

# Hattiesburg American

---

## NEWS

# Trio pleads guilty to misdemeanor voter fraud

**Tim Doherty** American Staff Writer

Published 2:50 p.m. CT Dec. 1, 2014 | Updated 9:09 p.m. CT Dec. 1, 2014

Three of seven defendants indicted on voter fraud connected to the 2013 Hattiesburg mayoral elections pleaded guilty last week to misdemeanor charges in 12<sup>th</sup> District Circuit Court.

Alethea Michelle Shaw, 46, Carmon Yvette Anderson, 53, and Joseph Lee Anderson, 53, each pleaded guilty to a charge of voting out of district of legal domicile.

Shaw works as public defender for the City of Hattiesburg's Municipal Court. Carmon Anderson works as human resources director for the Hattiesburg Public School District.

Each defendant received a suspended sentence of six months, was fined \$200 and ordered to pay \$220.84 court costs.

Shaw was cited for voting in the June 4, 2013, general election even though her legal residence was listed in Lamar County outside Hattiesburg city limits.

The Andersons were cited for voting in the Sept. 24, 2013, mayoral special election even though their legal residence was listed in Moselle.

The indictments were connected to alleged voting irregularities in the 2013 Hattiesburg mayoral race between incumbent Mayor Johnny DuPree and former Ward 4 City Councilman Dave Ware.

After a year-long investigation, two Forrest County grand juries handed down seven misdemeanor indictments in October.

Twelfth Circuit Court District Attorney Patricia Burchell said in a statement in October that her office had investigated "numerous complaints" and presented them to sitting grand juries in January and July.

“The crimes for which the grand juries found sufficient evidence are misdemeanors under Mississippi law, and they will be prosecuted as such,” she said in the statement.

DuPree won a fourth consecutive term after defeating Ware in a pair of elections that were marred by alleged voting irregularities, particularly with absentee and affidavit ballots.

After DuPree topped Ware by 37 votes in the June 4, 2013, election, Ware filed a petition of contest, alleging voting irregularities.

Specially appointed Judge William Coleman eventually ordered a special election after a July trial, and DuPree defeated Ware by 202 votes in the Sept. 24, 2013, do-over. DuPree had 7,507 votes to Ware’s 7,305.

Burchell said in the October release her office had “thoroughly investigated each and every complaint” she had received regarding potential voting irregularities.

“In the instances where the investigation uncovered sufficient evidence of illegal activity, the cases were presented to the Forrest County Grand Jury.”

There was no indication Monday when the other four defendants’ cases would go to court.