

From: Jill Doub <jill.doub@gmail.com>
Sent: 6/10/2022 8:15:04 AM
To: Jenna Miller <jmiller2@ashevillenc.gov>
Cc: councilgroup <ashevillencouncil@ashevillenc.gov>
Subject: Re: Felony charges for protesters in Aston Park?

Thanks for the response (and my apologies for my very delayed response)! I understand what you're saying. It sounds like the amount of litter left in the park was burdensome.

Honestly, for what it's worth, I still think the felony charges and park bans are overly punitive in this case. It seems like an overreach for the City.

Happy to live in a place where I can send a message like this to the local government and it actually be read and responded to. I appreciate you all (and the protesters, too)!

Take care,
Jill

On Wed, May 18, 2022 at 4:39 PM Jenna Miller <jmiller2@ashevillenc.gov> wrote:

Hi Jill,
Please see the response from staff below. Let me know if you have any other questions. Thanks!

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Ms. Doub,

Thank you for contacting us at the City of Asheville. We appreciate your community engagement and the opportunity to share our information with you.

To address the Aston Park issue you raised, the people charged at the event were charged with felony littering. They were not arrested for protesting or publicly demonstrating their values as has been portrayed by some media outlets.

The Asheville Police Department estimated up to 2,200 pounds of litter were intentionally left in the shared community space during this event, resulting in a clean up that cost the City of Asheville an estimated \$2,600.00 in taxpayer funds.

Those charged have been restricted from City of Asheville parks under the Restricted Access to City Parks policy enacted in 2017. The aim of this policy is to provide a safe environment for City employees and the public while in a City park. A restricted access notice may be issued to anyone in violation of the policy. The criminal charges related to these actions are a separate matter currently being handled by the Buncombe County District Attorney.

The City of Asheville respects the right of our community to have their voices heard. However, destructive action in public parks, such as occurred in this case, will not be tolerated. Violations of these rules may result in being banned from City property. We strive to provide a safe environment in which anyone can safely and freely express their opinions, along with respecting the rights of all our community to enjoy safe and clean parks.

Thank you.

On Wed, May 18, 2022 at 3:28 PM Jill Doub <jill.doub@gmail.com> wrote:

Thanks for the response, Jenna!

Jill

On Wed, May 18, 2022 at 10:28 AM Jenna Miller <jmiller2@ashevillenc.gov> wrote:

Hi Jill,
Thank you for reaching out. I've forwarded your email to the appropriate staff who can provide a response. I will get back to you as soon as I can.

Thanks,
Jenna

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jill Doub** <jill.doub@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, May 17, 2022 at 8:58 PM
Subject: Felony charges for protesters in Aston Park?
To: <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>

Hi there,

I recently learned that several folks who were involved in a peaceful protest at Aston Park are now facing felony charges and have been banned from all Parks & Recreation facilities even though they've not been convicted of any crime. This seems like a strange thing for the city to be putting resources into, so I just wanted to voice that here.

I think it's misguided to punish people for publicly demonstrating their values. Protests get messy sometimes, I know, but they're an important part of living in a strong, healthy democracy.

Any additional details are appreciated, to help me understand why the city is pursuing this case. Thanks for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,
Jill Doub

--
Jenna Miller
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City Manager's Office
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