

MINUTES REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BUFFALO AND ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOVEMBER 17, 2005

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, November 17, 2005, in the Central Library pursuant to due notice to trustees. All Board members were in attendance as follows:

Rebecca L. Pordum, Chair  
Phyllis A. Horton, Vice Chair  
Frank Gist, Secretary  
John B. Long, Treasurer  
Richard L. Berger  
W. Lawrence Buck  
Jack Connors  
Annette A. Juncewicz  
Susan Maggiore  
Hormoz Mansouri  
Elaine M. Panty  
Judith K. Summer  
Sharon A. Thomas  
Wayne D. Wisbaum

Chair Rebecca L. Pordum called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. in the Joseph B. Rounds Conference Room.

Agenda Item B – Approval/Changes to the Agenda. Chair Pordum informed trustees an Executive Session would be held at the conclusion of New Business to discuss personnel matters regarding potential appointments and compensation.

Agenda Item C – Minutes of the Meeting of October 20, 2005 . On motion by Dr. Long and a second by Ms. Panty, the Minutes were approved as submitted.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair. The Chair reminded trustees that advocacy efforts are being increased and asked trustees to provide her with contact information.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. Trustee Phyllis Horton reported the Executive Committee convened at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, November 9th. Trustees Pordum, Horton, Panty and Summer were present. The Director and CFO presented proposed agenda items for the November 17th Board meeting, and the Executive Committee confirmed each item.

At approximately 4:10 p.m. , the Chair entertained a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel matters, including potential appointments and compensation issues.

Ms. Summer made the motion, seconded by Ms. Panty, and the vote to enter Executive Session was unanimous. Trustee Buck arrived at approximately 4:15 p.m. No action was taken during Executive Session. At approximately 4:35 p.m. , Ms. Horton moved, and Mr. Buck seconded a motion to return to public session, and approval was unanimous. The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn, which was moved by Mr. Buck, seconded by Ms. Horton and approved unanimously.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee. Trustee John Long called on Deputy Director Kenneth Stone to explain budget and finance items.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Amend 2005 Budget: State Member Aid. Mr. Stone reported that Assemblyman Robin Schimminger allocated \$11,000 to the City of Tonawanda Public Library . An Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant circulation desk will be installed, and remaining funds will be used to purchase library materials. Ms. Summer moved for approval. Mr. Buck made a second, and approval was unanimous.

#### RESOLUTION 2005-53

WHEREAS, in October, the City of Tonawanda Public Library received notification from the State Department of Education that a grant-in-aid in the amount of \$11,000 had been apportioned to its library, and

WHEREAS, this member aid item was sponsored by New York State Assemblyman Robin Schimminger to allow the City of Tonawanda Public Library to replace its circulation desk with one that is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and to purchase library materials, and

WHEREAS, the grant will be provided in installments, with \$2,750 issued immediately and the balance expected in early 2006, and

WHEREAS, the City of Tonawanda Library has requested these funds be incorporated within its contract budget, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library gratefully accepts the \$11,000 in state aid, and be it further

RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library authorizes amending the 2005 City of Tonawanda Library budget to incorporate the \$2,750 revenue and expense , and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library instructs the Library Director to incorporate the balance of \$8,250 within the 2006 proposed budget for the City of Tonawanda Library to be forwarded to the B&ECPL Board of Trustees as part of the 2006 budget adoption process, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution and a revised Exhibit A be transmitted to the above library to implement the change.

Agenda Item E.2.b – Authorization for Year-end Transfers in Excess of \$5,000. Mr. Stone explained this routine resolution permits Library administration to move funds between accounts quickly, should that become necessary, in order to close the budget. Any transfers will be reported promptly to trustees in the monthly financial statements. Ms. Juncewicz moved for approval and was seconded by Ms. Horton, whereupon the resolution was approved unanimously.

#### RESOLUTION 2005-54

WHEREAS, the 2005 year-end closing process is approaching and involves finalizing encumbrances (or commitments to spend budgeted funds), and

WHEREAS, the delay between payment of telecommunications related expenses and receipt of E-rate discount reimbursements for those expenses can cause the need to transfer funds temporarily between budget accounts as the available balances in the E-rate supported accounts towards the end of the fiscal year are too low to accommodate the delay, and

WHEREAS, fourth quarter budget reductions adopted on August 4, 2005 in Resolution 2005-33 set aside \$328,842 of the total \$1,328,842 reductions, moving them to the System fringe benefits account to offset increased termination and unemployment insurance costs that may result from these measures, and

WHEREAS, some of these costs, specifically termination payouts, will impact other accounts including the System salary accounts and individual contracting library salary and fringe benefit accounts, requiring transfers, and in the case of contracting libraries, contract budget amendments, be processed quickly to ensure payroll expenses can be met on a timely basis, and

