

Group calls for officer with checkered past to resign from civil service board

By: Chris Nakamoto - June 16, 2020 4:30 PM in Top Story

BATON ROUGE- Together Baton Rouge is calling for the immediate resignation of Cpl. Robert Moruzzi as Chairman of the Municipal Police and Fire Civil Service Board. Moruzzi was voted in by members of the Baton Rouge Police Union, and his term expires on July 26, 2020. Together Baton Rouge said his history of police brutality is deeply troubling considering our nation's current climate.



The board has five members, one appointed from the police department, the fire department, the municipal government, LSU and SU. Moruzzi is the appointee from the police department.

In 2015, taxpayers shelled out \$75,000 after he kicked the teeth out of a 24-year-old man while serving a narcotics search warrant. Brett Percle told WBRZ he still thinks about what happened that day.

"He actually upon our first encounter threw me to the ground, kicked my face and the back of my head into the ground," Percle said. "Basically, a curb stomp where I lost four of my teeth."

In 2009, Moruzzi was off duty when he punched a manager of a bar on Third Street and a gun appeared. He was fired from the Baton Rouge Police Department but was reinstated in 2010.

"We are calling for local entities with an appointed position to develop standards for their appointment, considering individuals with an exemplary civil and professional record, free of conflict of interest, and who would serve in the best interest of the community," Together Baton Rouge said.

"It should be people with an exemplary record on this board," Jennifer Carwile with Together Baton Rouge said. "We know there are officers with exemplary records."

Pastor Clee Lowe told WBRZ with the current climate around the nation, Moruzzi's past actions are unacceptable.

"He is unfit. His character is not what it should be, and he does not represent what we believe that should be of the highest order," Lowe said. "Having high ethics and good standards based upon his background as a police officer."



The WBRZ Investigative Unit reached out to Moruzzi and the Police Union.

The Police Union told WBRZ the person who represents BRPD on the Civil Service Board is voted upon by union members. A member of the union told WBRZ that 94 percent of Baton Rouge police officers are members.

Moruzzi told WBRZ he has no intentions of resigning before his term is up on July 26, 2020.

He issued the following statement:

The civil service board is a civilian oversight committee for BRPD and BRFD. I currently serve on this board as an elected representative for the classified employees of the BRPD, which includes not only officers, but other staff such as communications, fingerprint techs, scientists, statisticians, and secretaries. These individuals support my role and my participation on this board, so any change in my position would only ever be to reflect their wants and needs. The hard-working, underpaid men and women of my department deserve a representative who will guarantee equality and fairness for them while preserving employees' rights, which I strive for and believe my board record shows. My peers must believe, as I do, that people sometimes make mistakes. Everyone should be held accountable for their actions & the civil service board ensures that those who deserve a second chance are given one.