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## **Hamilton set for April pre-trial date**

TAYLORVILLE - Donnella Hamilton appeared in court today for the first time since her council, Amanda Ade-Harlow, was relieved of her duties after entering a motion to withdraw.

Hamilton's appearance was brief and her newly appointed council Mark Wykoff, a Springfield attorney, asked for a pre-trial date of April 13, 2010. Judge Ronald Spears accepted the pre-trial date and Hamilton will appear at 10 a.m.

Judge Spears also set a tentative jury trial date of May 3, 2010.

"Being a first degree murder case, I cannot say for certain that I will be completely prepared for the May 3rd date," said Wykoff. "However, this should be adequate time for me to delve further into the case and increase my knowledge on the matter."

Hamilton, 26, has been charged with three counts of first degree murder in the shooting death of Steven L. Brummett last July. Each of the charges carry a sentencing range of 20 to 60 years, with the possibility of natural life.

In January, codefendant Brandon L. Allsup, 27, Springfield, was sentenced to a term of natural life in the Illinois Department of Corrections, without the possibility of parole, for Brummett's murder.

In February, codefendant Ashley Davis, 21, entered an open plea of guilty to a charge of concealment of a homicidal death. The State is seeking the maximum sentence of five years and Davis will appear in court April 8, 2010 for a status hearing.

All suspects are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law.