WHEREAS, it may be in the Library's interest to encumber items that may require budget transfers in excess of \$5,000, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library authorizes the Library Director, with the approval of the Board Chair or the Budget and Finance Committee Chair, to approve transfers within the budget impacting objects of expenditure in excess of \$5,000 for the purposes of making year-end encumbrances and/or expenditures as stated above, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board Chair is authorized to execute contract library contract budget amendments needed to implement transfers needed to address library termination costs, and be it further

RESOLVED, that any such transfers be incorporated into the monthly financial statements submitted to the full Board prior to the close of the fiscal year, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library authorizes the Library Director to approve temporary transfers within the budget impacting objects of expenditure in excess of \$5,000 for the purposes of accommodating the delay between payment of telecommunications-related expenses and receipt of E-rate discount reimbursements for those expenses, with said transfers being reversed upon receipt of the E-rate reimbursement.

Agenda Item E.2.c – Amend 2005 Budget: State “Hold Harmless” Aid. In each of the past several years, the B&ECPL has budgeted for State Aid assuming the current formulas in State law would be applied to Erie County 's population as of the 2000 Census. However, the State is again using a “hold harmless” policy for those library systems that have experienced a decline in population. This has resulted in a small benefit to grants and contracting libraries. This resolution incorporates the additional revenue and, except for grants, applies it to offset lower fine revenues, which at present are running about 12% below budget. Ms. Horton moved, Ms. Panty seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

#### RESOLUTION 2005-55

WHEREAS, New York State, through the Department of Education, State Library, Division of Library Development, provides both general and grant-based aid to support public libraries, and

WHEREAS, a number of the aid categories are formula driven, including a population factor, which under law is recalculated upon certification of the U.S. Census each decade and

WHEREAS, B&ECPL's 2005 Adopted Budget reflected the impact of Erie County's population loss on State Aid formulas, and

WHEREAS, the State's 2005-2006 adopted budget for library aid contains a “hold harmless” provision, specific to this funding year, that maintains aid for all libraries at their pre-2000 census levels, and

WHEREAS, the restored amount is available to be applied to the individual grants where appropriate and to offset lower than expected fine revenues in the budgets and increased retirement expenses in some contract library budgets, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library amends the 2005 budget as shown in the attached Exhibit, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution and a revised Exhibit A be transmitted to the Town of Cheektowaga, City of Lackawanna, City of Tonawanda, Town of Tonawanda and Town of West Seneca Libraries, reflecting this change.

Agenda Item E.2.d – Monthly Financial Report. Mr. Stone said the report has final September figures and preliminary numbers for October. The Library is operating within budget. Staff reductions will result in annual unemployment insurance costs of at least \$300,000. Fine and fee revenue for October improved over the previous month, mainly because of the new request fee implementation.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Michael Mahaney reported the Erie County Legislature adopted a 2006 budget, and the Library was advised its appropriation would be \$21.7 million. It is incumbent upon the Library to continue reducing the size of the Library System, operating only 36 libraries in 2006 rather than the 52 libraries that were open at the beginning of 2005. To date, seven libraries have closed, and three more will close by the end of the week. In addition, mobile libraries and outreach vehicles have been taken off the road.

Ms. Pordum said it is vital to continue dialogue with County legislators regarding library material funds. It may not be possible to receive the \$5 million appropriated this year, but it is hoped some additional money will be forthcoming.

Mr. Gist asked for an update on the Merriweather Library project. Mr. Mahaney replied a late December opening may be possible, but it is more likely that the opening will be in January. Library staff and City officials continue to work well together on this important project.

Dr. Mansouri stated trustees must remember taxpayer equity in the Library System and retain a social conscience to the community. He inquired whether other methods of service delivery are being explored to facilitate the availability of library materials to the public and make the best use of materials that are already in the System. He suggested it might be necessary to change State laws to help library systems carry out mandates to deliver good service and, at the same time, reduce costs.

The Director said the B&ECPL already provides a great deal of its services and resources electronically and remotely. For instance, people can call, e-mail or fax the public library for information; it is not necessary to visit a library in person. In addition, the Library is exploring new formats of information that could be shared without tying them to a physical location. Something being examined right now is downloadable audio books, a new format where patrons can download a book from the library no matter where they are. While there are costs associated with this, the Library would not have to deal with overhead such as processing and shipping. Also, some other libraries around the country are using kiosks located in shopping centers to help the public get access to information from libraries at convenient locations and non-traditional hours.

It is important to remember the B&ECPL is currently working with many communities to identify alternative uses for buildings the Library can no longer operate, and staff would welcome any ideas in this regard. In 2006, a new Five-Year Plan for New York State and a Strategic Plan for the Library must be produced. This would be an ideal opportunity for everyone to get together and consider different ways of doing the business of a public library that will be cost effective, meaningful and efficient.

Ms. Juncewicz asked if the Five-Year Plan would examine some of the buildings that have been closed. Mr. Mahaney hopes most of the buildings being closed will have a reasonable re-use plan in place soon.

