



HOWARD SCHWAPP

Robert Besedin Sr., with his attorney Frederick Brewington as they announce a lawsuit alleging assault by two Nassau police officers.

BALDWIN MAN, 72, SUES, SAYS OFFICERS BEAT HIM

BY MICHAEL O'KEEFFE

michael.okeeffe@newsday.com

A 72-year-old mechanic suffered serious injuries last year after two Nassau County police officers assaulted him outside his Baldwin home, according to a federal lawsuit filed Wednesday that claims the man's civil rights were violated.

Attorney Frederick K. Brewington said his client, Robert Besedin Sr., was charged with second-degree assault and other crimes last year after officers Stephen Beckwith and John Mantovani lied and claimed the Air Force veteran pushed and struck them during the Feb. 7, 2017, incident.

"These officers attacked me, physically abused me and then lied about it," Besedin said during a news conference at Brewington's Hempstead office Wednesday afternoon. "They are the ones who should have been charged after they threw me off the steps of my porch."

Prosecutors last month dropped the charges against Besedin.

Brewington said Besedin called 911 last year after his neighbor's trash blew onto his lawn. The attorney said Besedin invited Beckwith and Mantovani into his home to talk about the complaint. But the situation became violent when the officers were preparing to leave the home.

Beckwith claimed in a felony complaint filed last year that Besedin "did violently flail his arms, kick and scream and push officer Mantovani down 4 steps."

Brewington played a video

CRIME & courts

from a security system at the Harrison Avenue home during the news conference that he said showed Besedin was not acting aggressively before the officers threw him to the ground and arrested him.

"This videotape turned the case around and allowed the truth to come out," said Mineola defense attorney Lloyd Nadel, who represented Besedin in the criminal case.

Besedin said he had not met the officers before the incident.

Besedin was knocked unconscious during the incident and suffered post-concussion syndrome, Brewington said. He said his client also suffered from multiple lacerations, as well as mental pain and suffering.

Besedin spent several days in jail before he was finally released. The charges against Besedin were dismissed by Nassau District Judge Erica Prager on Jan. 29 after prosecutor Karen Lipton said her office would not prosecute Besedin because his conduct was not criminal.

The lawsuit names Nassau County, Nassau police and Beckwith and Mantovani as defendants.

The Nassau County police department and district attorney's office declined to comment. Nassau county officials could not be reached. Officials at the Nassau County Police Benevolent Association did not respond to a request for comment.