

Cory Booker is re-elected as Newark mayor for second term

By Star-Ledger Staff

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Saed Hindash/The Star-Ledger

Standing between his parents, Cary Booker Sr. and Carolyn Booker, Newark Mayor Cory Booker celebrates his re-election Tuesday night from the Robert Treat Hotel in Newark.

NEWARK -- Newark Mayor Cory Booker easily won a second term Tuesday night, but with a tighter margin of victory than in 2006, and with only seven of his nine council candidates winning re-election, according to incomplete election results.

Booker received 59 percent of the vote, beating out three challengers — Clifford Minor, Yvonne Garrett Moore and Mirna L. White. Minor, a subdued former prosecutor and municipal judge, received just 35 percent of the vote.

Just before 10 p.m., Booker declared victory and addressed a packed room at the Robert Treat Hotel. While his staff has delivered positive change, he said there is much more work to be done.

"We know we have difficult days ahead, but if I want to be in the trenches with any group of people in the United States of America, I want to be in the trenches fighting with my fellow residents of the city of Newark," Booker said.

In 2006, Booker won with a clear mandate of 72 percent of the vote, won a majority of votes in all of the city's wards and his slate of nine council candidates was elected.

Tuesday, one of Booker's most outspoken opponents, Ras Baraka, beat South Ward Councilman Oscar James II, a member of Booker's slate. And Booker's candidate in the Central Ward, Councilman Charles Bell, faces a run-off election against candidate Darrin Shariff. Booker also failed to win a majority of votes in the South Ward.

Booker outspent Minor 20-to-1, yet Minor, a member of the city's old guard, was able to marshal an already vocal anti-Booker contingent along with dissatisfaction about crime and joblessness to bring out voters against a mayor who promised major reform and a new era for the city in 2006.

Booker, the city's 41-year-old effusive political leader, ran a largely positive campaign, avoiding many of the public forums. With \$7.5 million raised, the Booker camp flooded local media markets with television commercials, and a steady stream of campaign fliers, posters and mailers, touting the city's lower crime rate, park expansion and development of small businesses.

Minor, running a grassroots campaign, attended almost every public forum on the campaign trail, held coffee klatches, and won the support of a disaffected minority, attacking Booker as an outsider who is unengaged with city residents. He spent only \$240,000 on the race.

"I am one of the people. I live here I pay taxes here. My wife lives here, my grandmother lives here, my grandchildren live here. This is my city," Minor told reporters yesterday, "I have some issues I need to resolve with the city — it really has nothing to do with Mr. Booker."

The loss of Councilman James and possible loss off Councilman Bell last night could affect Booker's ability to govern, especially with one of his incumbent allies defeated and another facing a runoff and possible defeat. Currently, all nine council members were Booker supporters.

John Weingart, associate director at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, said the slimmer margin of victory would not have an impact on Booker's political future. His success will depend on his performance as mayor and how much improvement he's brought to the city by the time he runs for statewide office.

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"I think that this election is really more the sort of British notion of a vote of confidence," Weingart said.

Joseph DelGrosso, the president of the Newark Teachers Union and a supporter of Minor, said historically, statewide voters have not been kind to Newark mayors.

"I don't think Mayor Booker's going to come out of this election having a political future," said DelGrosso.

The union donated close to \$3,000 to Minor's campaign. "I don't think Cory Booker's going to be the one to break that mold."

Whatever Booker's future ambitions, as mayor he will face between \$60 million and \$100 million in budget deficits, a stagnant housing market, and steep unemployment.

"The priority should be jobs," said Wade McIver, 66, a South Ward resident. McIver voted for Clifford Minor saying Booker had not done enough for Newark residents. "He really doesn't care about us."

In the Central Ward, Bill Williams, 55, stood outside of the Quitman Street School where he had cast his ballot for Booker.

"I think he does a good job," Williams said but agreed that jobs would be a top priority. "Get jobs and crime will cancel itself out."

Beatrice Greene, 70, of Newark, said she also cast her vote for Booker. She believes Booker will clean up the city's crime and help create more jobs.

"Jobs would cut down on a lot of crime and give men something to do instead of hanging out on street corners," said Greene.

Staff Writer Victoria St. Martin contributed to this report



Noah K. Murray/The Star-Ledger

Newark Mayor Cory Booker smiles after casting his vote in the Newark Municipal Election at University High School. Booker was re-elected tonight for his second term.

Winners are designated with an "x" before their names.

Town	Office														
Belleville	Mayor	One 4-year term	x Raymond Kimble*	1,806	Susan Citarella	704									
Belleville	Township council at large	Two 4-year terms	Sean Goldrick	733	x Kevin Kennedy*	1,545	x Michael Nicosia*	1,795							
Irvington	Township council at large	Three 4-year terms	x D. Bilal Beasley*	2,086	Clifton Beckley	509	Teleus Brazier	850	Eric Dixon	911	x Leby C. Jones*	1,752	x Andrea C. McElroy*	1,585	Harry Paden
Irvington	Mayor	One 4-year term	Gene E. Etchison	1,104	David Lyons	1,011	Antonio N. Sabas	332	Quadir Selby	247	x Wayne Smith*	2,542			
Newark	Mayor	One 4-year term	x Cory A. Booker*	21,397	Clifford J. Minor	12,924	Yvonne Garrett Moore	1,629	Mirna L. White	415					
Newark	Council at large	Four, 4-year terms	David T. Blount	6,521	x Mildred C. Crump*	17,764	x Carlos M. Gonzales*	14,616	Carole A. Graves	7,141	J. Sharpe James	11,934	x Donald M. Payne Jr.*	19,353	Jean Perez
Newark	South	One	x Don	4,581	Greg S.	2,025	Brian	115	Melvin L.	142	Joseph	142	Omar	144	

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