Mr. Gist asked whether any individual library systems, e.g., Amherst , have taken steps toward becoming independent library systems. Mr. Mahaney said contracting libraries could actually withdraw from the System simply by not signing the annual contracts. He does not believe any B&ECPL contracting libraries are seriously contemplating such action. Legally, it would require a change in State Law. However, meetings have been held with a consultant to explore different ways to govern, structure and finance the B&ECPL under current New York State Law. A committee has been constructed of staff, B&ECPL trustees and contracting library trustees to review information and try to develop a reasonable proposal for the B&ECPL System.

Ms. Pordum pointed out that one of the goals of the recently adopted Four-Year Plan is to expand the Centralized Human Resources program, which could make personnel administration more flexible and economical.

Dr. Long related to trustees the difficulties he has had to face in the past four months due to closing libraries in the Town of Tonawanda . In the near future, this Board will need to study the entire System to determine how the B&ECPL can adapt to new and better ways of delivering services in the 21 st century. Many dedicated employees in the Town library system were laid off. Few people realize what effect this catastrophic financial disaster has had on the community more than he has. He thanked trustees for their dedication and commitment to the B&ECPL. He believes the Library System is very fortunate to have Michael Mahaney as its Director and said Ms. Pordum has done a great job as Board Chair. Ms. Pordum thanked Dr. Long for giving testimony to the human side of this tragedy.

Mr. Buck inquired where the System currently stands in implementing the Centralized Human Resources (CHR) program. Human Resources Officer Mary Jean Jakubowski stated the Orchard Park Public Library recently joined, and three more libraries are waiting to sign up. There was a temporary delay in employee processing at the County level due to staff shortages in the County's Personnel Office. The Library has now been given authority to process staff itself, so the program is again moving forward. The Director said by the end of the period covered by the Four-Year Plan, it is anticipated that all contracting libraries will be participants in the CHR program.

Ms. Thomas wanted to know how many of the 36 libraries remaining open are part of the CHR structure. Ms. Jakubowski stated 12 contracting libraries will be in the CHR program soon, leaving 10 contracting libraries operating outside the CHR program.

Ms. Summer mentioned that whenever she travels, she tries to visit other libraries to learn what is being done elsewhere. If she discovers something she thinks is a worthwhile innovation, she reports the information to Mr. Mahaney. Ms. Summer suggested that trustees investigate library practices in other communities to see what might work well in Erie County . For example, in Stratford , Ontario , the Friends group delivers library

materials to the homebound.

Dr. Mansouri said he believes library support is no longer a portion of the New York State Education Department's budget. It may be possible for the B&ECPL to form working relationships with other organizations that might enhance the Library's ability to share resources, such as one between Colgate University and the University of Rochester . Library usage in schools has changed. Interactive study sessions are becoming more popular. The Library needs to bring library services to the people instead of waiting for people to come to the library.

The following was submitted by the Director and transmitted to Board members prior to the meeting.

**Library Expresses Needs in 2006 Budget Hearing:** On October 26 th , B&ECPL Chair **Rebecca L. Pordum** , Budget and Finance Committee Chair **Dr. John B. Long**, CFO **Ken Stone** and the Director presented the Library's 2006 Budget request to members of the County Legislature's Finance and Management Committee. Legislator **Demone Smith** chairs this committee and posed various questions about the Library's request. (A detailed written response to those questions was transmitted to the entire Legislature on November 9 th .) Other legislators present were **George A. Holt** (Chairman), **Lynn M. Marinelli** (Majority Leader), **Albert DeBenedetti** , **Charles M. Swanick** , **Denise Marshall** , **Elise Cusack** and **Timothy Kennedy** . Among the B&ECPL Trustees who attended were **Richard Berger**, **Frank Gist**, **Phyllis A. Horton** and **Elaine M. Panty** . Representatives from contracting library boards and staff also were present. (On November 9 th , with minimal notice, the Legislature conducted its public hearing on the 2006 budget. Chair Pordum, Vice-Chair Horton and the Director attended. Among those speaking on behalf of sustained or improved library funding was **Deborah Carr-Hoagland** , President of the Aurora Town Public Library Board of Trustees.)

**Renovated Popular Materials (POP) Department Opens:** Scheduled to coincide with the New York Library Association's (NYLA) Annual Conference in Buffalo this year, the Central Library hosted a grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony to unveil its newly renovated Popular Materials Department. As part of a multi-year asbestos abatement and update process, the department features adult and young adult fiction, DVDs and VHS tapes, audio books and circulating music CDs in a bright bookstore-like setting. Chair **Rebecca Pordum** and the Director offered welcoming remarks and congratulations. Several B&ECPL Trustees were in attendance, including **Judy Summer**, **Elaine Panty** and **Dr. John Long** . Attorney **Victor Gagliardi** and estate planner **Robert Ludwig** represented the late **Robert** and **Richard Krieger** , whose bequest provided funding for the upgraded finishes and furnishings of what is now a truly spectacular space. The Administration acknowledges with appreciation the valuable contributions and tireless efforts of **Carol A. Batt** and **Glenn Luba** throughout the renovation process and the exceptional participation of staff from many areas, including Network Support, which installed six public access workstations and five personal computers for staff use in time for the opening, **Chip Campbell**, **Matt Bravo** and other members of the Maintenance crew who worked long hours under pressure to make the area look its best and various Central Library departments that assisted in the move of

