

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017

SALISBURY, NC – May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017: Representatives from the City of Salisbury have attempted to convene grassroots leaders to strategize the release of the SBI report, related to the officer-involved shooting death of Ferguson Laurent. In response, grassroots leaders have refused the City's invitation however the Salisbury community will convene on **May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 6:30PM at Mission House Church/ 120 Statesville Blvd for The People's Assembly**. The community cordially invites City Manager Lane Bailey, Chief Jerry Stokes, Deputy Chief Barnes and PIO Linda McElroy to join us and share what your concerns are and strategize with us in a manner that is more conducive to public input.

After several disappointing attempts to partner with the City of Salisbury, the local community has specific requests that meet the needs of the Salisbury community. We believe fundamentally, that city officials should function with the community's best interest in mind however recent actions by the City of Salisbury demonstrate otherwise. The City of Salisbury exhibits a lack of concern for the well-being of its community and has revealed your inability to engage the local community effectively.

This City faces challenging times; it's critical that our elected officials omit their self-interests and answer the call of the community. Unfortunately, the City of Salisbury has repeatedly neglected opportunities to productively engage its community members. While general consensus among community leaders is that partnership between the City of Salisbury and the community is important to the progression of this City, this community will no longer be pawns subjected to careless local governance of this City we call home. Additionally, we will no longer be insulted by city officials who have insinuated that Black and Brown communities will respond violently after the release of the SBI report.

One thing that is certain, both entities share a love for the Salisbury community. While love can catapult progression, it is nothing without truth. The truth is, unless the community leaders stand together in the face of injustice, the City of Salisbury will continue empty attempts to divide and silence. Today, we stand together and will continue to reject any invitations from the City of Salisbury unless you meet the following demands:

- Show up to The People's Assembly at the specified time provided in this missive;
- Release the SBI report related to the officer-involved shooting death of Ferguson Laurent immediately. We are directly calling on District Attorney, Brandy Cook to authorize the release of the SBI report. City of Salisbury representatives have implied it is the District Attorney's decision to withhold the SBI report from the community;
- Provide the community with the official date District Attorney Brandy Cook received the SBI report;
- Provide the community with the official date District Attorney Brandy Cook informed City Officials about the findings of the SBI report; including a list of names of the elected officials and City staff to which it was provided;
- Suspend the use of no-knock warrants;
- Create a job description for the City Manager within the scope and authority provided in N.C.G.S 160A-148 specific to the needs and population of Salisbury. As it stands, City Council is derelict in its duty to manage the City's top executive by blithely relying on the general description

provided in the statute and not providing specific guidance by which to measure the City's top executive's performance.

- Answer whether or not the Salisbury Chief of Police is on probation; provide the community with detailed information related to the probation. Does the Salisbury Chief of Police meet basic standards and if not why is this Chief authorized to carry out the duties and responsibilities required?
- Release a full report of the City of Salisbury's funding and funding distributions.

In an effort to reconcile the lack of transparency represented by the City of Salisbury, local grassroots leaders request a confirmation in writing by 5:00PM on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017 that these demands will be met within 7-days. Until then, we withdraw our participation in meetings organized by the City of Salisbury or affiliates of the City of Salisbury.

Consider this statement a formal invitation to participate in a People's Assembly on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 6:30pm, 120 Statesville Blvd. At that time, the City of Salisbury will have an opportunity to meet and discuss your agenda items intended for this week's private meetings at Hood Theological Seminary. The People's Assembly will give the City of Salisbury another opportunity to engage the local community in depth and share the intended release of the SBI report. Please be prepared to answer questions from community members. We ask elected officials and City staff to please not contact community leaders individually. If you should contact community leaders anyway, we will respond by extending an invitation to the People's Assembly on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 6:30pm, 120 Statesville Blvd.

If you desire clarification on any of the aforementioned demands, please contact the Salisbury NAACP President, Gemale Black via email at [gemale.black@yahoo.com](mailto:gemale.black@yahoo.com) or via phone at 704.645.9906. There will also be updates on the *Justice in Salisbury* Facebook page.

Sincerely,  
The Salisbury Community