

Rocky Mount: *More resist new runoff voting idea*

By Zach Ahmad Rocky Mount Telegram Monday, April 23, 2007

TARBORO – As Twin Counties elections officials prepare to decide on instant runoff voting for Rocky Mount, the list of those opposing the experiment is growing.

...Rocky Mount Councilman Reuben Blackwell, who has announced that he will likely run for mayor, said he thinks it is the wrong time and place to test the method.

"To cast out an instant runoff speculative experiment in communities that have had historic voting rights violations issues is absolutely wrong," Blackwell said. "I think this needs to be studied further before it is done anywhere."

Blackwell added that the current runoff system, though time-consuming, allows voters a chance to re-evaluate options after the field is narrowed rather than making that decision ahead of time.

Concerns have also been raised by council members Andre Knight and Lois Watkins, who have said they will vote against it. Knight pointed out recent controversy surrounding the Edgecombe County Board of Elections and said that should make any significant voting change suspect.

"I'm not quite sure with that Board of Elections," Knight said. "It's not a good time with all the distrust and all in our county..."

<http://www.rockymounttelegram.com/news/content/news/stories/2007/04/23/instantrunoff.html>