Name of Project: R.O.O.T.S of Sunflower County

Date of interview: June 24, 2016

Location of Interview: Indianola, MS

Name of Interviewer(s): **(A) Travion Dozier**

Name of Interviewee(s): Jimmy Sherman **(B)**

Name of File: 065.MOV

[0:08] **A:** Are you safe in Indianola, MS?

[0:14] **B:** Yes.

[0:16] **A:** How do you feel about the youth court?

[0:19] **B:** I feel that we have a fine youth court. We have a fine youth court judge, former circuit court judge who’s been practicing law probably 40 years—does an excellent job.

[0:33] **A:** If you could change the number of youth that go in youth court, how would you do that?

[0:40] **B:** Well, it looks like right now our resources are kind of limited about what we can do. We see a lot of repeat offenders and a lot of times we can’t get those children to the places that we want to because of the resources involved. It’s like the training schools is usually our last resort but it’s been where they won’t take children until it’s really gone pretty far so that’s basically it and if we had more resources for the children. It looks like we had a program called the Adolescents Offender Program, the AOP program, that’s been discontinued because of funding.

[1:29] **A:** Do you ever get with the mayor about the youth court?

[1:33] **B:** Not really. The youth court is really run by the county, through the chancery court by the county so we rarely see the mayor. We do see all the police chiefs and police officers from the city.

[1:56] **A:** With the programs that you see around here do you think it would be helpful to youth kids?

[2:00] **B:** Absolutely. I surely do.

[2:06] **A:** Is there anything you want us to know that we haven’t asked you that you can give us information on?

[2:10] **B:** basically I’ll tell you this: the theory of youth court is designed not to punish children but what’s in their best interest. A lot of times it would look like we’re trying to punish them but if you read the youth court pleadings or documents it’s always in the interest of the child, not the state versus the child. So we’re always there to try to help children and try to help parents help children.