

Alton mayoral hearing moved again due to weather concerns

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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ALTON - A hearing regarding Alton mayoral candidate **Dan Rauschkolb**'s place on the April 4, 2017 ballot was rescheduled for a second time, due to Friday's closure of the Alton City Hall.

During a Thursday, Jan. 5 hearing in front of the **Alton Electoral Board**, Rauschkolb's attorney, **Sherry Murphy**, motioned for a continuance in the case until Friday, Jan. 13. On Friday, however, **Alton Mayor Brant Walker** made the decision to close city hall due to the possibility of hazardous weather conditions, which were already presenting themselves in the early morning hours of the St. Louis rush. It was rescheduled for this coming Friday, Jan. 20, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. in **Alton City Council Chambers**.

The hearing is in regard to Rauschkolb filing to run for mayor as an independent after "party-switching" from a Democrat following a failed primary run-off against fellow mayoral candidate and Progressive Democrat, **Joshua Young**. The protest against Rauschkolb's place on the ballot came from **Pat Schwarte**, who filed on behalf of Alton Mayoral candidate **Scott Dixon**. Young also filed a petition against Rauschkolb's place on the ballot.



In a letter to **Alton City Clerk Mary Boulds** provided to Riverbender.com from Schwarte, Schwarte cites a 2016 case in the **Illinois Appellate Court, Rudd vs. Lake County Electoral Board**, in which a similar issue caused a candidate to be unable to run. Schwarte delivered the letter to Boulds on Dec. 27, 2016, which read:

Dear Madam Clerk,

The intent of this letter is to register my protest regarding the inclusion of Dan Rauschkolb on the April 2017 ballot for Mayor of Alton, Illinois based on precedence set in the case of Rudd v. Lake County Electoral Board, 2016 IL App (2d) 160649.

Reference Paragraph 6 of the Illinois Official Report:

As the United States Supreme Court noted in Storer v. Brown, 415 U.S. 724 (1974): “protects the direct primary process by refusing to recognize independent candidates who do not make early plans to leave a party and take the alternative course to the ballot. It works against independent candidacies prompted by short-range political goals, pique, or personal quarrel. It is also a substantial barrier to a party fielding an ‘independent’ candidate to capture and bleed off votes in the general election that might well go to another party.” Id. at 735.

I ask that you and the City Attorney evaluate the grounds for my protest and act upon removing Rauschkolb from the ballot if appropriate.

Due to petitions from both Schwarte and Young, the matter came before the Alton Electoral Board, which exists as needed and is composed of **Fourth Ward Alderperson Charlie Brake, Sixth Ward Alderperson Gary Fleming** and City Clerk Boulds. The commission receives counsel from **Jim Schrempf**.

Rauschkolb did not have a comment regarding the hearing, but was dismayed upon the filing of petitions objecting his position on the ballot.

"I'm not surprised my petition was challenged," he said in earlier interviews with Riverbender.com. "The dirty politics of Alton have gotten out of control. I chose to run for mayor so I could give voters a choice. It is more difficult to get on the ballot in Alton than winning the election. At the end of the day, it's about the voters' choice, not the drive to eliminate the competition. People continue to tell me they're tired of the dirty politics. I am absolutely going to still run as a candidate; as a write-in if needed."

Rauschkolb said he was not aware of any laws regarding his ineligibility to switch from running as a Democrat to running as an independent. Both he and Young said they felt

ill informed during their candidacy processes and blamed Boulds for keeping them in the dark.

Young also blames Rauschkolb for declaring himself as a Democrat, which would have created a costly mayoral primary if not for the lack of proper paperwork. He said what is happening now is "karma" for Rauschkolb allegedly working with the **Madison County Democratic Party** to eliminate him in a primary. Young believes Rauschkolb's declaration as a Democrat was a conspiracy against him by the upper echelons of the party, because Young did not seek permission to run as a Democrat.

"It's karma for him," Young said of Rauschkolb. "They tried to press us into running as independents. He took the bait, and I asked him not to. I'm sure he took that deal to force that primary. I'm sure they told him if he ran independent, they would let him slide. He declared himself an independent at first."