materials from the temporary location on the ground floor to the newly renovated space in record time. (Subsequent to the grand opening, music CDs have been moved from the Grosvenor Room and are temporarily housed on the old spinner racks and on tables until the furniture vendor completes installation of the new music shelving.)

**Merriweather Branch Nears Completion; Capital Funds Reallocated, Library Materials Redeployed to Provide Opening Day Collections and Furnishings:** The City of Buffalo's Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Library construction project, which will replace the nearby 7,220 square-foot North Jefferson Branch with a new 20,000 square-foot facility, nears completion. The building has not yet been totally secured; therefore, the space is not accessible for the installation of library furnishings. Once the shelving has been installed, the collection will be shifted from the North Jefferson Branch. In all likelihood, the building will open very late in 2005 or very early in 2006.

As with previous library construction projects, the municipality is responsible for actual construction costs, and B&ECPL, traditionally using County capital funding, provides a stock of new library materials, shelving, furnishings and equipment. The County's 2005 Adopted Capital Budget allocated \$600,000 for this purpose; however, the County has not provided those funds in light of its ongoing fiscal crisis.

Normally, when upgrading to a larger facility, a significant stock of new library materials is purchased, spread over a period from just before opening to as much as three years after opening, to provide the additional depth and balance possible with a larger facility. These purchases would supplement a normal year's book acquisitions, which have been dismally limited in 2005. Buffalo branch personnel have harvested the best and most recent titles from the collections of libraries scheduled to close and reallocated items to other libraries. Nevertheless, the amount of 2005 titles will be extremely limited.

Earlier this year, the Library encumbered more than \$130,000 in previously approved Tobacco Settlement capital dollars intended to purchase shelving and furnishings for the Central Library Renovation project (now suspended) in order to place orders for shelving and furnishings in anticipation of the 2005 Merriweather project funds being released prior to delivery of those items. The County's failure to provide the 2005 budget funds means that the Tobacco project funds will not be available for future Central renovation needs. (Even partial issuance of the County's 2005 allocation for this project would allow the facility to be stocked with the quantity and depth of new library materials that the community deserves.)

Recently, B&ECPL received approval for its E-rate request to purchase a new telephone system for the Merriweather Library. Ninety percent of the cost will be covered as an E-rate discount. The City of Buffalo will purchase handsets and other telephone equipment. Final plans for the "multi-media" systems for the training lab and auditorium are being developed, with generous funding support from the **Margaret L. Wendt** Foundation.

**2005 Budget Cuts Affect Many:** On October 16th, mobile library service to seniors, persons with disabilities and children at risk from the Lookie Bookie ceased

operation. Last month, Fairfield Branch and Mead Branch were the first two libraries (of seven Buffalo branch libraries slated to cease operations this year) to close their doors. Other branches on that list are: Northwest, Kensington, Cazenovia, Martin Luther King and Fronczak. Extension Services Administrator **Sharon Holley** has tapped **Peter Lisker** and **Michelle Miles** to coordinate the closings and the transfer of materials, equipment and furniture to remaining open libraries. They are working with Extension and Support Services staff as well as Shipping and Maintenance Departments to facilitate a smooth transition.

- In the Town of Tonawanda, the Greenhaven Branch closed permanently on October 1st . After materials and furnishings were re-allocated to libraries throughout the System, the remaining items were liquidated through a public book sale followed by a public auction of shelving and furniture. The building was turned over to the Town of Tonawanda on October 19th . The Brighton Branch closed to the public, effective November 1st . A group of citizens proposing to form a “Friends of the Brighton Library” group are attempting to raise seed money to retain the facility for use as a community reading room, subject to approval from the Town of Tonawanda, which owns the building. Liquidation of materials and furnishings will be determined based upon potential re-use of the facility.
- The West Falls Branch in the Town of Aurora closed to the public, effective October 12 th . Aurora Town Public Library (ATPL) staff continue to transfer resources from West Falls (slated to become a volunteer-operated reading room in 2006) to ATPL's remaining location on Main Street in the Village of East Aurora .
- In Cheektowaga, the North and South Branches have closed, October 1st and November 1st respectively, with South destined to become a Town-operated youth center and North in line to become a public-access records access/ retention facility.
- Several other libraries have ceased normal operations and are in the process of dismantling collections.

