

American Legion World Series, Baseball leaving Shelby??? Charleston, SC to be the new “Permanent” Home for ALWS? –Facts and gossip related to the history and fate of the ALWS, Baseball provided by Robert A. Williams

First, some facts:

1. The American Legion World Series, Baseball, Inc. is a company incorporated in North Carolina with Former Commissioner Eddie “Massa Eddie” Holbrook as the Chairman of the Board. There is NO legal association between ALWS Baseball, Inc. and the American Legion organization and its various subsidiaries.
2. Cleveland County taxpayers have footed the bills for the ALWS Baseball, Inc from the very start. Including the two-busload junket of Massa Eddie’s buddies who took the lavish taxpayer paid “excursion” to the American Legion Headquarters in Indiana to lobby for a yearly contract to host the American Legion World Series games. There was NEVER any legal contract that the American Legion would ever make Shelby, NC the PERMANENT HOME of the ALWS games. Only a periodic contract that had to be renewed every so often.
3. During the time of the ALWS Baseball, Inc (Massa Eddie’s company) was “courting” the American Legion for the World Series games, the country was in a recession.

Unemployment rates in Cleveland County as well as across NC and the USA were sky-high. And Commissioner Massa Eddie Holbrook and his Commissioner buddies were holding property tax rates artificially high to squeeze taxpayers even as they were losing their jobs and their homes. Many Cleveland County citizens lost their homes and everything they had while the County Commissioners were spending like drunken sailors; dipping into taxpayer fund reserves in the process.

4. The Commissioner's, pushed by Massa Eddie, secretly sold the County's Healthcare system to Carolinas Medical Services (CMS) at pawn-shop prices and financed with ZERO interest. The secret deal included a hidden promise that CMS would pay a bribe to Massa Eddie of One Million Dollars in cash (I say cash because the County has refused to disclose to me how they received the funds for that \$1,000,000.00 Check they wrote to ALWS, Baseball, Inc.) that would be "laundered" through the Cleveland County financial records as a donation to the ALWS, Baseball, Inc. run by Massa Eddie. I have previously published a copy of that \$1 Million Check the County wrote to Massa Eddie's company.
5. Cleveland County taxpayers have funded the ALWS Baseball, Inc. almost \$4 million through 2017. It is expected that amount is now over \$5 million.
6. According to Federal IRS 990 Forms the ALWS, Baseball, Inc. has lost an average of \$1 Million per year for every year it has operated.
7. The ALWS, Baseball, Inc. full-time employee is a member of Massa Eddie's family as are one of the major contractors to the ALWS, Baseball, Inc.
8. Massa Eddie has illegally used Cleveland County Schools property to store and assemble Massa's Holbrook for Commissioner campaign signs. A complaint was made to the Board of Elections and Massa was forced to remove his campaign material from Shelby High School Property.
9. The exclusive use of the Shelby High School Boy's

baseball field for the ALWS, Baseball, Inc. use without equal provisions for a SHS girls' softball field has generated a Federal Title XI complaint filed against Cleveland County Schools. CCS Superintendent Stephen Fisher has apparently tasked CCS's high dollar Raleigh lawyers to tie up the Federal Investigation for as long as possible under the proviso that the CCS Raleigh lawyers submit their bills in \$99,000 or less increments so he (Fisher) can approve the multiple expenditures for legal services without school board approval or oversight. Fisher has also refused to provide documentation regarding CCS lawyer costs that were requested under the Freedom of Information Act as well as North Carolina Public Records laws. It is expected that the Federal Title IX investigation delays caused by the CCS attorneys is close to or has reached the end point and a multi-million-dollar penalty is about to be levied by the Federal Government against CCS in the very near future.

10. The latest boondoggle instigated by ALWS, Baseball, Inc. at the SHS Baseball field, a LASER Grading of the field itself that the County Commissioners chipped in another \$150,000.00 on has been halted because of the Title IX investigation. An inspection of the SHS field indicated the work has been stopped and no equipment is on the field. And the field is in bad condition now and perhaps not suitable for use by the SHS boy's baseball team when school starts next month.
11. The American Legion has cancelled their World Series games for 2020 due to the Coronavirus stopping all the ball games across the country, the winners of which feed into the World Series. There has been no word whether or not the County taxpayers will be refunded the \$150,000 for the laser grading that appears not to have been done.
12. The coronavirus pandemic is presently being debated at the National level regarding whether or not schools will

start back in 2020 as scheduled or even into the fall of 2021. Which might end up cancelling the 2021 ALWS games also.

