

**LOUTIT DISTRICT LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
August 3, 2022**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by President Burton Brooks in Program Room B.

Roll call of Board members present: Mary Jane Belter, Burton Brooks, Penni DeWitt, Dave De Young, Caryn Lannon, Lisa Menerick, Kathy Osmun, Cathy Rusco

Library Staff present: Amy Bailey, Marianne Case, Sara Derdowski

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

22-32 Motion by Belter, seconded by Menerick, to approve the agenda as amended below. The motion was unanimously carried by roll call vote: Belter – Yes, Brooks – Yes, DeWitt – Yes, De Young – Yes Lannon – Yes, Menerick – Yes, Osmun – Yes, Rusco - Yes

Remove

- Approval of Consent Agenda
- Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings
- Unfinished Business
- Treasurer's Report
- Committee Reports

Under New Business, add:

- Acceptance of the letter of resignation from Executive Director Sara Derdowski
- Acceptance of the letter of resignation from Director Amy Bailey
- Discussion of employment of an acting director
- Discussion of handling of library financial matters
- Resolution updating authorized signatures on all depository and investment accounts by adding LDL Board President and Treasurer as signatories
- Request that Derdowski and Bailey compile a list of all library-related online accounts with passwords for the Executive Committee
- Request Derdowski prepare a list of contacts with email addresses and phone numbers for business-related contacts
- Confirm the final day of work for Derdowski and Bailey as August 12 and schedule a meeting that day, at a time to be determined, which includes the Board President, other officers and Acting Library Director (if named) to transfer details of security alarm and similar building security as well as receive all physical and electronic keys
- Make arrangements for the LDL staff to meet with the Board President, other LDL officers and the Acting Library Director (if named) on Monday, August 15 at 9:15 a.m.
- Any other items that board members wish to add.

Under New Business, consider:

- A motion to appoint a search committee chaired by Cathy Rusco with committee membership comprised of the Personnel Committee members (Cathy Rusco, Lisa Menerick, David DeYoung, Penni DeWitt) and the Officers of Loutit District Library's Board of Trustees. The Search Committee is authorized by the Board of Trustees to review and propose changes to the senior management structure of the Loutit District Library, develop a recruitment plan, and to carry out recruitment activities to identify and recruit qualified candidates to fill senior management positions as approved by the Board of Trustees. The senior management team structure, agreements with recruitment consultants, and all offers of employment must be approved by the full Board of Trustees. The creation of this committee is effective upon approval of this motion.
- A motion to appoint a transition committee chaired by Burton Brooks with committee membership comprised of the Officers of the Loutit District Library's Board of Trustees (Burton Brooks, Cathy Rusco, Mary Jane Belter, Caryn Lannon). The Executive Committee is temporarily authorized to act on the Board of Trustee's behalf to develop a management transition plan and carry out business activities that ensures continuity of the Loutit District Library's business operation until permanent senior management appointment(s) are approved by the board. The scope of these responsibilities and the committee's authority will be consistent with the authority and responsibility of the senior management roles covered in the transition (Executive Director and Library Director). The creation of this committee is effective upon approval of this motion.
- A motion to approve a board resolution removing Sara Derdowski, Amy Bailey and David DeYoung as signatories on all depository and investment accounts belonging to the Loutit District Library and adding Burton Brooks (President), Cathy Rusco (Vice President), Mary Jane Belter (Secretary) and Caryn Lannon (Treasurer) as authorized signatories on all depository and investment accounts of the Loutit District Library. These changes become effective August 12, 2022.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeanette Weiden, staff member and Grand Haven resident, read a prepared statement, attached.

Amy Van Oordt, staff member and Grand Haven resident, read a prepared statement, attached.

Nancy Collins, member of the public and Grand Haven resident, commented that the meeting notice did not list the topics to be covered and suggested this should have been subject to prior legal review. Secretary Belter replied that she had consulted with an attorney prior to distribution of the notice to ensure it was in compliance with the relevant regulations.

Hollie Alphenaar, staff member and Robinson Township resident, read a prepared statement, attached.

TRUSTEE COMMENT

Trustee De Young thanked the public for their comments and stated that the meeting was being held to ensure continuity of operations during the transition of leadership at the Library.

President Brooks stated that there was much work to be done prior to the departure of Derdowski and Bailey.

Trustee Menerick wished Derdowski and Bailey success going forward and expressed appreciation for all the work they have done, especially Derdowski's work regarding the Library's financial operations. She was disappointed to receive their letters of resignation.