**New York's Library Professionals Assemble in Buffalo for Annual Conference:**

From October 26 th through 29 th , the annual conference of the New York Library Association (NYLA) convened in Buffalo . B&ECPL Children's Department Manager **Beverly Federspiel** chaired both the Local Arrangements Committee and Vitality Fund Event Committee. Staff from various Central Departments and other B&ECPL locations served on committees and provided invaluable assistance throughout the conference. The Vitality Fund Event, whose theme was “Mark Twain: From Buffalo to the Bayou,” was held in the Central Library on October 27 th . Niagara University theater students read excerpts of Twain's writings, LeRon Zydeco and the Hot Tamales performed regional music and Fables Café provided a wonderful Bayou Bruschetta Table.

Many B&ECPL staff were involved in conference activities, including the following:

- Central Library Administrator **Peggy Skotnicki** hosted the New York State Central Library Directors meeting in the Central Library. State Librarian **Janet Welch** and NYLA Director **Michael Borges** attended the meeting, where topics of general interest to central libraries were discussed.
- Librarian **Peter Lisker** presented a pre-conference Continuing Education Workshop on “Outrageous Customer Service.”
- Librarian **Gwen Collier** was a panelist for the pre-conference workshop entitled “Experiencing Hidden Disabilities.”
- Librarian **Patricia Covley** was a panelist on the topic of “Correctional Facility Library Issues.”
- Extension Services Administrator **Sharon Holley** coordinated local storytellers for the Youth Services Section event, “Telling Tales: Celebrating Diversity.” This event featured 10 storytellers, including Mrs. Holley and North Jefferson Branch Manager **Sandra Williams Bush**. Mrs. Holley also participated in several meetings with the Outreach Coordinators of New York State.
- The Director hosted the annual conference meeting of the Public Library Systems Directors Organization (PULISDO) in the Central Library's Joseph B. Rounds Conference Room. State Librarian **Janet Welch** and NYLA Executive Director **Michael Borges** attended.
- The Director was a speaker at the session, “Fighting Back: Libraries at the Budget Brink.”

**Fine Revenue Remains Low for 2005:** System-wide receipts for September totaled \$88,276.39. This compares to a total of \$112,453.92 for September 2004, or a decrease of 21.50%, the largest monthly decline to date. Year-to-date fine revenue, at \$877,069.76, decreased by 13.39% from \$1,012,663.24 collected during the same period in 2004. This decrease can be attributed to budget-related turmoil, including the Mead, Fairfield, Greenhaven and South Cheektowaga branches' limiting circulation in anticipation of their October closing dates; 2005 budget cuts that reduced open hours throughout the System; and the cumulative impact of reduced availability of new library materials resulting from Erie County's failure to provide \$5 million of the 2005 Adopted County Capital allocation for library materials. CFO **Ken Stone** continues to monitor this situation. The recently approved fees for request service, implemented on October 1st, along with the Board approved mid-year operating budget reductions to fund \$1 million in library materials purchases should partially offset the decline. (At the time this item was written, Mr. Stone had yet to receive October 2005 reports from a handful of libraries. Based on the balance of libraries that had reported, the decrease in October will be less severe than the September drop. A full report will be available by the Board's November meeting date.)

**B&ECPL Prepares to Scale Back Utility Consumption in Anticipation of Higher Rates:** In addition to devastating the Gulf Coast , Hurricanes Katrina and Rita threw energy markets into turmoil as Gulf Coast refining and natural gas production were curtailed. Energy price forecasts for 2006 are now significantly higher than before the hurricanes. Murphy's Law being what it is, the Library's 2006 utility budget estimates were developed just prior to the impact of these hurricanes. The \$295,134 natural gas and \$1,069,937 electricity budgets for a smaller system of 36 funded libraries could be severely strained, particularly if this winter is colder than normal (high natural gas prices will also affect future electricity supply costs as natural gas, a clean burning fuel, is a growing source used to generate electricity). Should charges on average run 15% above forecast, for example, cost increases could exceed \$200,000 (equal to the annual operating cost of a small to medium-sized library). Just as any household facing higher utility costs might do, the most immediate way to reduce utility costs is to lower the thermostat over cold winter months and raise the thermostat during warmer summer months. Maintenance staff will try to maintain a reasonable level of comfort at modestly lower average temperatures as we enter the heating season. Contracting libraries are encouraged to conserve as well.

**New Health Insurance Rates Released:** Recently, the Erie County Health Care Coalition, which administers the County's one provider health insurance plan, released the health insurance rate schedule for the October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2006 plan year. Overall, the impact is expected to average 15.5% higher than last year's costs. The 2006 budget request assumed a 15% overall increase.

**Conference Celebrates Niagara Movement :** From October 6<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> , more than 900 participants gathered at the Buffalo Hyatt for the 90<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. Extension Services Administrator **Sharon Holley** presented a workshop on "Storytelling the History" with **Karima Amin**. They and other members of the Afro American Historical Association of the Niagara Frontier formed the Local Arrangements Committee for this conference, whose theme was, "The Niagara Movement: Black Protest Reborn."

