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Kingman, Arizona • 1 Section • 18 Pages

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## Recount confirms Baker win

*Local business owner Jim Baker beats out incumbent Homer Johnston by just two votes for city council seat*

By Marvin Robertson  
Miner Staff Writer

Jim Baker is finally the winner of the March election for a Kingman City Council seat, confirmed in Tuesday's recount.

A second computer count confirmed the original count of 831 votes for Baker and 829 for incumbent Homer Johnston.

It was the first mayoral or council election in the memory of City Clerk Chaslene Ware close enough to require a recount.

The outcome will become official with canvass of the vote during the Monday council meeting.

Neither Baker nor Johnston attended the recount in the city council chambers Tuesday. Johnston was out of town.

Baker received the result by cell phone.

"I appreciate the voters and supporters," Baker said. "I will do my best to make the right decisions for the residents of Kingman."

Bill Doyle of Election Operations Service, the company that provides election services across Arizona and

sample ballots for Kingman, conducted the recount.

"We took the recount to an outside source to an unbiased process," Ware said.

The ballots were sealed after being counted following the March 12 primary and kept under lock and key by Ware. The ballot boxes were unsealed Tuesday.

Doyle programmed the computer for the council election ballot and ran test ballots to affirm the accuracy before counting the punch card ballots from March 12.

State election law calls for an automatic recount if the margin is less than 10 votes. There is some vagueness in the election law regarding application to city elections. The Kingman City Council voted to seek the recount.

Ware prepared all the legal documents and filed them with Mohave County Superior Court.

Baker will be sworn in during the June 3 council meeting with Phil Moon and Ray Lyons, winners of the other two open council seats. They will serve four-year terms.

Mayor Les Byron ran unopposed for his fourth two-year term and will take the oath of office again June 3.

The other three members of the council, Dave French, Frank McVey



Miner Photo/MARVIN ROBERTSON

Bill Doyle of Election Operations Service prepares for the Kingman City Council election recount Tuesday under the watchful eye of deputy city clerks Toni Weddle, far left, and Diane Russell and Kingman City Clerk Chaslene Ware, center.

and Monica Gates, are in the middle will step down at the June 3 meeting. Homer Johnston and Tom Spear Spear did not seek re-election.

## Harassment probe goes to state attorney general

By Ken Hedler

Miner Staff Writer  
Mohave County Attorney Bill Ekstrom said Tuesday he has rejected Supervisor Buster Johnson's request for a "full and open" hearing of sexual harassment allegations and has referred the case to the state Attorney General's Office.

Ekstrom said he notified Johnson in a letter that the county may not conduct the hearing about the investigation that led the Human Resources Department to conclude that Johnson sexually harassed two county employees.

"There is no mechanism in our personnel policies for that, and he knows that," Ekstrom said.

Johnson issued a press release Friday denying he sexually harassed former administrative assistant Malina Bopp and former office clerk Kelly McWhorter, and charged that the probe was "one-sided."

Reached for comment Wednesday morning, Johnson said his hometown residents were hounding him.

"I've got nothing but support down here (in Lake Havasu City)," he said.

The women, who have been on paid administrative leave since Feb. 25, accused Johnson of downloading Internet pornography in their presence, making sexist comments, offering to expose himself and engaging in other inappropriate con-

duct. Human Resources Director Geoff Riches said that on Monday he forwarded about 75 pages of documents, including transcripts of interviews of witnesses, to Ekstrom.

Ekstrom said he spoke to a lawyer in the Attorney General's Office on Tuesday and was forwarding the matter to that office.

"That's my first choice because they are independent, they are very professional and have the resources with which to review this sort of matter," Ekstrom said.

Faith Utias, a spokeswoman for Attorney General Janet Napolitano, said she could not confirm or deny whether her office would investigate Johnson.

"We can enforce civil rights," Utias said. "We file complaints or administrative charges. We have the authority to take legal action."

Utias said she does not believe her office is empowered to remove Johnson from office.

Johnson does not face any punishment over the human resources investigation because as an elected official he is exempt from merit rules, which are similar in concept to U.S. Civil Service policies. Following a six-week investigation, Riches concluded Thursday that Johnson violated the policy on sexual harassment by creating a "hostile work environment."

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Local man

Commissioners oppose sign ordinance

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