Now, with all the coronavirus pandemic cancellations this year and possibly into next year, as well as all the information coming out about the Commissioners complicity with Massa Eddie Holbrook's crooked dealing with the ALWS, Baseball, Inc. and the possibility that the funds might dry up during this election year, Massa Eddie must be feeling the hang-man's noose tightening up around his neck in regard to the continuing and large flow of secret taxpayer funding of his pet ALWS, Baseball, Inc. project. You have to just know that Massa Eddie must be searching for greener pastures. Searching for a new host for his ALWS, Baseball, Inc. to suck the blood out of. Getting out of Shelby while the getting is good.

But such searches cannot be done in secret forever. Maybe with the Shelby Star, but certainly not with me. Now some word is percolating out of Massa Eddie's septic-tank like kind of business practices. Words from sources that are spoken on the condition on anonymity. Words that I will call "gossip" say Charleston, SC is the target city for the next ALWS, Baseball, Inc. to call a Permanent Home for the American Legion World Series games. Remember, the American Legion's contract for hosting the American Legion World Series games is with Massa Eddie's ALWS, Baseball, Inc. NOT with the City of Shelby, Cleveland County Schools or even the Cleveland County Commissioners. Especially not with Cleveland County taxpayers. Massa Eddie has shit us all. Massa Eddie can pull out his ALWS, Baseball, Inc from Shelby at a minute's notice. All he has to do is find another sucker city with more money than brains and away he goes. ALWS, Baseball, Inc. (the one briefcase company) included.

But why Charleston, SC? Well, Massa Eddie has an advance man in Charleston. His very own son, Chad Holbrook. (Talk about family connections.) Massa Eddie's son just happens to be the

Head Baseball Coach at The College of Charleston and a person with his own political pull at the college as well as with the City of Charleston.

Folks, from a practical standpoint, Massa Eddie Holbrook packing up his ALWS, Baseball, Inc. from Shelby and moving it to the College of Charleston is a win-win situation for everybody involved. It goes like this.

Cleveland Count, despite spending over \$5 Million directly on the American Legion World Series games and basically giving away \$100,000,000 on the Hospital and Healthcare system sale will be finally rid of Massa Eddie Holbrook and his underhanded wheeling and dealing spending spree. Shelby and Cleveland County never had the "diversity" and depth of travel, tourism and recreational attractions to begin with to ever generate a profit in the past, present and very near future. Everything done, the Earl Scruggs Center, the LeGrand Center, the Foothills Shooting Range are all money losers every year. Just like the ALWS. Even the Cleveland County Fair has become a money loser requiring county taxpayer support. Losing the ALWS and Eddie Holbrook will cause a rethinking of things and hopefully smarter thinking will prevail. Especially after Mr. Willie Green's lawsuits finally "roots" out the corruption in the City of Shelby leadership.

As for the College of Charleston and the City of Charleston. The American Series World Series would be an incremental addition to what the College and City of Charleston already have. If you are a supporter of an American Legion baseball team from Oklahoma and your team makes it to the AL World Series, where would you be most willing to spend your money to visit for a week. Shelby, which has a limited choice of things to do? Or Charleston, which has a vast array of things to do, places to go, beaches, fishing, sailing, a much wider variety of restaurants and local foods, etc. Charleston wins hands down.

The College of Charleston and the City of Charleston already have sports facilities adequate and probably better overall than the Shelby High School boy's baseball field. Even after the \$millions Massa Eddie spent from taxpayer dollars to enlarge and improve the field itself. But inviting Titl IX penalties too.

Motels, Hotels, Restaurants, activities and more. Charleston wins hands down.

Baseball: People in South Carolina like baseball just as much as anywhere else. And everybody likes winners. The College of Charleston and especially Baseball Head Coach Chad Holbrook would have an up-close and personal opportunity to "scout" some of the best baseball talent from all across the country during the AL World Series games. And college scholarships to award that talent with.

Charleston, SC wins hands down in any such comparison between Charleston and Shelby, North Carolina. So, Goodbye ALWS, Baseball, Inc. You might be an asset for Charleston's overall travel and tourism business. But your \$1 Million per year loss is good riddance from Shelby and Cleveland County, NC. At least until we get better leadership, instead of crooks running things here.