

Cause No. 2022-CVK-001669-D1

Ricardo “Richie” Rangel Jr.,	§	In the District Court
Contestant,	§	
	§	
vs.	§	49 th Judicial District
	§	
Daisy Campos Rodriguez,	§	
Contestee.	§	Webb County, Texas

Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law

On January 26 and 27, 2023, came on to be heard the above entitled and numbered cause. The parties appeared in person and by their respective counsel of record. The Court, having considered the evidence, authorities, and argument of counsel, makes the following findings of fact and conclusions of law.

1. The election at issue was the general election conducted on November 8, 2022, for District II of the City of Laredo City Council. The election night vote was as follows:

Ricardo “Richie” Rangel Jr.	1,951
Daisy Campos Rodriguez	1,957
Overvotes	4
Undervotes	<u>243</u>

Total Ballots Counted	4,155
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2. Ricardo “Richie” Rangel Jr., hereafter referred to as “RR,” requested a manual recount. Same was conducted with the vote result as follows:

Ricardo “Richie” Rangel, Jr	1945
Daisy Campos Rodriguez	1956
Undervotes	<u>250</u>

Total Ballots Counted	4,151
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3. Thereafter, RR requested the Court order a machine third recount. The order was granted, and upon the machine recount, a hearing was held concerning the efficacy of that recount. The Court ordered the election administrator to provide the Cast Vote Record (“CVR”) to all parties. At trial, Elections Administrator Jose Castillo testified that he had the most faith in the CVR as accurately reflecting the vote. The Court found him to be knowledgeable and credible.

4. The Court finds the Election Night Count and the CVR as the accurate count of the votes and should be the vote used in the determination of this cause. Further, the Court finds that Webb County does not maintain the votes in a temperature-controlled environment, thus leading to issues of ballots on thermal paper that stick together and not properly preserved for recount.

5. Accordingly, the Court finds there is a six-vote difference between RR and Daisy Campos Rodriquez, hereafter referred to as “DCR.”

6. RR alleges that numerous individuals voted illegally because they were not residents of District II and had worked in concert to claim residence for the purpose of electing their friend and family member to the position. The evidence at trial showed a familial, friendship, and residency concert. A person may not establish residence for the purpose of influencing the outcome of a certain election. TEX. ELEC. CODE ANN. § 1.015 (b).

Illegal Voters

1. KATE MEZA

Meza admitted that someone asked her to change her address. She did not live in District II, and in fact lived in Rio Bravo. Her friend asked her to vote for DCR, and she did. The Court finds her credible. Kate Meza illegally voted for DCR. Her vote should be deducted from DCR’s vote total. Her registered address was 3003 Pecos Plaza. Seventeen other voters are also registered at this address.

2. MARIA DE LOS ANGELES MARTINEZ

Maria De Los Angeles Martinez testified that she never lived in District II “in her life,” although she registered her address as 3507 S. Martin, which is located in District II. She testified that she occasionally stays with friends and at a gathering they suggested “let’s go vote.” The Court finds she voted illegally. She did not state who she voted for and claimed she did not remember. Her residence is 3001 Musser, which is located in District III. The Court finds she voted for DCR.

3. VINCENTE RODRIGUEZ

Vicente Rodriguez, DCR’s brother-in-law, had abandoned his registered residence at 3124 Potomac Loop, located in District II, six years before this election. Eight individuals are also registered to vote at this address. His residence is 7306 Ezra Pound. He is related to DCR, and he voted for DCR illegally.

4. JUAN VILLA

He is DCR’s former brother-in-law. He voted for DCR. He has not lived at Pecos Plaza, which is his registered voter address since September 2021. His divorce from Valerie Campos was finalized on January 27, 2022. He voted illegally and admitted voting for DCR.

5. PATRICIA SOTO

Patricia Soto is DCR’s first cousin. She claimed 3304 S. Bartlett, located in District II, as her residence by changing her registration address after the March 1st primary election. Her residence is actually 204 Middleston Drive, which is located outside of District II. She voted illegally for DCR.

6. BRYAN VICHARELLI

Bryan Vicharelli stated that his registered voter address of 2601 Lomas Del Sur was temporary and not a permanent address. This is the apartment rented by Yaretzi Campos. He supported DCR and voted for her illegally.

7. RAUL RIOS

Raul Rios listed 3304 S. Bartlett as his voter address. This is the home of his sister and he stated that he occasionally stays there. DCR registered him to vote in 2015 when she served as a deputy registrar and her husband was running for election in the same District. He never changed his registered address. On January 2022, he claimed residence at 4109 Toluca and admitted living there on December 19, 2022. He claims an eleven-year connection to that address. He illegally voted for DCR.

