

August 22, 2013

Mayor Pro Tempore Loupe,

I applied to serve on the CATS Board four years ago because I wanted to help change the public transportation system in Baton Rouge. Having seen the economic asset of well-run transportation systems in other cities, I dared to think that it could be done here.

As a conservative business owner, I found myself in the precarious position of becoming an advocate and public face of a controversial property tax. But I believed then, as I do now, that with a dedicated revenue source, we could finally give the people of Baton Rouge the transit system they deserved.

That was over 16 months ago, though, and it has become abundantly clear that for some, the CATS Board is not an opportunity for service but a platform for selfish behavior and political posturing.

Despite the failing grades and unaccomplished tasks of the Accountability Report Card, the CATS Board started this year by ignoring expert recommendations to contract a management team. The Board then stalled on holding our (former) CEO accountable for his poorly written and untimely implementation plan. Months later, the Board begrudgingly issued an RFP seeking a project manager, only to skirt the RFP processes for the sake of advancing a separate agenda.

What's even worse than the ineptitude and closed mindedness displayed over the years is the unethical behavior of some of my colleagues on the Board. While I was shocked to personally discover the criminal activities of a fellow board member, I was appalled to discover the blatant and well-documented attempts to keep it from the public.

After Tuesday's board meeting antics, in which selfish and unethical behavior was on full display, I have lost all confidence in this Board's ability to do the right thing.

Today, I am submitting my letter of resignation from the CATS Board and encourage my colleagues to do the same. Riddled in controversy, it will be impossible for the Board to move forward "as-is" and thereby impossible to give the people of Baton Rouge the public transit system they want and deserve.

I still desire a first-class public transportation system in Baton Rouge and despite my resignation, will do everything in my power to help promote the vacancies, provide useful information and insight as requested, and serve as a positive force in supporting the Board as they seek to improve our public transit system.

After four years on the CATS Board, I have learned one important lesson: We CAN move Baton Rouge forward. However, we must first purge those with self-serving agendas and replace them with true public servants who have a deep desire to make our City better. Only then will we see change and be able to truly serve our riders. Only then will we have the public transit system we've always wanted.

Respectfully,



Jared Loftus