**Literally Speaking Explores Contemporary Classic:** The Central Library lunchtime book discussion group delved into *Black Boy* by **Richard Wright** in honor of the 100-year anniversary of the Niagara Movement. Popular Materials Department manager **Meg Cheman** led this month's discussion.

**Wendy's Restaurants Collaborates with Library to Encourage Use of Self-Checkout Machines:** Coupled with the grand opening of the Popular Materials Department was the introduction of a program to encourage the use of new self-checkout machines located adjacent to it and the Fables Café. The Library has collaborated with Wendy's Restaurants to offer patrons who use the self-checkout equipment a coupon good for 75 cents on a future purchase of a sandwich "combo" at any Wendy's location in Western New York . Since the program began on October 26<sup>th</sup> , use of the self-checkout machines has increased more than 50%. The program will be extended and its use will be monitored.

**Celebrated Author Visits Central:** As part of a national tour to promote his latest work, *Seven Lies*, award-winning author **James Lasdun** appeared at the Central Library on October 8<sup>th</sup>. Lasdun read excerpts from his new book and answered questions from the audience. A book sale and signing immediately followed the presentation.

**Buffalo Spree Focuses on Library:** Recently, Grosvenor Librarian **Amy Pickard** spoke at length to *Buffalo Spree* feature writer **Devon Dams-O'Connor** about the Library's genealogical resources. Watch for the article in a future issue. The Fall/Winter 2005-2006 issue of *Spree* also features an upbeat review of Central Library activities and improvements, including the renovated Popular Materials Department and the "Map That Changed the World" exhibit. A photo of Fables Café accompanies the piece.

**Budget Constraints Compel Central Library to Limit Access and Hours:** Effective October 31<sup>st</sup>, hours were reduced at the Central Library. The Business, Science & Technology Department (BS&T) joined the Children's Room and the Grosvenor Room in closing on Fridays. BS&T further reduced operations with a 10 a.m. opening on the remaining days of the week. All are open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

**Author Uses B&ECPL Resources to Explain Mandolin Mania:** UB Librarian **Jean Dickson**, who specializes in Romance Languages, Linguistics and the Polish Collection, has contributed an article entitled "Mandolin Mania" in the current issue (Fall 2005) of *Western New York Heritage*. Ms. Dickson spent a great deal of time in the Grosvenor Room researching her subject and acknowledges librarians **Cynthia Van Ness**, **Raya Then** and the B&ECPL for research assistance.

**"Map That Changed the World" Inspires Field Trip:** On October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 10 hardy souls braved inclement weather to learn more about Western New York's geology on a field trip to the Niagara Gorge led by UB geology professors **Dr. Tracy Gregg** and **Dr. Robert Jacobi**. The professors gave an outstanding tour, demonstrating their enthusiasm for geology and B&ECPL's collections. **Elaine Barone** represented the Library and the Library Foundation for this event.

**Twentieth Century Club Learns of B&ECPL Riches:** On October 27<sup>th</sup>, rare book aficionado and Humanities & Social Sciences Manager **Elaine Barone** presented "Treasures of the Rare Book Room" to approximately 100 members of the Twentieth Century Club. Members were enthusiastic in their appreciation of the treasures and expressed support for the Library and its rich collections.

**New Grant Application to Gates Foundation Developed:** B&ECPL has been invited to submit a grant application to the **Bill and Melinda Gates** Foundation to replace computer workstations at public libraries in the Cities of Buffalo and Lackawanna. These personal computers were originally purchased with a grant provided by the same Foundation in 1998. A draft has been developed by CIO **Shirley Whelan** and is being reviewed in consultation with other staff prior to submittal. It is expected to be complete in time for the December Board meeting when approval will be requested to meet a December 30<sup>th</sup> deadline.

**Charges for Holds Generate Needed Revenue:** On October 1 st , B&ECPL began to charge patrons a fee for placing a request for materials. The charge is assessed when a patron picks up the request or when a hold becomes “unclaimed” and is returned to its permanent location. In the first month, more than \$9,200 was assessed and approximately 74%, \$6,829, was actually paid by patrons.

**Library Examines Downloadable Audio Books:** Recently, CIO **Shirley Whelan** arranged a demonstration of digital book downloads for B&ECPL administrators and key staff. This electronic technology—the subject of a recent *Buffalo News* feature—is increasing in popularity and already has been integrated into the array of innovative services offered by many libraries around the country. The merits of the service are many, and all agreed that this should be high on the list of proposed new services if funding can be identified.