8. EDGAR CAMPOS

Edgar Campos is Yaretzi Campos's brother and is the Covid Relief Fund administrator for the City of Laredo. He lists 5422 Alamosa as his address on his employment records and admits that he owns the property but states that it is an "investment property." He states that he lives at 3003 Pecos Plaza. He pays no rent there. The Court does not find sufficient evidence to find he voted illegally.

9. YARETZY CAMPOS

Yaretzy Campos listed 3001 Pecos Plaza as her voter address. She claims she lives there with 12 people and states that the property belongs to her uncle. She states that she lives with her uncle and his wife, Alejandro and Celestina Campos. Her father's address is 3601 Bismark in District III. Her bank records and pay stubs indicate the Bismark address as her address. 2601 Lomas del Sur is on her employee records, which is an apartment that she rents for \$800-900 a month that she got "stuck with". She is DCR's cousin, and illegally voted for DCR.

10. CELINA AZENNETH RAMIREZ

Celina Azenneth Ramirez's residence is 4417 Exodus. She is a related to DCR and was a campaign supporter of DCR. She engaged in block walks and bake sales for DCR during the

campaign. A deed shows that the Exodus property has been under her and her husband's name since 2009. She enrolled her children in the Exodus school district. She voted for DCR illegally.

11. GRISELDA ELENA CISNEROS

Griselda Elena Cisneros is registered at 312 Cazares but lives and resides at 2815 S. Musser, which is not in District II. She has resided there for two and a half years. She cast an illegal vote for DCR.

12. KARLA PEREYRA

Karla Pereyra registered to vote while in high school in 2015. She never voted until this election. She admitted and brought proof that her residence is 1914 Juarez, which is outside of District II. She voted illegally, and although she stated that she didn't know who she voted for, the Court finds she voted for DCR.

13. STACI NAVARRO

Staci Navarro resides at 3702 Gregoria Lerma. She has done so for four years. She temporarily stayed with her aunt at 2108 Green Street while her aunt was sick. She registered to vote using her aunt's home address. The Court finds her permanent address is outside District II, located at 3702 Gregorio Lerma. Her claim that she doesn't remember who she voted for is belied by the fact that she actively campaigned for DCR, wore DCR's campaign shirt, and went to campaign events. The Court finds her vote was illegally cast for DCR.

14. JOSE CARRIZALES

Jose Carrizales has lived at 2702 Gregorio Lerma for five years. He applied for homestead at that address. He is married to Staci Navarro, who was a schoolmate of DCR. He stayed at 2108 Green Street for only a couple of months. He stated that he believes he went to campaign events. The Court finds his residence to be 2702 Gregorio Lerma. His claim that he doesn't remember who he voted for is not credible. The Court finds his illegal vote was cast for DCR.

15. VOTER ANGEL VICHARELLI

Angel Vicharelli lives at 2701 Blaine, which is outside of District II. He moved out to stay at 2601 Lomas Del Sur with Jackie Estevez while he was having trouble with his father in law and girlfriend. He is Bryan Vicharelli's brother. He did not pay rent or bills while he stayed at Lomas Del Sur. He went to campaign events for DCR. Did not register to vote until July 2022. He is DCR's husband's friend. The Court finds his residence, which he owns, is located at 2701 Blaine Street, which is outside District II; and he admitted, and the Court accepts, that he voted for DCR illegally.

16. VOTER JACQUELINE ESTEVIS

Jacqueline Estevis registered to vote under 2601 Lomas Del Sur, Apt. 101. The Court finds her claims to residency in District II are not believable. Although she claims to have no relationship with DCR, she attended campaign events and her boyfriend is on the same softball team as DCR's husband. She has used 320 Jazmin as her address on several occasions and "believes" that is where her parents live. The Jazmin address is her prior voter registration address. The Court finds she registered at 2601 Lomas Del Sur for the purpose of influencing the election of DCR. That location is a rental by another individual which has no hot water, no internet, no cable, and is used as an occasional residence by friends of the renter. When questioned as to who she voted for she loudly stated RR. Her body language, tone, and attitude lead the Court to find her testimony untrue and finds she illegally voted for DCR.

The Court, having made the above findings, declares the illegal votes cast for Daisy Campos Ramirez must be deducted from her election night count and the accepted count by the Court, thus finding that Ricardo" Richie" Rangel won the general election for Laredo City Council District II. The Court taxes all costs against contestee.

Signed and entered this the 2nd day of February 2023.

Susan D. Reed, Senior Judge, 144th District Court
Sitting in 49th Judicial District Court
Webb County, Texas

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Status as of 2/3/2023 8:06 AM CST

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