

Maury prom king faces 4 felony charges

By Janie Bryant
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Four felony charges including a charge of malicious wounding will proceed against Ricky Haley, the Maury High School student who was crowned prom king a week after being arrested in connection with a drive-by shooting.

During a preliminary hearing Thursday, General District Judge S. Clark Daugherty decided a grand jury should also consider charges of child endangerment, use of a firearm and conspiracy. Daugherty dismissed 15 other charges.

Evidence included Haley's statement to police, in which he said he told his passenger not to shoot, pushed the weapon down and had the gun pointed at him.

A teenage girl testified she was walking from a store in the 2400 block of Lafayette Blvd. when shots were fired from the front passenger side of a car that drove by. She said she was hit in the leg but did not go to the hospital.

A police officer testified that he stopped a Buick matching the description of the car. He said Haley, who was driving the car, was cooperative. Haley told police he had a scholarship at Norfolk State University, the officer testified, and said he gave

someone a ride for gas money.

Police arrested Haley and Raetron Malik Whitaker-Lee, both 18, and two juveniles who were in the backseat of the car.

The officer testified a gun slipped down the leg of one of the passengers as police patted him down. He said there was also a rifle on the floor of the backseat where a toddler was sitting.

The judge silently read the statement Haley made to police.

Defense attorney Andy Protogyrou cited portions of Haley's statement, including that his client repeatedly told the shooter not to fire from his car. Haley also told police he tried to stop the shooter by pushing down the weapon.

Protogyrou said after the hearing that his client had known Whitaker-Lee for only about a week.

News of Haley's return to school after being released on bond raised safety concerns and questions about school policy.

School Board Chairman Kirk Houston testified on Haley's behalf at his bond hearing.

Houston, who is Haley's minister, did not inform school officials of the testimony and said he did not see it as a school issue.

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