



South Roxana's Police Chief Challenged by NAACP After Video Surfaces, Chief Disputes Complaint

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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SOUTH ROXANA - The Alton Branch of the NAACP announced today, March 11, 2024, that it has requested the resignation of South Roxana Police Chief Bob Coles after a video suddenly surfaced of an arrest incident dating back two years ago.



The situation is about an arrest when Carlos Boles, 25, was involved in a high-speed chase that ended when he hit a South Roxana Police vehicle and also a tree. Boles faced several charges including aggravated fleeing and eluding, unlawful possession with the intent to deliver a controlled substance and failure to report a traffic accident involving personal injury.

A video was taken at the time of the arrest and recently the NAACP leader received the video asking him to intervene with an officer involved.

Leon Smallwood-Bey, president of the Alton Branch of the NAACP, and Abe Lee Barham were given a video from that day on Jan. 10, 2022, when Coles was involved in the apprehension of Boles. Smallwood-Bey and Barham allege from what they saw in the video that Coles stepped on the suspect's neck and held it there for about 10 seconds. Coles was asked about the situation Monday night and he said he has now seen the video. He said he clearly placed his foot in the middle of the suspect's back, not his neck.

"We stand against injustice and this video shows a clear violation of excessive use of force," Smallwood-Bey said. "We don't care about the politics going on in South Roxana. (Coles is running for a Madison County Board seat.) We just cannot tolerate anyone applying excessive use of force, especially a police officer."

Coles said Boles is now serving seven years in prison. "The suspect was very reckless and I was trying to control the situation until other police officers could help and handcuff him. I didn't want him to do more. He had reached speeds more than 100 mph in the high-speed chase."



Coles stressed the suspect was not injured in the arrest. He said he is a 260-pound man and if he had placed his foot directly on the suspect's neck it would have likely caused

injuries. Coles denies that he applied excessive force in this arrest, but he tried to keep the suspect from possibly harming him or other officers.

Coles also said he has been a police officer for 30 years and has never had a complaint of excessive force against him. Coles said he believes the video was distributed to media because he is a Madison County Board candidate and it is "political."



The Alton Branch of the NAACP said it is not a “political move,” and all they care about are the facts and what they saw as an excessive use of force.

Barham stood firm with Smallwood-Bey in the request for Coles to resign from his police job.

Barham stressed that as the chief Coles has to lead by example and this is not something he should want his other officers to do.

“This sends a message to other officers that is not acceptable,” Barham said. “We did ask the chief to resign and believe the video shows excessive use of force on the suspect.”

Coles will appear Tuesday morning on C.J. Nasello's Our Daily Show! with Riverbender.com and is expected to discuss the issue as one of his conversation topics.