

NORTH CAROLINA NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

P. O. BOX 1236 • CARRBORO, NC 27510  
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Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II  
*President, State Conference of Branches*

*Michelle Laws*  
*President, Chapel Hill-Carrboro Branch 5689*

October 6, 2009

Mayor Kevin Foy  
City Council Members  
Roger Stancill, Chapel Hill Town Manager  
Chapel Hill Town Hall on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard  
Chapel Hill, NC  
Via E-Mail

**RE: *Three Requests on the Charles Brown Case***

Dear Mayor, Council Members and Manager Stancill:

We learned at 4 p.m. last Tuesday, via a News Release e-mailed to the NAACP from various media outlets requesting our response, that Chief Brian Curran and Capt. Jeff Clarke presented a report and answered questions about their “investigation” of the questionable stop, search and seizure of a Chapel Hill business owner in early June in downtown at a private meeting on last Monday after the Council meeting.

We respectfully request the same opportunity to present the incident to you from Mr. Brown’s viewpoint. We also wish to raise directly with you the questions that were not addressed in our original complaint. Please contact me by the end of the week to arrange this meeting. We would be glad to meet before, after or during a Council Meeting. We prefer to do our business with you in the open. We believe this issue warrants at least a half hour of time.

Secondly, we respectfully request a report on the status of the Civilian Police Review Board. Obviously the treatment of one of the few Black Business owners in downtown Chapel Hill has a chilling effect on any Black entrepreneur. This case points up the fallacy of police reviewing police in a case of possible misconduct. According to the Chief’s report, the only people interviewed in the investigation were the five officers who made, condoned and apparently misrepresented the arrest to Capt. Clark--officers who we believe taunted Mr. Brown and, after they knew they had arrested the wrong man, insisted that the NCIC operator search not only the standard criminal records file, but the extended AOC files. This type of incident sets back police-community relations five years. Some Chapel Hill officers have made genuine good faith efforts to build relationships and trust with the African American community--particularly with the young men who cannot find decent jobs. These officers’ efforts are undermined, however, by this type of incident, and the less than vigorous investigation. If there were a

Civilian Review Board in place, we could avoid these setbacks. As part of the report about the status of the Review Board, we request a five-year review of the officers' stops and arrests including location, cause, and race and gender demographics. This base information will be useful to the Civilian Review Board in evaluating the Department's progress.

Thirdly, we respectfully request a report on the number of Black business owners in the Town of Chapel Hill, how they have been included in the Town's development plans, whether they are members of the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations that promote the interests of small businesses, and if not, why not? Perhaps this will stimulate some discussions and decisions about bringing about more diversity and equality to our community.

Sincerely,

Michelle Cotton Laws

C: Media

Rev. William J. Barber II, President of State Conference of NAACP  
Ben Jealous, President, National NAACP