

Black man led by rope by white cops on horseback sues Texas city



The lawsuit accused the city and the police department of negligence [File: Photo courtesy: Adrienne Bell/Twitter]

Galveston, October 13 (RHC)-- In the U.S., a Black man who was led by a rope by two white officers on horseback has sued a southeast Texas city and its police department for \$1 million, saying he suffered humiliation and fear during his arrest.

A lawsuit filed last week in Galveston County district court on behalf of Donald Neely, 44, alleged the officers' conduct was "extreme and outrageous" -- both physically injuring Neely and causing him emotional distress, U.S. media outlets reported, citing the court documents.

Photos of the August 2019 encounter showed Neely being led by the officers on a rope linked to handcuffs – reminiscent of pictures showing slaves in chains.

Neely, who was experiencing homelessness at the time, was sleeping on a sidewalk when he was arrested for criminal trespass and led around the block to a mounted patrol staging area. In body-camera video, one officer could be heard twice saying that leading Neely by rope down city streets would look

“bad.”

The lawsuit accused the city and the department of negligence, and stated that the officers should have known Neely would consider it offensive to be led on the rope “as though he was a slave.”

“Neely felt as though he was put on display as slaves once were,” the lawsuit stated.

In a statement at the time, Police Chief Vernon Hale called the tactic a “trained technique and best practice in some scenarios.” However, he said he believed his officers “showed poor judgement,” adding that the department since changed its policy to prevent the use of the technique.

A Texas Rangers investigation determined the officers did not break the law.

Neely’s criminal trespass charge was dismissed in court. His lawsuit also alleges malicious prosecution connected to the charge.

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