Treasurer Lannon also expressed her appreciation for the work of Derdowski and Bailey and her disappointment at receiving their resignations.

NEW BUSINESS

22-33 Trustee De Young moved and Trustee Menerick seconded a motion to accept the letter of resignation of Sara Derdowski, Executive Director, to become effective August 12, 2022. The motion was carried 8-0.

22-34 Trustee Rusco moved and Trustee Menerick seconded a motion to accept the letter of resignation of Amy Bailey, Library Director, to become effective August 12, 2022. The motion was carried 8-0.

The board decided that discussion of the employment of an acting director would take place in the discussion of consideration of a motion appointing a transition committee.

Financial Matters

Trustee De Young asked Derdowski for her input on the handling of the Library's financial matters going forward, and she distributed a list of tasks and responsibilities she currently handles as well as a list of tasks and responsibilities handled by Marianne Case, Accountant. She reported that the Library's current payroll service provider, Dominion, has decided to discontinue their service and transfer their accounts to the company ADP. The transition was to have begun by July, but has not yet occurred; until the transfer is final the Library may continue to use the Dominion online interface, and afterward may review the service from ADP to determine if it meets the Library's needs. Derdowski also reported that she will be making recommendations on where to transfer funds from a maturing Certificate of Deposit if time allows. Bailey stated that Team Leads are working on interviews for currently posted open positions, and that she has continued to handle issues surrounding facility maintenance as a suitable candidate has not yet been hired. Outsourcing options were discussed for services such as payroll and worker's comp. Issues regarding MERS will be discussed in a meeting of the Transition Team.

The board decided that discussion of updating authorizing signatures would take place in the discussion of the consideration of the relevant motion.

Online Accounts and Business Contacts

Derdowski informed the Board that she has a list of online accounts and will compile a list of business-related contacts.

Confirmation of Final Day of Employment

Derdowski and Bailey confirmed that their final day of employment with LDL will be Friday, August 12. President Brooks and Vice President Rusco will meet with them at 3:00 p.m. that day to receive all physical and electronic keys.

Meet With Staff

President Brooks and either Vice President Rusco or Treasurer Lannon will meet with the staff at 9:00 am Monday, August 15. Any staff members who are unable to attend will be accommodated with a meeting at a different time.

Additional Item

The email accounts of the departing directors will be forwarded to ensure important mails are not missed.

- 22-35 De Young moved to appoint a Search Committee chaired by Cathy Rusco with committee membership comprised of the Personnel Committee members (Cathy Rusco, Lisa Menerick, David DeYoung, Penni DeWitt) and the Officers of Loutit District Library's Board of Trustees. The Search Committee is authorized by the Board of Trustees to review and propose changes to the senior management structure of the Loutit District Library, develop a recruitment plan, and to carry out recruitment activities to identify and recruit qualified candidates to fill senior management positions as approved by the Board of Trustees. The senior management team structure, agreements with recruitment consultants, and all offers of employment must be approved by the full Board of Trustees. The creation of this committee is effective upon approval of this motion. Menerick seconded the motion, which was carried 8-0.**

Vice President Rusco, Chair of the Personnel Committee, has created a draft job description which she will present to the Committee. It was agreed that the Committee will meet on Tuesday, August 9 at 4:00 p.m. A discussion item for the committee will be whether to include staff members.

Trustee Osmun suggested the Committee consider requesting \$1,000 budget to fund job postings.

- 22-36 De Young moved to appoint a transition committee chaired by Burton Brooks with committee membership comprised of the Officers of the Loutit District Library's Board of Trustees (Burton Brooks, Cathy Rusco, Mary Jane Belter, Caryn Lannon). The Executive Committee is temporarily authorized to act on the Board of Trustees's behalf to develop a management transition plan and carry out business activities that ensures continuity of the Loutit District Library's business operation until permanent senior management appointment(s) are approved by the board. The scope of these responsibilities and the committee's authority will be consistent with the authority and responsibility of the senior management roles covered in the transition (Executive Director and Library Director). The creation of this committee is effective upon approval of this motion. Lannon seconded the motion, which was carried 8-0.**

Trustee De Young reminded the Board that usually the Executive Committee functions in an advisory capacity, so this motion empowers the Committee to act. The Committee will return to its advisory status after its authorized task is completed. An attorney will likely be consulted during this process.

