

Draft Plan of Service

July 16, 2018

1. Introduction

The purpose of this Plan of Service is to describe how the Branch District Library (BDL) provides library services among its branches and how it interacts with cooperating governmental units in the library district. Contracts with each governmental unit continue to be in effect, and copies may be found on the Library's website. This Plan of Service operates in concert with the BDL Strategic Plan.

2. Name

The name of this district library shall be the Branch District Library.

3. Authority

The Branch District Library is established as authorized under the District Library Establishment Act 24 of 1989, as last amended.

4. Governance

The Branch District Library is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees, as provided for under the Branch District Library Agreement (1991) and the Michigan District Library Establishment Act 24 of 1989. Two Trustees are appointed by the Mayor of Coldwater. The County of Branch appoints five Trustees: two representing the county at large, and one each representing the Bronson, Quincy, and Union Twp. Branches.

The Board of Trustees meets on the third Monday of each month. These meetings are open to the public. Full details are available on the Library's website.

The Board's precise powers and responsibilities are spelled out in the above-mentioned documents, available on the Library's website. Broadly speaking, however, the Board is charged with 1) setting library policy, 2) adopting and implementing budgets, and 3) hiring and evaluating the Library Director.

The Library Director is responsible for implementing the Board's policies and budgets, human resources, and the day-to-day operations of the Branch District Library.

5. Service Area

The legal service area of the Branch District Library is all of Branch County, as well as Allen Township of Hillsdale County. By reciprocal service agreement with the Burlington Township Library of Calhoun County, Burlington Twp. residents may freely use BDL services and vice versa.

6. Physical Locations

A stated goal of the Library in the 2018 Strategic Plan is to be “a destination, with accessible facilities that attract visitors, with ample accommodation for their meetings and programs, and with the necessary infrastructure to support their current and future needs for collections, services, and technology.” To this end, the Library Director will seek to further cooperation with cooperating governmental units to achieve the goals in our Strategic Plan as they pertain to facilities.

The Branch District Library does not own any property or facilities, and as such could not exist without cooperation between BDL and the partnering governmental units. As spelled out in contracts, BDL will provide library services at facilities provided by the partnering governmental units in the communities of Alganssee, Bronson, Coldwater, Quincy, Sherwood, and Union City. These branches are designated as:

- Alganssee Branch Library
- Bronson Branch Library
- Coldwater Branch Library
- Quincy Branch Library
- Sherwood Branch Library
- Lucille E. Dearth Union Township Branch Library

Except when impractical due to space, demand, or other logistical concerns, BDL will strive to offer equivalent services at all branch libraries. BDL provides funding for staffing, library materials, and services, as well as for all interior fixtures and equipment necessary to provide those library services.

BDL will operate branches to be open a certain number of hours each week, based upon population and usage demand, as well as available funding. As demand and funding warrant, hours of operation may be increased or decreased.

BDL and the governmental units cooperate on the maintenance of branch locations, as provided for in the individual contracts. The exact nature of the cooperation varies from branch to branch; consult the contracts for details.

Though currently possessing six physical branches, the Branch District Library is a singular entity. The Library Director will give each branch individualized attention within the framework of furthering a successful and cohesive library system.

7. Administrative Offices

The administrative offices of the Branch District Library will be maintained at the Coldwater Branch Library. The administrative offices include the Director’s office, the Assistant Director’s office, the Director of Public Services office, the Financial Manager’s office, the IT office, the Teen Services office, all Tech Services, and ILL services.

8. Staffing

All branches will be staffed, as determined by the Library Director, to provide the best possible service within the budgetary limits. At a minimum, each branch will have a Branch Manager. Additional staffing may be added as deemed necessary and as funding allows. In accordance with contracts, the Library Director will consult with the partnering governmental units and/or Advisory Boards when

hiring staff at all branches, with the exception of Coldwater Branch staff and district-wide Professional Librarians.

Staff meetings are held throughout the year, typically monthly, where all BDL staff meet in person for training and to stay informed of BDL news. Continuing education opportunities are offered to all staff.

