

***School**

(Continued from page 1.)
 Sherri Reeves, parent of a HCCHS student, was last for public comments, speaking about a graduation issue.
 "The parents of forty-five students at Holmes County Central High are in turmoil," said Reeves, "when they received letters in the middle of February that their child was in danger of not graduating."
 "Most of these parents are expecting their child to complete with the option of dual enrollment. The dual enrollment was denied them."
 Anderson attempted to stop Reeves from continuing.
 "Excuse me Mrs. Reeves," said Anderson, "we are here to answer questions, I mean address the public based on the consolidated school board. We will not hear anything for the Holmes County Board."
 "Okay," said Reeves, "consolidated board is not Holmes County School District anymore?"
 Anderson replied "Holmes County School District will go on until June 30."
 "Are you not a member?" Reeves asked.
 "We are, but we have other members up here that are not," Anderson said.
 Reeves reiterated that parents are still in "turmoil" but that she would be at the next

Holmes County School District board meeting.
 Anderson then addressed the room, "Before we move on, to the public, I must state that this board will not answer questions or take any actions because we don't have a superintendent in place. We haven't discussed budgeted items, so therefore...our meetings will be based on discussions and informative in nature."
 Anderson also addressed the meeting attendees on the hiring process and search for the candidate who will lead the soon to be unified county school district.
 "We will be interviewing candidates very soon," said Anderson, "and once we have a superintendent in place, then we can move forward to answering a lot of questions the community has brought forward."
 Eloise Luckett, president of the Durant Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), was present and spoke with the *Herald* after the meeting that board members had given out false information and were misinformed.
 "Dr. Angel Meeks, interim superintendent for the Holmes County School District, gave false information," said Luckett, "to news outlets Fox 40 and WLBT 3," about the Durant school closing permanently.

"Mr. Rayford Horton came out of executive session (at the February 27 consolidated school board meeting)," according to Luckett, "with an outburst that he motioned Durant K through 8th to stay at Durant and 9th through 12th goes to Holmes Central. He failed to realize that Durant is a three facility school...If you close the high school, then you close the school."
 Also in attendance at the meeting was Mississippi Department of Education Interim State Superintendent Mike Kent.
 Kent spoke with the *Herald* after the meeting to elaborate more on what the consolidated board will be facing in the coming months.
 "They are tasked with the responsibility of preparing the budget," said Kent. "About seventy percent of a school district's budget is personnel. They need to know, obviously, how many teachers they're going to have and really a factor of teachers is, how many schools are we going to have open? I think what they're trying to do is look at enrollment, the available dollars, and then try to make some decisions about how they can best spend their money. Ordinarily, and I would emphasize 'ordinarily,' you would have a budget presentation that would outline the available dollars. Once they look at those available dollars, then they would come back and make decisions about 'What are we able to do with those available dol-

lars?"
 School district restructuring will be largely based on the combined resources and money of both Durant and Holmes County. The money available will determine what can and can not be sustained financially. In example, sustaining one county high school instead of two.
 On Tuesday, March 20, Debbie Jones, the financial conservator for both Durant and Holmes County School Districts who was appointed through the school consolidation bill, presented the combined budgets for the new consolidated district. The budget was not available by press time.
 "The school board is duly elected and is duly authorized to make decisions," said Kent.
 March 15 was the deadline, according to the School Employment and Procedures Act, for the school board to inform administrators if they will be rehired.
 "If they don't tell an administrator," said Kent, "he's automatically back."
 April 15 is the deadline for teachers to be notified whether or not they still have a job.
 "They've got to make some decisions about what their organizational structure is going to look like, how many teachers do they need, and if there are people they're not going to need they've got to tell those people by April 15," Kent added. "If they don't tell them, then their contracts are automatically renewed."