22-37 De Young moved to approve a board resolution removing Sara Derdowski, Amy Bailey and David DeYoung as signatories on all depository and investment accounts belonging to the Loutit District Library and adding Burton Brooks (President), Mary Jane Belter (Secretary) and Caryn Lannon (Treasurer) as authorized signatories on all depository and investment accounts of the Loutit District Library. These changes become effective August 12, 2022. Menerick seconded the motion, which was carried 8-0.

The original motion was amended to delete Cathy Rusco. This process is standard for when there are staff changes. Two staff members, Allison Boyer and Katie Alpenhaar, are currently authorized signatories on the Huntington Bank operating checking account.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Derdowski expressed what a privilege it has been for her to work with the staff and patrons, and that she wishes nothing but the best for the library.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Brooks read a prepared statement, attached.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Nancy Collins commented that the Board should communicate with the community as to why the top two positions are resigning from the Library at the same time, and what the plans are to avoid this situation in the future. She praised the Library as a wonderful resource and thanked Derdowski and Bailey for their service.

Kate Tobin, staff member and Grand Haven Township resident, read a prepared statement, attached.

Chelsea McCoy, staff member and Muskegon resident, commented that Board members expressed surprise and shock at the resignations, and that the Board listened but did not hear when staff tried to share their feelings about the leadership of Derdowski and Bailey. It is her opinion that the staff's trust in the Board has been destroyed. She also read a prepared statement, attached.

Amy Van Oordt, staff member and Grand Haven resident, commented on how disappointed she is that things have gotten to the point where Derdowski and Bailey felt their only option was to leave. She supports them and feels their loss is devastating. She thanked them for their leadership.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Trustee Menerick commented that in hiring Derdowski, the Board did listen to the staff and believed Derdowski would be the best fit for the position. She expressed disappointment that Derdowski thanked the staff but not the Board for what they've done for her, which includes paying tuition toward her MLIS degree.

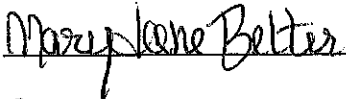
Trustee Osmun commented that she has been on the Board, and put her heart and soul into it, for about 15 years. She has always believed that all involved have worked together with faith and trust, and would like to see that trust and openness of communication reestablished. She is pleased with how Loutit is such a great library, and doesn't regret any decisions made.

Secretary Belter commented, in response to Ms. Collins, that the directors' letters of resignation were received on the afternoon of Friday, July 29 and the Board cannot speculate as to any reasons for the resignations that are not contained in the letters.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting of the Board will be August 9, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in Program Room B.

Meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.



Secretary
Mary Jane Belter



President
Burton Brooks

Prepared by Marianne Case, Accountant

ATTACHMENTS

Jeanette Weiden:

I'm Jeanette Weiden and I have worked at Loutit District Library for seventeen years. I have been through a few directors over the years and none of them compare to Sara Derdowski and Amy Bailey. I'm sad and disappointed that we are now at this point. During their time as assistant directors and now directors, they have changed the library's work culture for the better. For me personally, it has been a positive experience.

- Sara and Amy have supported and encouraged me to break out of my routine. To want more and go for it. I'm currently working toward becoming a Certified Genealogist and that is in part because of them.
- Sara and Amy have also brought a new level of accountability to the library that has never been here before. In my opinion, this is refreshing. This is one of the biggest ways they have improved the culture of the library.
- They have also improved communication and have worked to be open and transparent with the staff. They have always been approachable and available to talk about accomplishments or concerns. Over the last few years, Sara and Amy have joined a small group of people I turn to here at the library when something exciting has happened or I have a problem to work through. I will miss them.

I have always loved my job here and know this is where I was meant to be. I can honestly say, that because of Sara and Amy, the library has become a better place to work.

Amy Van Oordt:

Our library website contains some very important information. On our about page, our mission statement and library governance information are listed.

Mission statement is: Expanding horizons, Enriching minds, Engaging community.

Library Governance says: Our Library Trustees are our busiest volunteers! See when they meet, what they've accomplished, and how it fits with our mission. Library Board meetings are open to the public.

I attended the executive board meeting last week as a member of the public, a member of this community. I am a Grand Haven City Resident. The meeting was started with the one member of the board saying to the people there to sit in on the meeting "don't you people have something better to do upstairs in the library?" I was so disappointed to hear that. Maybe I misunderstood, but it did not feel like there was any intention to follow our mission statement of engaging the community or being open to the public with an introduction to the meeting like that.