**Trustees and Staff Examine Options for B&ECPL:** On November 9 th , library consultant and former B&ECPL employee **Richard Panz** presented an overview of funding and governance options for the B&ECPL. He reviewed the New York State Library infrastructure, summarized funding options available to all New York State libraries and described specific funding and governance alternatives available to B&ECPL as a system. Among those attending were B&ECPL trustees **Rebecca Pordum** , **Phyllis Horton** , **Elaine Panty** and **W. Lawrence Buck** . Among those contracting library trustees who participated were **Richard Earne** ( Grand Island ), **Mark Weber** ( Cheektowaga ), **Mark Stevens** ( Orchard Park ), **Johanna Fallon** ( Hamburg ) and **Albert Martin** (Lancaster). Collins Public Library Director **Karen Koch** represented her Board. Administrative staff in attendance included COO **Ruth Collins** , CFO **Ken Stone** , CIO **Shirley Whelan** , Human Resources Officer **Mary Jean Jakubowski** , Central Library Administrator **Peggy A. Skotnicki** and the Director. B&ECPL legal counsel **Patrick E. Martin** also attended. The format allowed for interaction among participants and the presenter, and there appears to be sufficient interest among trustees and staff to explore the various options further. Panz's presentation was supported in part by a New York State Division of Library Development and Federal Library Services and Technology grant.

**Miscellaneous Meetings and Appearances:** On October 15 th , COO **Ruth Collins** , CFO **Ken Stone** and the Director attended a meeting of the Association of Contracting Libraries (ACT) at the Hamburg Library. On October 18 th , the Director addressed a class of honors students at SUNY Fredonia. The class, “Books, Libraries and American Democracy,” had been instructed to explore the B&ECPL website for current events at the B&ECPL and to read the 1998 Cohen study ( *The Buffalo and Erie County Public Library in the Third Millennium* ) for historical perspective. On November 4 th , CFO Stone, Extension Services Administrator **Sharon Holley** and Institutional Services Librarian **Patricia Covley** met with **Jean Botta** , Supervising Librarian for the New York State Department of Correctional Services and Correctional Facility Librarians, **Patrick Reed** of Gowanda Correctional Facility, **William Smith** of Wende Correctional Facility and **P.D. Upadhyay** of Collins Correctional Facility to discuss current and future contracts for services with B&ECPL. On November 10 th , the ACT Board met at the Hamburg Library, and COO Collins attended on behalf of B&ECPL administration.

Agenda Item G – Report of the Foundation Director. James Janis, an employee of the Library Foundation, distributed a written report and gave an overview of activities. The report contained detailed information regarding the *Map That Changed the World* exhibit. Mr. Janis said there has been extensive interest in this project. The donor base has grown as a result of exposure the B&ECPL gained from this exhibit. The written report also included information on 2005 programs, the fall 2005 annual campaign, the Wendt Foundation, Rare Book Room conservator project and funding support and expenditures. Mr. Janis mentioned some operational issues that need to be addressed. Ms. Pordum suggested all requests be put in writing to Deputy Director Ruth Collins so that she can respond in a timely manner.

Ms. Juncewicz asked what portion of the contributions reported for 2005 were actually raised in 2005. Mr. Janis replied \$207,935.80 was raised in 2005, as was \$56,000 from the Grosvenor Society. The Wendt Foundation grant was secured in 2002. Ms. Juncewicz inquired whether trustees would be receiving an annual financial statement from the Library Foundation. Mr. Janis said he would look into that.

Mrs. Collins concurred that the *Map* project was a fantastic event. She believes the best benefit to come from it are the many partnerships that have been formed.

Agenda Item H – Public Comment. Richard Phillips, 346 Pilgrim Road , Town of Tonawanda , is a member of the Friends of the Brighton Library (FOBL) group. FOBL raised the required funds and has volunteers who are ready to work. He is opposed to having a book sale at the Brighton Library and believes all library materials currently remaining in the building should be left behind for use at the Brighton reading room.

Linda Byrnes, 52 Keats Avenue , Tonawanda , is a member of the Friends of the Brighton Library. A proposal for re-use of the Brighton Library was submitted to the B&ECPL in accordance with Resolution 2005-41. She stated the Town Council plans to vote on a proposal in support of the Brighton re-use plan on November 28th. She does not feel the Town Library Board should sell Brighton 's books in order to cover a \$10,000 deficit.

Lynda Stephens, 266 Hartwell Rd. , Buffalo , asked trustees to reconsider the plan to close so many Buffalo branch libraries. She believes Buffalo school children, many of whom are disadvantaged, will be disproportionately affected by library closings.

Trustee Jack Connors left at approximately 5:10 p.m.

Jeffrey Gauthier, 189 Cazenovia Street , Buffalo , said school children depend on Buffalo branch libraries to complete assignments. Closing several branches will make it difficult for students to do research. This library crisis affects children and teens as well as adults. Jeffrey would like a re-use plan for the Cazenovia Library to be developed.

ElizaBeth Berry of the Save Our Libraries Coalition believes Buffalo took the brunt of library closings in Erie County . There is no plan to deliver services, no bookmobiles. She would like to see all Buffalo branch libraries open 32 hours per week. Ms. Berry

suggested other schedule options for the three departments at the Central Library that are now closed one day per week.

