

Video Release Statement from Triad Abolition Project x Unity Coalition

On July 31, 2020, it was decided in a hearing at Forsyth County Superior Court that parts of videos of the circumstances leading to John Elliott Neville's death would be made public. We recognize that whether to view this video is a personal decision to be made with the utmost respect for the humanity of Mr. Neville. We also recognize that for many, viewing this video might provoke intense emotions, from rage to mourning. We are holding space for the full range of those emotions, and have had very intentional conversations as organizers and occupiers about how to best continue supporting Mr. Neville's family and our community as we process. From the beginning of our efforts demanding justice for Mr. Neville, we have respected the family's wishes to not have the video of the circumstances leading to their father's death be made public. We stand by that decision as organizers and individuals. We understand the trauma associated with Mr. Neville's family having to publicly relive their grief, and also know the trauma associated with Black people being consistently exposed to brutality against people that look like them. Now that the family has since decided to support efforts to release the video, we support their agency in making that difficult decision. We cannot imagine how unbearable this journey has been for them, and we are in awe of their bravery and strength. We continue to stand with them, and will continue to stand in the gap for them demanding justice for their father and policy change that is in accordance with their goals to prevent what happened to Mr. Neville from happening to anyone else.

#OccupyWSNC will continue until our four reasonable demands (outlined below) are met. To date, we have not heard responses from any city or county officials regarding our requests.

1. Answer the questions posed by the Triad Abolition Project regarding Mr. Neville's murder.

(<http://triadabolitionproject.org/demands>.)

2. Ban the prone restraint and commit to sanctions for any law enforcement personnel who uses it on any citizens, incarcerated or not.

3. Pledge to notify the public of any deaths of incarcerated people.

4. Dismiss all charges against peaceful protesters practicing our Constitutionally protected rights.