

Sue Epstein may be reached at sepstein@njadvancemedia.com. Follow her on Twitter [@susan_epstein](#). Find [NJ.com on Facebook](#).

[MORE MIDDLESEX COUNTY NEWS](#)

Gallery: NJ.com Photos of the Week: Mar. 20 - Mar. 26

Note to readers: if you purchase something through one of our affiliate links we may earn a commission.

Around the web

If Your Dog Eats Dry Food, Do This Everyday

Ultimate Pet Nutrition Nutra Thrive Supplement | Sponsored

Man Who Predicted 2020 Crash Issues Next Major Warning

The Legacy Report | Sponsored

Little-Known Gutter Cleaning Trick Used By Seniors

LeafFilter Partner | Sponsored

He Was An Icon Of The NBA, Now He's Doing This

Gameday News | Sponsored

Research COPD Prescription Inhalers

Yahoo Search | Sponsored

Do you Know Wesley Snipes' Son? Take a Deep Breath Before You See Him Now

Mortgage After Life | Sponsored

At 54, Elisabeth Shue Leaves Nothing To The Imagination

FinancialAdvisorHeroes | Sponsored

20 "Hells Angels" Membership Requirements

Past Factory | Sponsored

Justine Bateman, 54, Sends Fans Wild As She Flaunts Age-Defying Figure

Healthy George | Sponsored

Cher's Son Is Probably The Most Attractive Man To Ever Exist

Like It Viral | Sponsored

Rude Mom Keeps Blocking Builder's Truck So He Teaches Her an Expensive Lesson

Articles Vally | Sponsored

Chrissy Metz, 39, Shows Off Massive Weight Loss In Fierce New Photo

Locksmith of Hearts | Sponsored

Catholic school teacher who coaches lacrosse repeatedly sexually assaulted student, prosecutor alleges

NJ

Man admits stabbing drug dealer to death at campground

NJ

ADVANCE
LOCAL

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#), [Privacy Policy and Cookie Statement](#), and [Your California Privacy Rights](#) (each updated 1/1/20).

© 2020 Advance Local Media LLC. All rights reserved ([About Us](#)).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Advance Local.

[Community Rules](#) apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

[▶ Ad Choices](#)