***Hearing**

(Continued from page 1.)
 Durant Police Investigator Paul Freeman worked the case and testified to the events that unfolded on January 30.
 "We received a call that an armed robbery was taking place at Dollar General and officers responded to that location," said Freeman. "We encountered two female cashiers that stated they were robbed by three black males wearing masks."
 "You knew people were injured?" Edwards asked.
 "One of the cashiers was apparently struck by one of the assailants during the robbery," Freeman said.
 A backpack was recovered as evidence from the crime scene.
 "We recovered a backpack that was turned inside out," said Freeman, "inside the backpack it was like leopard print. Like it belonged to a female. Inside contents were a disciplinary form..."
 Haymon then made a moaning sound which Wooten immediately silenced him.
 "Just a second," said Wooten, who then whispered to Haymon.
 "Inside the backpack," Freeman continued, "were several pieces of homework, assignments inside the backpack. As well as a disciplinary form that was four days old from what I later discovered to be (Haymon's) sister. At that point we looked at the (surveillance) video later and saw that the first assailant entered the Dollar General with that backpack in his hands."
 Freeman also went on to detail the attempted robbery at Family Dollar that occurred on February 21.
 "Officers received a call about two juveniles," said Freeman, "outside of the Family Dollar, as they were coming out, they encountered two black males with masks on...they made the two juveniles get on the ground, lay face down. Those suspects fled the scene. Officers then pursued for about thirty or forty minutes...we set up a perimeter and checkpoint near the Family Dollar."
 After about an hour, law enforcement "lost visuals" of the suspects, according to Freeman.
 "...we were able to stop a vehicle with Mr. Haymon in the back seat," said Freeman, "at that point we made an arrest."
 by his wife Maggie Mae Burrell.

Haymon's sister, mother and mother's boyfriend were all in the vehicle.
 Haymon was interviewed after his arrest with his mother present, according to Freeman, both on audio and video recording, in which Haymon named his accomplices in the Dollar General robbery.
 "He admitted to you," Edwards asked, "on the video and named his accomplices on those videos to all the crimes which he's been arrested for, which includes felony taking of a vehicle, the attempted robbery at the Family Dollar and two counts of armed robbery at Dollar General?"
 Freeman replied "Yes."
 Wooten then asked Freeman the location of the video.
 "Why isn't that present here today? I want to see that video, ever since the rules have changed and I'm entitled to discovery. Because my client has not told me that's what actually occurred," said Wooten.
 "There was no discovery request made that I'm aware of," said Edwards.
 "I'm making it now," replied Wooten.
 "You can't do it today, it's a hearing," said Edwards.
 "Sure I can," said Wooten, "It's here, it's ready to be seen right?"
 Arnold said it was too late in the day to watch the two-hour interview of Haymon.
 "It's just not proper, at this point," said Arnold, "to take up the time required to view it."
 Wooten requested to view the video with Freeman's testimony being based on it.
 "I should be allowed to see it and you should know that whether or not it is truthful testimony coming from this officer. Now, to sit here and say (Freeman's testimony)," said Wooten, "that it is sworn, therefore it's truthful, that's improper judge."
 Arnold responded, "But it's also improper to wait until the preliminary hearing to do discovery."
 "Well then we should know what evidence is out there," said Wooten. "If there's a video and an audio, we should know that."
 Edwards later told Wooten that her client should have informed her of the video interview.
 "No he didn't," said Wooten, "this is a seventeen-year-old child, he didn't say they videoed him."
 "My twelve-year-old child would know whether he would be on video or not," said Edwards.
 "Well that's your child!" said Wooten, "my client did not tell me he was videoed."
 Judge Arnold granted a continuance of the preliminary hearing on Friday, April 6 at 4 p.m. in Durant City Hall.
 Haymon was later seen with family members, after the hearing was dismissed, visiting and taking selfies.

Durant Public School District
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The Durant Public School District posted on its Facebook page calling out both the Holmes County School Board and the consolidated board as "biased," on Sunday, March 11. (Photo by Matthew Breazeale)

Obituary

JOE J. BURRELL
 Joe Jimmie Burrell, 90, died March 19, 2018 at his residence in Durant. Visitation will be held from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Thursday, March 22, 2018 at Southern Funeral Home in Durant. Funeral service will be held at 11:00 a.m. Friday, March 23, 2018 also at the funeral home. Burial will be in Bowlin Cemetery in Sal-

lis.
 Mr. Burrell was retired from the Durant Public School where he worked in maintenance. He was a U.S. Army veteran and a member of Bowlin Baptist Church.
 Survivors are his son James Burrell (Sandy) of Starkville; daughters, Martha Ellington (Skippy) of Kosciusko, Nancy Williamson of Kosciusko, Shelia Howard of Byram and Theresa Rule (Tommy) of Kosciusko; brothers, Charles Burrell of Durant and Fred Burrell of Columbus; sisters, Sally Bardwell of Durant, Mary Bardwell of Durant, Dorothy Keen of Sallis and Analiza Jenkins of Yazoo City; 10 grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren and 3 great great grandchildren.
 He was preceded in death

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