

Elections board disqualifies Jacobson, Cook

Executive candidates Bret Jacobson and Matt Cook will appeal the board's decision to the ASUO Constitution Court

By Jeremy Lang
Oregon Daily Emerald

Even before the votes for ASUO Executive were counted Thursday, the ASUO Elections Board had disqualified Bret Jacobson and Matt Cook's second-place finish in the race.

The board voted 4-1 in favor of a grievance filed by rival vice presidential candidate Jeff Oliver, with Elections Coordinator Shantell Rice casting the single dissenting vote.

Jacobson, who called the decision an "irresponsible finding" and the process "disappointing," said he will explore an appeal of the decision to the ASUO Constitution Court.

Oliver filed the grievance after Jacobson's campaign volunteers distributed fliers outside doors in the residence halls last week. Oliver said the action broke election rules requiring equal access for all candidates to University facilities.

Oliver — who is running with

presidential candidate Eric Bailey — added that University Housing adopted a Residence Hall Association rule that candidates could place a poster in each of the common areas of the four complex lobbies, but not in the actual residence halls.

Jacobson said he carefully examined election rules before distribution, but he did not talk to the elections board personally or consult University Housing rules.

The board agreed with both of Oliver's points and said the action affected the election's outcome. Election rules allowed the board to consider the housing regulations in its decision to disqualify Jacobson and Cook.

Rice left the ASUO office before the election results were released and could not be reached afterward for comment.

But board member Ken Best said he was confident the board came to a thorough decision.

"We looked at it from all angles," he said. "We decided on the grievance long before the results were released."

But Jacobson said he thinks the board missed key angles and didn't communicate sufficiently with

housing and his campaign.

"We were never cited by housing. We were assumed guilty there [by the board]," he said.

Jacobson also criticized the board for not interviewing people from his campaign and accepting his written statement only hours before the decision without proper time to investigate his claims.

"We first heard about the grievance [Wednesday] from the Emerald, not the elections board," he said.

But Oliver said the board's decision did not surprise him, and the violations were clear.

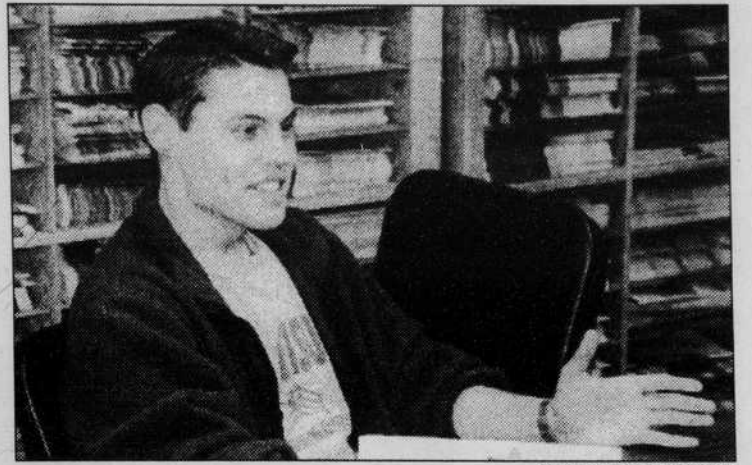
"All along I felt the grievance had a pretty solid case," he said.

After Oliver filed the grievance, Rice appointed board member Emily Sedgwick to investigate and gather facts before the board made its decision.

"We needed to make this decision before the results of the election were found out," Best said.

Despite being from rival campaigns, Oliver and Jacobson both agreed Sedgwick should have taken a more proactive role in her investigation.

Both said Sedgwick told them to



ASUO Executive candidate Bret Jacobson said he will appeal his disqualification to the ASUO Constitution Court. Jacobson and his running mate, Matt Cook, placed second in Thursday's primary election.

compile facts and witnesses, but they believed that was her job as the grievance investigator.

"The fact-finding was left up to us," Oliver said. "We had to prove this to her."

But Jacobson said that besides his removal from the ballot, his biggest

disappointment is the way the rules limited political discussion in the residence halls.

"I am appalled that these rules are anti-democratic," he said. "But we did receive the second most votes, and we have a rightful place on the general election ballot."

Brooklyn, Bailey tickets already planning next steps

The candidates want to raise awareness of the general election and their campaigns

By Emily Gust
Oregon Daily Emerald

Even with the good news of Thursday's ASUO primary election results, Nilda Brooklyn and running mate Joy Nair, and Eric Bailey and running mate Jeff Oliver said they hoped for something more.

Brooklyn and Nair said they thought they could garner more than 50 percent of the vote in the primary election and win outright without a general election.

"We always had that hope [that] maybe we'd win that 51 percent," Nair said. "We knew that of all the candidates, we had the strongest base."

Brooklyn and Nair received 624

votes out of more than 1,500 total votes — not quite the 51 percent they'd hoped for.

But Bailey and Oliver, who received 237 votes, were also somewhat shocked by the results.

"We thought we would easily get into the generals," Oliver said. "Eric and I are moving on, but we have our work cut out for us."

Another Executive candidate team, Bret Jacobson and Matt Cook, received 356 votes, but were removed from the ballot Thursday.

Even though both advancing tickets had some air let out of their tires, both said they are ready to get out next week and campaign for another four days.

A big objective on Brooklyn and Nair's list is to "make this campus feel that there's an election going on," Brooklyn said.

"I want students to be invested in

how this school's going to be next year," she said. "This is their chance to make that statement of what they want from the U of O."

Brooklyn said that last year, a person couldn't walk down 13th Avenue without getting a flier or seeing a campaign T-shirt. This year, she said, many people do not even realize there is an ASUO election going on.

"We'll ask people if they voted, and they'll say yeah — eight months ago," Brooklyn said.

While the two plan to head out full-force, they would not reveal specifics, saying only that they will continue handing out fliers, putting

up posters and talking to students about their platform.

"We're not going to tell about our exact plans, but [it will be] something really crazy that ties into the campaign," Nair said. "We're just going to make sure we're out there all the time rain or shine."

Bailey and Oliver also plan to encourage students to vote. But they have a few more ideas in mind to keep their campaign momentum going.

In addition to handing out fliers and putting up posters for a second week, the two will visit the greek houses that they haven't already hit. They are also going to make buttons.

"We didn't have buttons before, and now we will," Bailey said.

All efforts lead to making their campaign more visible and letting students know what they stand for, Bailey said, something that he and Oliver have done less than Brooklyn and Nair so far.

With a difference of 387 votes between themselves and the Brooklyn-Nair team, Bailey and Oliver have an uphill battle ahead of them, Oliver said.

But Bailey remains optimistic. "I think it's well within our reach," Bailey said. "We're just as good candidates for the job — if not better."

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