

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER:   E.1.  



Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees  
Executive Committee Meeting Report  
December 10, 2020

Present via Zoom conference call: Executive Committee Chair Kathleen Berens Bucki; Vice Chair Kimberly Johnson; members Sheldon Berlow and Elaine Panty; and ex-officio member Frank Housh. Library Director Mary Jean Jakubowski, Chief Financial Officer (C.F.O.) Ken Stone and Chief Operating Officer (C.O.O.) Jeannine Doyle also participated via Zoom.

In keeping with Executive Order 202.79 issued December 3, 2020 which extends previous Executive Orders regarding emergency adjustments to the Open Meetings Law in response to the COVID-19 pandemic through January 1, 2021, this meeting was held remotely via Zoom. As required by the Governor's Order, the public had the ability to listen to the proceeding via Zoom, and the meeting was recorded, transcribed, and made available on the Library's website. This information was included in the meeting announcement.

Chair Bucki called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

C.O.O. Jeannine Doyle introduced Action Item: Resolution 2020-37 – Employee Health Insurance Contribution Waiver for December 2020. She explained most Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) employees who receive health insurance through the B&ECPL are responsible for a portion of the monthly premium costs. The Labor Management Healthcare Fund (LMHF) currently administers the health insurance plans of those benefited employees. In 2020, LMHF achieved cost savings due in part to the healthy choices of employees and the reduction in health care utilization due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related shut-downs. Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz has decided that the County will not deduct the base plan (Value Plan) employee premium contribution from Erie County employees' paychecks for the 2 pay periods in December 2020. Any employee who has a plan greater than the base plan will still pay the difference between their plan and the Value plan. C.O.O. Doyle recommended that the Executive Committee approve the same waiver for B&ECPL employees for the month of December. Trustee Johnson moved for approval of Resolution 2020-37, Trustee Panty made a second and approval was unanimous.

The Executive Committee then reviewed the proposed agenda for the December 17, 2020 B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting. Chair Bucki noted the Election of the Nominating Committee under Report of the Chair. She asked if any of those present would be interested in serving on the Nominating Committee. Trustee Panty and Trustee Housh both expressed their interest.

C.F.O. Stone reviewed proposed resolutions from the Budget and Finance Committee. He noted the Erie County Legislature had adopted a 2021 County Budget on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, which did not include any changes for the Library from the County Executive's 2021

Proposed Budget. He reported the B&ECPL remains within budget, and is currently projected to achieve a savings of approximately \$2.1 million in 2020, even including adjustments made to revenue estimates after much of the County was placed in an Orange Zone. He is recommending a portion of these savings be used as described in Resolution 2020-42 – Library Fund Balance Transfers with the remaining falling to fund balance.

Trustee Panty reported that the Policy Committee met on November 19<sup>th</sup> and reviewed changes to the Circulation Policy as well as completing an annual review of the B&ECPL Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual (Manual) and Employee Handbook (Handbook). Recommendations for changes to the Circulation Policy include the addition of language to differentiate between available types of library cards and to clarify procedures for applying for a library card online. C.O.O. Doyle noted most of the changes to the Manual in 2020 were due to policy changes initiated by the Board. She will review all changes at the meeting on December 17<sup>th</sup>.

Director Jakubowski reported the Central Library and Buffalo Branches are currently operating walk-up and/or curbside service. Virtual services, including email and telephone reference, virtual training programs, storytimes, books clubs, lectures, etc. continue to be offered as well. She noted that New York State (NYS) Governor Andrew Cuomo is expected to announce changes to the NYS Micro-Cluster Strategy on Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup>. Director Jakubowski also reported she and Chair Bucki would be meeting with County Executive Poloncarz on Friday. They will report back on said meeting at the December Board Meeting. Director Jakubowski affirmed she and Library Administration will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation in Erie County and will revise B&ECPL plans and procedures as necessary.

Trustee Berlow asked if the B&ECPL had sufficient insurance in place to handle situations to do with the pandemic. Director Jakubowski assured the Committee that she was confident in the B&ECPL's current coverage and noted C.O.O. Doyle had a great relationship with the current carrier. C.O.O. Doyle reaffirmed general liability insurance for the B&ECPL had been renewed in July, and she continues to follow up on any questions regarding insurance as they arise.

Trustee Berlow then inquired whether the health insurance coverage of B&ECPL employees covers all costs associated with COVID-19. C.O.O. Doyle responded that active employees currently receive coverage through BlueCross BlueShield, and the plan offerings through LMHF have been rated as Platinum or better by Affordable Care Act (ACA) standards. She noted the cost of testing has been a source of some confusion, but that she and Human Resources Manager Judy Fachko are holding conversations with employees, as needed, to ensure they find a testing site that meets the qualifications/criteria to be fully covered. Director Jakubowski also pointed out employees who need time off due to COVID-19 related situations may be covered by various federal leave programs.

Director Jakubowski noted the Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT) would be meeting on Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. She, C.F.O. Stone and C.O.O. Doyle would be presenting at the meeting, which had been suggested by Library Administration. She will give a report at the Board Meeting, unless a member of ACT is present to report.

The public had no comment.

Director Jakubowski noted Resolution 2020-45 under New Business. She conveyed C.O.O. Doyle was coming to the end of her 3-year term of appointment, noted Ms. Doyle's exemplary contributions to the library and therefore recommended that the Board reappoint her for another term. She noted the resolution did not specify a salary; she was currently in the process of reviewing and making changes to the wage/benefits packages of Deputy Directors and Managerial/Confidential employees and expected to bring something forward in January.

After review, the Committee had no changes for the proposed agenda.

The Committee reviewed the proposed meeting schedules for the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee for 2021. The schedule continues the pattern of holding Executive Committee meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month at 4:00 p.m. and Board of Trustees Meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month at 4:00 p.m. Two typos were corrected on the suggestion of Trustee Panty. The Executive Committee indicated agreement with the schedules as presented; finalized versions will be distributed to the Board of Trustees in January.

Trustee Panty asked how the Nominating Committee will be able to meet given current restrictions. Director Jakubowski offered to set up a Zoom meeting for the Nominating Committee if needed. She also mentioned she and Erin Vest are developing a process using Zoom features should a determining vote be needed to select members to the Nominating Committee.

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Berlow, with a second by Trustee Panty.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Johnson