

Former director sues Shenandoah library

By Sally Voth

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HARRISONBURG — The Shenandoah County Library is among several defendants being sued for millions of dollars by its former director, who was fired last October.

Rob Pasco filed the \$14.35 million job discrimination suit Wednesday in U.S. District Court, according to online court records.

The suit names the library, the board of trustees, trustees Chairman Hank Zimmerman and employee James "Dallas" Moore.

It says Pasco, who had been hired as library director in 2002, currently has a home in Bath County.

The lawsuit details a dispute between technology

director Moore and Pasco. It says Moore "had become a disciplinary problem" last summer.



Pasco

"He had taken an unnatural interest in Keith Brown, another employee at the Library,

during the summer of 2010," it says. "Brown had complained of the continuing efforts by Defendant Moore to be involved in Brown's life."

Besides that, Moore was frequently late to work and not performing well, the suit claims.

In an interview last October, Pasco said Brown was his partner, and the two of

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them had included Moore in holiday dinners. He said he'd recruited Moore to Shenandoah County. Moore and Pasco had known each other in Nashville, Tenn.

Pasco's suit says he reprimanded Moore for tardiness on Oct. 1. Later that day, it says, Moore came into Pasco's office, pushed him and took two external computer hard drives. One was for library files and the other was Pasco's personal hard drive. The library's hard drive contained sensitive library information, such as personnel data and patron information, while Pasco's had tax records, family research, photos and other personal files, according to the suit.

Pasco tried to get the computer equipment back, but Moore threw the drives to the ground, it says.

"Defendant Moore later told Defendant Zimmerman that he was seizing the computer hard-drives in an effort to use information he falsely claimed was on them against Plaintiff in an effort to get Plaintiff terminated," the suit says.

It says that Moore said Pasco assaulted him and he was going to police. During the altercation, Pasco got a bloody nose and a cut above his eye.

Deciding that Moore presented a possible danger to

others, Pasco fired him, according to the complaint. It says Moore lied to police, saying Pasco had assaulted him, which in turn broke Pasco's trust in Moore.

After a grievance hearing for Moore on Oct. 7, Zimmerman asked Pasco to resign, according to the lawsuit. Pasco refused.

"Before Oct. 7, 2010, Zimmerman had obtained commitments from the other members of the Board of Trustees to terminate Plaintiff's employment, despite knowing that Moore had assaulted and battered Plaintiff and that Moore had illegally seized and destroyed Plaintiff's property as well as illegally seizing and damaging Library property," the suit says.

Five days later, Pasco was fired. Moore was rehired.

"They're trying to blame me because the technology geek who I hired went berserk and I fired him," Pasco said at the time.

Pasco claims his civil rights were violated. His suit alleges the seizure of his hard drive was a violation of his constitutional rights, that the defendants committed "computer trespass" and that Moore assaulted him and his behavior was accepted by the library board.

He says he has suffered lost salary and benefits, a damaged reputation, and mental and emotional distress.

Zimmerman declined to comment Thursday.