

For Immediate Release: 7/15/2020

Winston-Salem Demonstrators Regarding **Occupy the Block, DAY TWO #OccupyWSNC**

We **demand** full transparency in the process towards justice for John Neville. We **demand** that the Forsyth County District Attorney's office and Forsyth County Sheriff Bobby Kimbrough's department answer the public:

Why are you covering up a murder?

We demand answers to all of the following questions: Why has Sheriff Bobby Kimbrough not publicly addressed any changes to policy that were made after Neville's death? Was Sheriff Bobby Kimbrough at any time on the scene during the hog tying of Neville? Why has the hog tie remained an acceptable restraint in Forsyth County when it has been banned in the majority of police precincts across the country years ago? Have there been any changes in the medical provider since Neville's death? How many other deaths have occurred at the detention center since the death of Neville? Have there been changes to the handcuff policies of sick inmates? When was the last time the FCSO conducted an overall use of force training and handcuffing training for its deputies and detention officers? Were the detention officers that handcuffed Neville certified to handcuff him? Have there been any policy changes for how to handle handcuffs when the key breaks, for when bolt cutters are necessary?

Why was Guilford County never notified of John Neville's death? What would have happened had Guilford County ADA Spiker known that John Neville was resuscitated after losing his pulse in FCDC custody when she was asked to release his unsecured bond? Would these staff members have still been charged had SB 168 not been vetoed by Governor Cooper? Why were these staff members allowed to continue working with our incarcerated siblings for seven months after their involvement in a murder? Would the public have been notified of this murder had SB 168 not been vetoed by Governor Cooper? Was the passing of SB 168 intended to shield the murder that took place in the FCDC from the public? What involvement did Sheriff Bobby Kimbrough have in the proposal of SB 168 the night before news reports on the death of John Neville were to become publicly available?

Furthermore, according to the Grace, Tisdale, & Clifton website, "Mike and the firm Grace, Tisdale & Clifton are one of the two local firms who represent local law enforcement through the Police Benevolent Association." Michael Grace, the lawyer for the John Neville estate, has been representing the Sheriff's Department since Sheriff Schatzman's tenure, and presented Sheriff Bobby Kimbrough to the court and to the public at his swearing in ceremony. What rules of professional conduct under the NC State Bar Rule 1.7 Conflict of Interest are implicated by Michael Grace representing both the estate and the Sheriff's Office?

Why are you, Sheriff Bobby Kimbrough and DA Jim O'Neill, covering up a murder?

On Wednesday, July 15, Winston-Salem community-based organizations and demonstrators began gathering in the Downtown area at 10am, and stayed until just after 10pm. The first day of occupation included camaraderie among local activist organizations such as Young Democrats of Forsyth County, Housing Justice Now, The United States of Racism, Prisoner Outreach Initiative, Vote On Purpose, among others; educational talks, speeches, and poetry; sign

painting; marches to the Forsyth County Detention Center; live music from Steady Hype Rap Collective; and food provided by Burger Supreme and Kaveman Dogs-Kareem Anderson Sunshine. The day closed with a vigil led by Reverend K. Monet Rice-Jalloh. A total of about 200 demonstrators cycled through the occupation over the course of the day.

On Thursday, July 16, and for as long as it takes for our demands to be met, we will continue to occupy downtown Winston-Salem. Please join us. In the words of K. Monet Rice-Jalloh, "No Justice, No Peace. We have got to have Transparency."

For further information, please see @TriadAbolitionProject and @_theunitycoalition_ on Instagram.

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