9. Professional Librarians

Professional Librarians, with a Master's degree from an ALA-accredited institution, serve the entire library system and spend time in each branch. They provide training and guidance as needed on all aspects of library services to all library staff. They also represent BDL at local, state, and national events. Currently, as a Class V Public Library in Michigan, BDL is required to have at least 2 Professional Librarians on staff.

Professional Librarians also work closely with the Library Director on all aspects of library operations to ensure that BDL policy and procedures are implemented consistently throughout the library.

10. Branch Managers

In addition to their duties running their local branch libraries, the Branch Managers also function as the everyday representatives of BDL in the local community. Communication with the community, networking with community agencies and groups, as well as active promotion of the library are an important part of the Branch Managers' duties.

A goal of the Strategic Plan is to "reach beyond the library's buildings to provide collections and services to diverse audiences where they are, and will collaborate with schools and other organizations to expand community reach." Branch Managers' exposure in the community is therefore critical to identifying needs and solutions to address them. Since the needs of each community differ, the Branch Managers are the first link in communicating these differences to the Library Director. Conversely, they must also be able to communicate the need for general overall procedures and policies to local community.

11. Advisory Boards

Advisory Boards to local BDL branches may be established at the discretion of the local governmental units. They may administer gift monies, memorial funds, and local governmental appropriations of their township. The structure, responsibilities, and powers of each Advisory Board is up to the discretion of the local government unit, providing they do not interfere with responsibilities and powers statutorily granted to the BDL Board of Trustees under the District Library Establishment Act 24 of 1989. Detailing the specifics of branch Advisory Boards is outside the scope of this document. Contact the Advisory Boards themselves for details.

12. Revenue

The primary source of revenue for BDL is from property taxes. Millage 1 was voter-approved in 1991 in perpetuity. Millage 2, approved in 2014, is strictly for operating expenses, while the first millage may be

split among operating expenses, capital improvements, and special funds. Both millages are subject to reduction by the Headlee Amendment.

Other sources of revenue include Penal Fines (see Public Act 59 of 1964), State Aid, fees, donations, and other miscellaneous income.

13. Donations and Endowments

All monies collected in the name of the BDL or its Branches and those endowment funds delivered to the BDL, but designated for a specific branch, shall be administered by the BDL Board of Trustees. These monies may be deposited or invested, subject to laws governing the same, with a financial institution chosen by the BDL Board, provided that endowment funds designated for a specific branch shall be accounted for separately. No expenditures from endowment funds designated for a specific branch shall be made without the approval of the Board of Trustees.

14. Operating Budgets

The Library's fiscal year is the calendar year. The Library Director, after consultation with Professional Librarians and Branch Managers, and with the BDL Board Finance Committee, will present a proposed operating budget to the BDL Board of Trustees no later than November of each year. This proposed budget will be available for public inspection and comment for a full month and will be voted upon no later than the December BDL Board meeting.

This operating budget will prioritize the 4 goals of the 2018 Strategic Plan:

- Future-ready facilities
- Multiple literacies
- Sustainable stewardship
- Community-embedded services

For details, see the full Strategic Plan on the Library's website.

Budgets will ensure that every branch has an appropriate allocation of resources to provide the best service possible to our patrons.

15. Capital Improvement and Special Project Funds

The governmental units and BDL cooperate in the maintenance of the premises. Monies for such projects may come from the BDL Capital Improvement Fund for the Branch Library in question. Special project funds also exist for projects designed to benefit the entire Library.

These funds will be maintained by setting aside 3% of millage 1 each year. At the end of each fiscal year, that year's remaining balance shall be credited to a separate account for each fund.

- Major District Projects (not typically IT-related): 0.375%
- Future Automation Fund (for major library automation system upgrades): 0.125%
- Alganssee Branch Library: 0.125%
- Bronson Branch Library: 0.25%

- Coldwater Branch Library: 1.5%
- Quincy Branch Library: 0.25%
- Sherwood Branch Library: 0.125%
- Lucille E. Dearth Union Twp. Branch Library: 0.25%

16. Adoption

This Plan of Service was officially adopted by the BDL Board of Trustees on July 16, 2018.

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