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FEATURED

## Body Believed to be Allisha Watts Found; Boyfriend Arrested

Elena Marsh and Ana Risano Staff Writers

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Allisha Watts, courtesy photo

Montgomery County law enforcement authorities, working in concert with several other agencies, announced Thursday afternoon that police had found human remains they believe to be the body of Foxfire resident Allisha Watts.

"This is not the outcome that we had been hoping for," Montgomery Sheriff Pete Herron said at a brief news conference attended by Moore County Sheriff Ronnie Fields, "but by finding Alisha today it can bring some closer. I hope and I pray bring some closure to family and friends moving forward."

Watts, who also had deep family and personal ties to West Southern Pines, disappeared July 18. She had told friends she was going to Charlotte that weekend to see her boyfriend, James Dunmore, who lived in the city.

Dunmore was arrested Thursday and charged with murder in connection with Watts' disappearance. He is in custody at the Montgomery County Sheriff's office.

Fields said at the same news conference Thursday that the Moore County Sheriffs Department will continue to help with the case.

"We just have to do the very best we can and move forward and lift Ms. Watts' name up," said Fields. "There will be a day of reckoning for this individual that was arrested."

Police indicated Thursday morning that a body had been found near the community of Norman, which is off U.S. 74.

According to a statement from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department on Thursday afternoon, the "case is no longer considered a missing person investigation."

Watts was reported missing July 19 after friends and family said she had gone to Charlotte to see Dunmore a few days prior.

On July 18, Watts' black Mercedes SUV was found in the parking lot of the Anson County DMV office in Polkton, about an hour west of Moore County on U.S. 74. Dunmore was found inside and unresponsive.

Police had remained silent on Dunmore's condition or whereabouts or whether they considered him a person of interest in Watts' disappearance.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department filed a missing persons report on July 19 for Watts. Foxfire police searched Watts' home but did not find her.

Friends and family had been maintaining a series of vigils and search parties for Watts over the last few weeks and kept hope that she remained alive.

Watts had been active in the West Southern Pines community, serving as the corresponding secretary for the Rufus McLaughlin American Legion Auxiliary Unit 177. She also is a board member of the Southern Pines Land and Housing Trust, a member of the Moore County branch of the NAACP and member of the West Southern Pines Community Association.

She is also the owner and CEO of Inspired Visions Support Services, Inc. in Siler City, which provides disability services to people of all ages.

Those involved in the investigation include the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, Foxfire Police Department, Richmond County Sheriff's Office, Moore County Sheriff's Office, Anson County Sheriff's Office, North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

For more information and updates check the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office Facebook page.



## Family, Friends Still Seeking Answers on Woman's Disappearance



Foxfire Woman Missing Since July 16