

THE CHRONICLE

History | Heritage | Culture

Volume 47, Number 22

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.

THURSDAY, March 18, 2021

Local NAACP hosts COVID-19 vaccination clinic

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

Last weekend the Winston-Salem NAACP headquarters was transformed into a COVID-19 vaccination site. Ahead of the vaccine clinic held on Saturday, March 13, 200 people pre-registered to receive the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

The clinic was held in collaboration with the local NAACP, the Forsyth County Department of Public Health, Wake Forest Baptist Health, Novant Health and the volunteer organization Women-In-Action. The event was open to healthcare workers, senior citizens, and frontline essential workers. Participants had to pre-register

online and schedule an appointment.

On the day of the clinic, participants were greeted at the door with temperature checks and hand sanitizer before making their way inside to receive the vaccine.

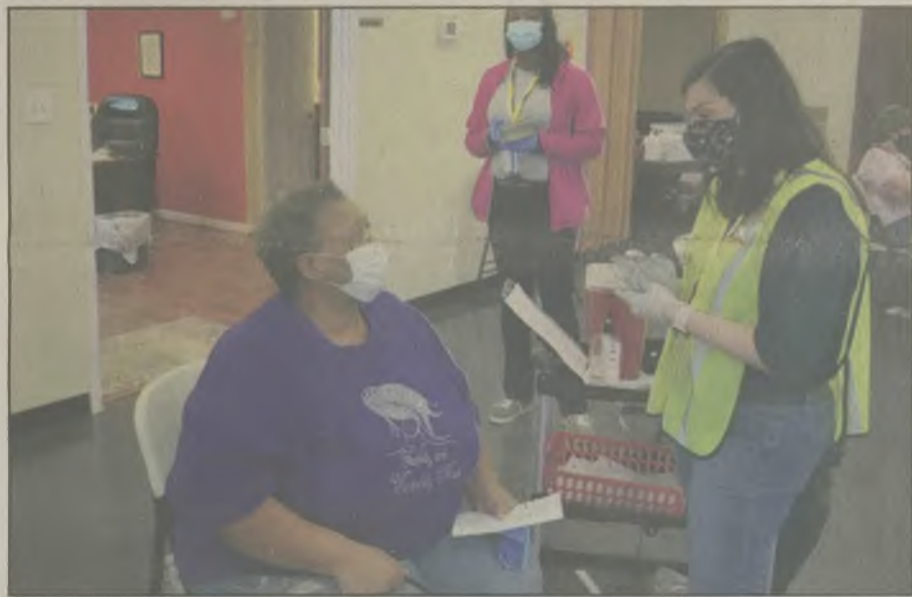
When discussing the clinic, president of the local NAACP, Al Jabbar, said it felt good to be able to bring the clinic to the people. "We want the people to know we're a resource for the community, so we were excited when we had the opportunity to host a vaccine clinic here," he said.

Jabbar said although he understands why there is some skepticism when it comes to receiving vac-



Photos by Tevin Stinson

Last weekend the Winston-Salem NAACP hosted a COVID-19 vaccination clinic at its headquarters.



During the vaccination clinic at the NAACP headquarters, 200 people received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

cines, especially in the Black community, he got the vaccine and is encouraging other people to do the same. Jabbar mentioned he received the Moderna vaccine a few weeks ago and aside from a little soreness in his arm where he received the shot, he didn't show any side effects.

"I was skeptical. I'm 73 years old, so I remember what happened in the past," he said. "But we have to understand that this could save lives, so I've been encouraging

people to get it."

Clinical Director of the Department of Health, Edwin Marshall, said after seeing where we were at this time last year, being able to vaccinate thousands of people in one day is like a dream come true. Over the weekend, the Department of Health also held a vaccine clinic at the Winston-Salem Fairgrounds, where close to 8,000 people received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

"I've seen this come full circle from beginning

to end," Marshall said. "Hopefully we're on our way out of this, but it feels great to be able to deliver the education and protection that's needed."

The Forsyth County Department of Public Health announces openings available to receive the vaccine throughout the week. For more information, visit <https://www.co.forsyth.nc.us/publichealth/>, or "Forsyth County Department of Public Health" on Facebook.

WSPD launches Aviation Unit using drones

BY TEVIN STINSON
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The Winston-Salem Police Department (WSPD) has introduced a new unit that will use drones or sUAS (small Unarmed Aircraft System).

During the Public Safety Committee meeting on Monday, March 16, Assistant Chief W.S. Weaver II said the WSPD Aviation Unit was established to provide aerial photography for documentation

of crime scenes and police response incidents in the city, including missing persons, large event monitoring, hazmat incidents, large fire scenes, severe weather response, and suspicious packages.

Weaver said he was aware of community concerns about potential invasions of privacy and that the sUAS would not be used as a general surveillance platform. The drones are not equipped with facial recognition software and they don't have the capability to monitor conversations between people.

"We at the WSPD are familiar with the concerns of the American Civil Liberties Union regarding law enforcement use of this technology and we have utilized information from their organization to maintain trust with our community. We will not be flying into our residents' backyards, looking into

their windows to invade their privacy," Weaver continued. "Law enforcement across our nation is struggling with maintaining trust within our communities and we at the WSPD have been engaged with building trust through community oriented policing since 1989. We will not allow the misuse of technology to erode our trust with the community."

Currently the WSPD has four drones total, but they plan to add more throughout the year and train more pilots. In order to pilot a drone for the WSPD, you have to be licensed with FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) and pass a training course.

After watching a brief video that showed how the drones work, members of the Public Safety Committee and the Winston-Salem City Council had the opportunity to share their thoughts and ask questions



about the drones and the Aviation Unit. Chair of the Public Safety Committee, James Taylor, who is also publisher of The Chronicle, said, "As technology continues to evolve and expand, we have to keep up with that technology to better serve our citizens."

Councilmember Kev-

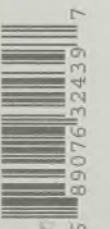
in Mundy encouraged the WSPD and the city's marketing team to ensure that the people know how the drones will be used. Although he applauded Weaver for detailing how the drones will be used, Mundy said there needs to be a plan to introduce the unit to the community.

"There are people who are going to disagree with this," Mundy continued. "We need to have a PR plan before we introduce this to the public."

According to Assistant Chief Weaver, the WSPD Aviation Unit is expected to go live sometime this week. Weaver also mentioned that they are working with the city's marketing department to let the community know about the new unit.

"We've been able to work with city marketing and communications to be able to push the word out and as we start receiving comments, whether good or bad, from our citizens, we'll take those into consideration," he said. "We will be stepping forward and telling the people what we're doing as far as trying to ensure we're still maintaining their trust with the use of this technology."

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