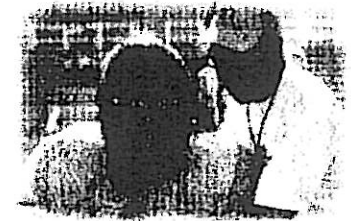


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Clerk's Office reports votes cast illegally in runoff

By Ray King
OF THE COMMERCIAL STAFF

A check of voting records from Tuesday's runoff elections indicated that approximately 68 people who voted Republican in the May 22 primaries were able to cast ballots in the Tuesday runoff, which affected only Democratic Party candidates.

Jefferson County Clerk Patricia Royal Johnson said Friday

that members of her staff had scanned the election books that voters signed at polling sites during the runoff to come up with the figure, which was requested by Pine Bluff Assistant Chief of Police Ivan Whitfield, who was a Democratic candidate for Jefferson County judge.

Whitfield was defeated by former Pine Bluff mayor Dutch

King by 154 votes, and said Thursday night that he would be filing a complaint with the Jefferson County Election Commission alleging voting irregularities.

A letter signed by Whitfield and delivered to the Election Commission Friday requested the commission canvass every vote in the runoff, something Johnson's office has already

done.

The letter also requested that a list of Republican voters from the May 22 primary be prepared and compared to the list of people who voted in the Tuesday runoff.

Johnson said currently, the office has the capability of printing a list of all voters, but to prepare a list of only Republican voters will require outside

assistance from the company that handles software for elections.

County Election Coordinator Will Fox acknowledged Friday that some poll workers last week apparently didn't do their jobs properly by allowing people who voted Republican in May to vote in the Democratic Party runoff.

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"We spent a lot of time training those people working at the polls and we're going to get a list of where the problems were and deal with it from there," Fox said.

Whitfield cannot request a recount because state law requires that any such request be made within 48 hours after the elec-

tion is concluded, Fox said.

The letter from Whitfield also asked that the canvassing process be completed prior to the certification of votes from the county judge's race, which is currently set for June 19 at the Election Commission office at 123 Main St.

An attempt to contact Whitfield Friday afternoon was unsuccessful.