

Black Leaders Finally Speaking Out!!!—Just a little!!! —Report by Robert A. Williams

Editor's Note: For months and years now Mr. Willie Green and Rev. Dante Murphy have found themselves standing alone in the Black Community in their fights for justice. Courts and lawsuits being the only remedy as the “deafening silence” in the black community signaled the “oppressors” that oppression in Cleveland County was not only alive and well, but thriving. Words like “Massa,” “Uncle Toms,” “Coons,” “Plantation Politics” and the “N”-word (if spoken by a white person) appeared to be the only thing that would “offend” persons of color. Perhaps that is changing.

Ellis Chapel Baptist Church:

The first “crack” in that wall of silence in the black community began in a Sunday School Class at Ellis Chapel Baptist Church a couple weeks ago. The Sunday School Teacher, Linda Lockhart, in her Sunday School Lesson, [recorded on Facebook](#) mentioned the fact that the Black Community needed to speak-up and speak-out about local issues such as what happened to Mr. Willie Green and Mr. Jeff Ross. It was around 10 minutes into the lesson. We recommend you listen to all of the lesson.

In that brief portion of Ms. Lockhart's message, her focus was on the very obvious oppression of Mr. Willie Green by the City of Shelby in Mr. Green's attempt to do business in Shelby on an equal footing as white business men are allowed to do and what some believe to be the targeted traffic stop of Mr. Jeff Ross and the recorded search of Mr. Ross and his vehicle by Sheriff's Office personnel.

Sheriff's Office Major Durwin Briscoe:

Within the past 24 hours Sheriff's Department Major Durwin Briscoe made this comment on his Facebook page that has generated over 200 comments:

Durwin Briscoe

18 hours

For the past few days, I've watched the videos and read post concerning the travesty that took place in Minneapolis. Normally I refrain from making comments on situations such as this. I don't because, if I don't know the totality of the circumstances, I refuse to be the Monday morning quarterback. However, in this situation there's no need to get all of the information because NO situation justifies the outcome I've witnessed.

It's been almost 28 years since I decided to get into this profession. When I started, I took the position because it was a job but over the years it evolved into a career I love. I said that to say, people get in to law enforcement for various reasons. Like any other profession you have individuals that get in it for the wrong reason, they may get in it for the authority, or they may get in it for perception. Like other professions, we have bad apples that found a way to manipulate the process and get hired. No system is perfect! However, the system must be as such that officers like those should be identified and terminated BEFORE incidents like this happen. My final comment is to ask that you do not group or characterize all officers in the same category with those officers. I know a lot of officers who really care about the community and citizens. All citizens aren't bad citizens and all officers aren't bad officers.

Editor's Note: There is some speculation that Major Briscoe may be considering a run to become the first black Sheriff in Cleveland County History.

School Board Member Coleman Hunt:

Editor's Note: Folks, I am not a personal fan of Mr. Coleman Hunt. I believe Mr. Hunt has had zipper problems of his own over the years when he was a Principal within Cleveland County Schools. And, I believe Mr. Hunt has been ineffective in his role on the Cleveland County Board of Education because of his long silence and lack of participation in discussions of the many problems that permeate CCS. But, when Mr. Hunt is right about something, I will report it. As I am doing right now.

Folks, in the phony Special Called School Board Meeting this past Wednesday-May 27,2020; during a rambling coverage of issues related to the COVID-19 school closings Superintendent Stephen Fisher went on and on about trivial stuff while glossing over major problems. One particular topic that Fisher was bragging on was the "virtual learning" concept where students at home hook up to the internet for their classes. Maybe in between their sessions with pornography and Facebook.

Anyway, Fisher was bragging about "virtual learning" even though everybody already knows that there are a number of students who don't have internet service at home-leaving them NO OPPORTUNITY to participate in their education via virtual learning. Most everybody also knows that major Supreme Court rulings have held that EVERY child is required by law to have the OPPORTUNITY* to a sound basic education. Basically, since Virtual Learning is not available to everyone, CCS's total reliance on Virtual Learning is unconstitutional. And unfair. And wrong on its face.

This fact was obvious to me the first time I heard about it. But I was busy on other things and didn't say anything. Until now. During all this school shutdown stuff I also noticed that nobody else, black or white, was saying anything either. Until I picked up on what Mr. Coleman Hunt was saying on the recorded School Board meeting this past Wednesday.

Coleman Hunt, began questioning CCS Supt. Fisher about how this virtual learning was reaching ALL the students at home. Of course, Fisher went on and on with a bunch of words that condensed down to the fact that not all students had access to the internet at home. Especially students in the West and North of Cleveland County. And those students living in poverty.

Mr. Hunt could have let it go at that. But he didn't. Mr. Hunt kept asking his questions in slightly different forms and with statements indicating he was certainly interested in ALL students having the opportunity for their rights to the opportunity of a sound basic education and he didn't want any child to fall behind.

The sad part of all this virtual learning discussion at the May 27, 2020 Special Called School Board meeting and how not every child was getting their constitutional due, was that NO other School Board member joined in on the discussion. Nobody made the motion to require Supt Fisher to find a way that every child had the equal opportunity to a sound basic education and that NO child was to be denied that opportunity. When Mr. Hunt finally stopped talking, everything just dropped off the face of the earth.

But Mr. Coleman Hunt finally spoke up about a problem at CCS that nobody was talking about and nothing is likely to ever get done about this unconstitutional virtual learning issue. Of course, School Board members up for re-election this year; Shearra Miller, Richard Hooker and Roger Harris didn't say anything about seeing to it that EVERY child would have that educational right in the midst of the school shutdown. All voters should remember that on 2020 Election Day in November.

Now, I am going to throw my two cents into this failed virtual learning program at CCS. I always like to suggest a resolution to the virtual learning inequality at CCS. If only to show that public input, the very thing that CCS avoids, can

sometimes be helpful.

The Virtual Learning Program doesn't have to depend on internet connections!!! Since CCS is providing meals to students, a virtual learning daily lesson can be recorded on a very cheap USB Thumb Drive that works on all the school provided computers, a bunch of those USB Thumb Drives can be sent to those students without access to the internet along with those CCS provided meals. The student can do their work on those USB Thumb Drives and return them to CCS the very next day when their meal is picked up as well as pick up the Virtual Learning lesson plan for the next days lessons. Those USB Thumb Drives run about \$4 each and can be used over and over again. So, why is CCS not doing this or something similar.

Now, for some additional information about those that are being left behind presently at CCS. An article this very week in the Shelby Star titled "Back to school? 1 in 5 teachers are unlikely to return to reopened classrooms this fall, poll says" estimates that 3% of students don't have access to the internet. Three percent of the 15,000 students at CCS is 450 students. Can Cleveland County and CCS afford to knowingly allow 450 students be denied of their constitutional rights to have the opportunity to a sound basic educational? And that is on top of the 46% of graduating High School Students who cannot read, write and do math at a proficient level. Wait until some lawyer gets ahold of this sorry state of affairs in Cleveland County Schools.

Folks, I say get rid of School Board members Shearra Miller, Richard Hooker and Roger Harris in the 2020 School Board Elections by voting for Robert Queen, Ron Humphries, Joel Shores, Rodney Fitch and Samantha Davis. The five new school board members represent a majority and a majority is all you need to clean house of the problems at Cleveland County Schools.

Stay tuned all you Cleveland County citizens and taxpayer. And be sure to vote in the 2020 School Board and other elections!!!

PS: A message from Willie Green that is appropriate for this article.

Robert,

For those who continue to remain silent, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said of them **"History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people."**

Willie