On a different note, I want to say how sorry I am to hear of the resignations of Sara and Amy from Loutit Library. I want to thank them both for all of the hard work they have put in for the library and the community. I have truly enjoyed working with both of them. I know everything that they have done here at the library they did in the best interest of the library and the community, as well as staff. It is very rare to have leadership of their caliber- people who know how to plan, how to execute plans, and can lead a diverse group of people so well. Every time I went to either one of them, I felt listened to. That doesn't happen very often. Thank you, both of you. I wish you the best and will miss you both.

Hollie Alphenaar:

First of all, THANK YOU! I have worked for a variety of employers in the private, public and governmental sectors. Sara and Amy, you are two of the most hardest working and dedicated people I have had the privilege to work with, under and for. Your commitment to the organization, the people you work with and for, the patrons and the community, can not be matched. The personalities, obstacles and challenges you have had to juggle and still show a steadfast dedication to the job and its people, is unmatched. You have had to make hard and difficult decisions, but they have always been with a goal to make Loutit Library a success, and I believe you have done that and more!

Please know that you will be missed more than you know. Also, whatever your new paths will be, I know that you will have a positive effect and continue to do it with the grace and dedication that you have shown here at Loutit.

Again, Thank You,

Hollie

Burton Brooks:

On behalf of the Loutit District Library Board of Trustees, I would like to thank Sara Derdowski and Amy Bailey for their contributions as LDL employees during the last several years.

Sara did an excellent job working as the library's chief business officer during her time with us helping chart LDL's financial future as well as streamlining the library's accounting operations.

In her time with the LDL, Amy offered many suggestions for improving library service for LDL patrons.

Both worked through the CoVid period when, unfortunately, library services were curtailed and many innovative approaches to serving the public were developed.

The LDL Board wishes the best for both as they seek new endeavors.

Kate Tobin:

From when I started at Loutit District Library five years ago to now, I have experienced a few different shifts in the workplace culture. It was only once Sara Derdowski stepped into her role as the Director Select that I began to feel a positive shift throughout the library. Both Sara and Amy have been consistent with their transparency, support, and genuine care for the library staff and community. Anytime I have approached them with a concern, they took action. I have come to recognize that these are unique qualities to have in any leadership position, and even more so in a Library Director. I am saddened by Amy and Sara's departure as I was excited for their vision for the library, however, I continue to be energized by what they leave behind—a staff that is invested in working together to serve the library's community.

Chelsea McCoy:

When the original idea to name Sara was brought forward in September 2021, staff was given the opportunity to provide feedback. I would like to read some of the comments staff shared.

- I could not be more in favor of this idea! Sara has the skills, personality, drive -- everything needed to be an amazing leader. I love the idea of hiring internally so that we know we're choosing a fantastic candidate, we get the enormous advantage of hiring someone already familiar with the library and service area, and also so that we can feel confident about the path that LDL will take forward. I think we have made SO many positive changes in the last few years, and I know that Sara would keep us progressing along those lines to make LDL the best. I am totally confident in Sara's vision for the library and frankly in awe of her ability to manage, direct, and get things done. I would LOVE to work for her!
- Couldn't think of a better successor to John than Sara!
- I think Sara is an amazing choice for our future director. She absolutely has the best interests of all of the stakeholders in mind and is really skilled at dealing with all the personalities, and their different needs and learning styles, that are part of the library.
- Sara has been an incredible force within Loutit for fiscal reform, innovative practices and encouraging talent. She is kind, caring and compassionate while also making sure things are done properly and equitably. When she doesn't know something she is quick to share that and ask for help from those with the right information. We would be in great hands with Sara as the next director. I would strongly recommend this choice.
- Sara has worked hard to establish policies and procedures for the betterment of the library, and would be great to keep pushing for excellence.
- Sara is a great choice for director. As assistant director/hr, she has performed her job with tactfulness, fairness, and kindness. Additionally, Sara has an exceptional eye for detail and the keen ability to detect deception. She is our advocate but she also encourages us to be advocates for ourselves which is empowering.
- I think offering Sara the library director position is a good fit. With her knowledge and experience with the library it would give the position a shorter learning curve. She knows the community and I believe that is crucial to working in this position. While it would benefit to have someone come in with a fresh look at the library. Sara has the benefit of knowing what works already, what might not and what new things can work.
- I believe her dedication and hard work will benefit the library in numerous ways, and we will achieve a vision that takes us to the next level.

Sara is the best boss I have ever had. And Amy was a friend. I felt so proud to have invited Amy to apply to the position. I am absolutely devastated to lose them but I wish them well in their future endeavors. I have become a better person because of their leadership.