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PRESS RELEASE

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Mayor pays public tribute to long-time MLK advocates



Mayor Cedric Glover today recognized three citizens for their extraordinary efforts to hold a privately-operated landfill accountable for the repeated violations and fires originating from the facility and negatively affecting the city, particularly the Martin Luther King Jr. area.

The Rev. Lamar Holden, Middie Farrow and Thelma Humphrey, long-time MLK advocates, were awarded the Mayor's Award of Excellence during the City Council Meeting.

All have been vocal in their opposition to a landfill operated by Harrelson Material Management, Inc. The facility has a history of zoning and operating violations dating back to the mid-1990s and last month was ordered to cease certain operations due to ongoing concerns about emissions that might be harmful to nearby residents.

Rev. Holden has long used his strong voice as a community activist to solicit support for efforts to either close the landfill or force its operators to comply with the local and state regulations that limit potential chemical or gaseous exposure to nearby residents.



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Farrow and Humphrey have invested considerable time and effort to obtain training in environmental advocacy and have used that training to fuel their consistent campaign to raise awareness locally and statewide.

Both women joined a 2008 lawsuit against Harrelson in an attempt to shutter the facility. That lawsuit included several claims aimed at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, which regulates such facilities. One major contention was that DEQ violated its own regulations and a standing executive order of the governor by issuing an operating permit without obtaining documentation of the facility's current compliance with local zoning requirements. The lawsuit, ultimately, was not successful.

That, however, did not dissuade Farrow and Humphrey who continued to lobby state lawmakers for assistance in battling the landfill. This dynamic duo also played a significant role in blocking Harrelson's attempt to expand into a full-fledged municipal dump site for solid waste.

"It is indeed my honor and privilege to be able to recognize these three outstanding citizens, who had the courage to essentially make themselves targets by standing up and speaking truth to power," Mayor Glover said. "I am especially proud of the way they have elevated this issue beyond just the Cooper Road because it is, indeed, a city of Shreveport problem as well."

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