

Ordinance 24.289 continued from page B6

RESOLUTION NO. 24-288 (Cont.)	ADOPTED this the 25th day of April, 2024.  President of the City Council of the City of Huntsville, Alabama
APPROVED this the 25th day of April, 2024.	 Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS Sealed proposals will be received by Alabama A & M University in Normal, Alabama at the office of the <u>Alabama A & M University, Facilities Conference Room, 453 Buchanan Way, Normal, Alabama 35811</u> until 2:00 p.m. CST May 2, 2024, for the project. <u>Morrison Fine Arts Elevator Upgrades:</u> This is an interior renovation of one existing elevator on the Alabama A & M campus. at which time they will be opened and read. A cashier's check or bid bond payable to <u>Alabama A & M University</u> in an amount not less than five (5) percent of the amount of the bid, but in no event more than \$10,000, must accompany the bidder's proposal. Performance and Payment Bonds and evidence of insurance required in the bid documents will be required at the signing of the Contract. Drawings and specifications may be examined at the office of Dodge Data Analytics (www.construction.com) and Construction Connect Data Plan Room (www.constructconnect.com) Electronic Bid documents may be obtained from Dodge Data. Bidders may order prints directly from Repro Products (770) 434- 3050. Bids must be submitted on proposal forms furnished by the Architect or copies thereof. All bidders bidding in amounts exceeding that established by the State Licensing Board for General contractors must be licensed under the provisions of Title 34, Chapter 8, Code of Alabama, 1975, and must show evidence of license before bidding or the bid will not be received or considered by the Architect; the bidder shall show such evidence by clearly displaying his or her current license number on the outside of the sealed envelope in which the proposal is delivered. The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive technical errors if, in the Owner's judgement, the best interest of the Owner will thereby be promoted.	<u>Alabama A & M University</u> (Awarding authority) <u>Alabama A & M University</u> (Local Awarding authority) <u>CHASM Architecture LLC</u> (Architect)
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INVESTIGATION

continued from page A1

look.”

In his letter to U.S. Attorney Prim Escalona, Merritt requested she meet with Perkins’ widow, Catrela Perkins, as soon as possible.

“The Decatur Police Department is engaged in a pattern of civil and criminal abuses that require immediate intervention,” he wrote.

Reiterating his claims made in a civil lawsuit against DPD last year on behalf of Perkins’ estate, Merritt wrote that "Decatur's policies and procedures 'promote the use of excessive and unconstitutional force against citizens.'"

The letter also claims that the events of 3rd Friday marked a “sharp escalation by officers who have agitated the community since (Mac) Marquette's criminal indictment.”

Former officer Marquette, accused of shooting and killing Steve Perkins on Sept. 29, was indicted by a Morgan County grand jury for murder on Jan. 5.

The Decatur Police Department referred questions to Mayor Tab Bowling on Friday, who said the city is aware of Merritt's comments.

“The DPD is reviewing last Friday's events,” he said. “As a city, we're constantly looking to ensure that everything we do is to the highest standard. Law enforcement duties are extremely challenging, and we want to be sure that we’re doing all we can to help them do their job and to keep our community safe. We are exploring

available resources to help us to that end.”

Bowling declined to comment on the possibility of a DOJ investigation.

From reviewing video recordings, police complaints and social media, Merritt said officers such as Lt. Joe Renshaw have made public statements showing support for Marquette after he was indicted.

An Instagram account appearing to belong to Renshaw includes a picture of him standing next to Marquette, captioned: “For those wondering where I stand? I stand for my brother.”

“The people of Decatur, as expressed through the grand jury comprised of citizens of Decatur, have determined that there's probable cause that Marquette committed a crime — the most serious crime in our jurisprudence, which is murder,” Merritt said Friday. “The DPD are pretending that this didn't occur.”

Merritt's firm was involved in the case of Ahmaud Arbery, a Black man murdered in 2020 while jogging in Glynn County, Georgia. Former District Attorney Jackie Johnson was indicted on charges of interfering with the investigation into Arbery's murder. Merritt said the case is an “important analogy” for what's happening in Decatur.

“What we discovered was that she (Johnson) and the Glynn County Police Department were engaged in all levels of corruption,” he said. “That is what I expect

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to come out of this. I think that, as a result of the murder of Perkins and the light that it's putting on the city, we're going to find a lot of people who are used to doing the wrong thing and getting away with it.”

‘You just don't do that’

Merritt said the way Decatur police officers are responding to “peaceful, lawful, and First Amendment-protected protests” shows that they believe themselves to be above the law.

“Last Friday was a very peaceful demonstration,” he said. “It was just a peaceful gathering of people. They weren't blocking anything; the roads were already shut down. It (DPD's actions) seems reflective of a police department in crisis.”

He said the handcuffing of Catrela Perkins last week was “constitutionally offensive” and showed a “high disregard and disrespect” for the community.

“I've represented families all over the country, and the one thing that we try to treat sacred — on both sides of the argument — are the victims' families,” Merritt said. “You just don't do that. I don't understand what's going on.”

Around 26 nonviolent demonstrators have been arrested and charged mostly with disorderly conduct since Perkins was killed. Merritt said this treatment of demonstrators is continually proving his claims against DPD in the lawsuit.

“I have lost faith in Chief Todd Pinion's ability to lead this particular department that seems out of control,” he said. “It's a complete lack of leadership. It seems that the officers are not only allowed to disobey his orders but

to take independent actions and insist that he ratifies their actions.”

In a footnote to Merritt's letter, he claims that Marquette avoided the requirements of Aniah's Law — which requires defendants charged with severe crimes to be held without bond pending a hearing — and received an unusually low bond of \$30,000.

District Attorney Scott Anderson, who is prosecuting Marquette's case, agreed to the bond amount set by Circuit Judge Jennifer Howell. Anderson did not respond to requests for comment on Friday. A hearing on a temporary gag order in Marquette's case is scheduled for May 17.

In addition to writing a letter to Escalona, Merritt said he's also reaching out to the DOJ's assistant attorney general for civil rights, Kristen Clarke.

A “pattern or practice investigation” is a “thorough and independent investigation conducted by civil rights attorneys at the Justice Department to search for any patterns of misconduct within a given police department,” according to a DOJ fact sheet.

The DOJ launched a pattern or practice investigation last year into the Memphis Police Department following the killing of Tyre Nichols, a 29-year-old Black man, by five police officers.

During such an investigation, in addition to interviews with community members and police officers, the DOJ observes officers during shifts, reviews documents and bodycam video and evaluates specific incidents relevant to the investigation.

Escalona's office could not be reached for comment Friday.

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