

# Fired library director files federal lawsuit

## Library, trustees, chair named as defendants

By MONA CASTEEL

A lawsuit accusing the Shenandoah County Library and its trustees of violating the constitutional rights of a former director was filed Wednesday in the U.S. District Court at Harrisonburg.

Robert Pasco, who was fired as library director last October after a shoving match with an employee, filed the lawsuit naming as defendants the library, its trustees, trustee Chair-

man Hank Zimmerman and Dallas Moore, the employee involved in the scuffle.

The lawsuit contends that Pasco was dismissed from employment at the library in violation of Virginia public policy.

The lawsuit alleges that Moore had "become a disciplinary problem" at the library, specifically that he was frequently late for work, and had "taken an unnatural interest in Keith Brown," Pasco's life partner and another library employee.

On Oct. 1, 2010, according to the suit, after Pasco had reprimanded Moore for being late, Moore went to Pasco's office and "physically pushed (Pasco) back from his computer and seized two external computer hard drives" on a desk nearby.

One of those drives contained information for the library and the other contained Pasco's personal information.

The suit alleges that Moore attempted to leave the office with both hard drives. At some point, Moore is alleged to have thrown both drives on the floor, breaking them. Pasco alleges that during a scuffle over the drives he sustained a cut over his eye and a bloody nose.

After Moore secured an arrest warrant against Pasco for assault and battery, Pasco said he informed Zimmerman as chairman of the library trustees that he intended to terminate Moore and did.

Moore subsequently filed a grievance seeking reinstatement to his job, and a hearing on that request was scheduled for Oct. 7.

Though Moore failed to show for the grievance hearing, Zimmerman soon afterwards asked Pasco to resign, saying the library board would "celebrate his success." Pasco refused to resign.

According to the lawsuit, Zimmerman, before Oct. 7, had secured commitments from other members of the library board of trustees to terminate Pasco. On Oct. 12, during a meeting at a private residence, trustees voted to terminate Pasco, the library's director of 10 years. He received word by phone that he had been fired.

Pasco claims he has suffered loss of property, salary, employee benefits, earnings capacity, a

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