John Klukowski, 189 Cazenovia Street , Buffalo , said there is a lack of social conscience in Erie County . The Cazenovia Library is closing after 80 years of service to the community. Taxes are going up and services are being reduced. He would prefer to have some library services remain at Cazenovia rather than see it used by not-for-profit groups. Social conscientious

Agenda Item I – Unfinished Business. No unfinished business.

Agenda Item J – New Business.

Agenda Item J.1 – 2005 Contract Extensions with Contracting Libraries. For the past several years, the Board has authorized the Chair to execute contract extensions with contracting libraries. It is again necessary to execute extensions rather than new contracts due to the uncertainty of anticipated revenue from Erie County and New York State . This resolution would extend contracts for six months. New contracts for 2006 will require time for review and analysis because new language pertaining to library management, utilities, health insurance and retirement costs must be developed. In response to a question, Mr. Stone stated the allocations would be based on the proposed 2006 budget. Amounts can be adjusted in the second half of the year if necessary. Mr. Buck moved and was seconded by Ms. Summer, whereupon approval was unanimous.

#### RESOLUTION 2005-56

WHEREAS, budgetary allocations from Erie County and New York State to the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library constitute over 90% of the financial resources supporting the contract with the “Public Library,” and

WHEREAS, due to difficult local fiscal circumstances, Erie County's 2006 allocation may not be known until mid-December or later, and New York State's allocation may not be known until well into 2006, and

WHEREAS, a restructuring of the Library System is required to address reduced County support for operations and library materials in 2006 that, at \$21.7 million, is anticipated to be at least \$7 million less than the \$28.7 million (\$24.2 million in Library Property Tax and \$4.5 million in County Capital funding for library materials) provided in 2004, and

WHEREAS, this restructuring will require changes in contract language to reflect the impacts of restructuring, for example, in cases where contracting libraries' fundraising efforts provide sufficient monies to allow libraries to remain open more hours per week than provided in the budget, a provision to reimburse the System for the additional utility and related expenses paid by the System must be incorporated into the annual contract, and

WHEREAS, this would make it difficult for the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library and the contracting libraries to develop, consider and approve a contract prior to the beginning of the 2006 fiscal year on January 1, 2006, and

WHEREAS, to meet the 2006 payroll and other operating expenditure needs of the contracting libraries, a provision for allocating funds must be in place on or about January 1, 2006 , if not earlier, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library authorizes the Chair of the Board of Trustees to, if necessary, execute 2005 contract extensions with contracting libraries to be effective until such time as a permanent 2006 contract is executed, or June 30, 2006, whichever is earlier, and be it further

RESOLVED, that funding amounts under said contract extensions would be based upon the estimated allocation of the 2006 B&ECPL Board-adopted budget.

Agenda Item J.2 – Use of United Way Donations. Mr. Mahaney reminded everyone the B&ECPL is a United Way donor choice option and receives funds through the United Way on an annual basis. One of the Library's very popular and necessary services, an electronic resume application program that is used by thousands of patrons each year, is up for renewal. The Library is proposing to expend some United Way funds to renew an improved application of this program. Ms. Junczewicz moved for approval. Ms. Panty seconded, and the resolution was approved unanimously.

#### RESOLUTION 2005-57

WHEREAS, since 2003, the Library has provided resume preparation software to assist patrons seeking employment, and

WHEREAS, this software is available within each library on public access computers, and

WHEREAS, this software was licensed for unlimited use on 600 public access workstations for three years in 2003 and the license must be renewed to continue use of the program, and

WHEREAS, changing technology provides the opportunity to expand access to all library cardholders regardless of location (in a library, at home, school or work) via the Internet, and

WHEREAS, changing technology presents the opportunity to expand access to all Buffalo branches and the Central Library, using the Internet at a cost of \$7,500 for three years, and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL has identified \$7,500 in available funds donated directly to the B&ECPL via the United Way *Donor Choice Program* and deposited in the Library's

private funds account held in trust by the Erie County Comptroller to support this service,  
and

WHEREAS, this use is an excellent match with the United Way 's emphasis on human services programs and activities, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees authorizes the release of \$7,500 from the B&ECPL donations trust account to fund the costs associated with access to resume preparation program *Resume Maker*.

At approximately 5:24 p.m. , the Chair entertained a motion to enter Executive Session. Ms. Summer made the motion, which was seconded by Ms. Panty. Approval was unanimous.

At approximately 6:24 p.m. , Ms. Thomas made a motion to end the closed session. She was seconded by Ms. Horton, and approval was unanimous. The Board returned to public session. Ms. Pordum reported no action had been taken during Executive Session.

Ms. Horton asked for a moment of silence in memory of Susan Maggiore's mother, who passed away two weeks earlier. There being no further business, on motion by Mr. Buck and a second by Ms. Panty, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Gist

Secretary