

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: E.1.



Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees
Executive Committee Meeting Report
August 13, 2020

Present via Zoom conference call: Executive Committee Chair Kathleen Berens Bucki; members Katie Burd and Elaine Panty; and ex-officio member Frank Housh. Vice Chair Kimberly Johnson was present in person at the Central Library, as was Library Director Mary Jean Jakubowski. Chief Operating Officer (C.O.O.) Jeannine Doyle and Chief Financial Officer (C.F.O.) Ken Stone also participated in the meeting via Zoom.

In keeping with Executive Order 202.55 issued August 5, 2020 which extends previous Executive Orders regarding emergency adjustments to the Open Meetings Law in response to the COVID-19 pandemic through September 4, 2020, this meeting was offered 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 4:03 p.m. Following the call of the roll, it was noted a quorum was present.

With the August 20, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting remitted per Resolution 2020-22, there was no agenda for review by the Executive Committee.

C.F.O. Stone reviewed the year-end budget projection meeting he and Director Jakubowski attended with the Erie County Budget Office. He then noted the status of the Library's 2021 budget, due on August 24th: all libraries and library departments have submitted proposed budgets with multiple reduction factors. Budget instructions from the County require the submission of both a status quo budget and a 5% reduction in operating budget expenditures. Discussion ensued. C.F.O. Stone further explained the Library has asked each library/library department to submit additional reduction scenarios and to provide impact statements. Director Jakubowski indicated this was because of budgetary history and her belief it is better to be prepared. She further expressed her hope that the Library will not need to employ such scenarios. C.F.O. Stone concurred. He noted while sales tax levels are down, they are better than anticipated. Discussion ensued regarding the current status of federal COVID-19 relief stimulus packages. Director Jakubowski stated she is cautiously optimistic.

C.F.O. Stone then spoke to the New York State budget. He indicated he believes there will be a 20% cut in State Aid to libraries. He also indicated that while 80% of basic aid allocation is being released for 2020, this is only a portion of the funding received by the B&ECPL. It is not known when the other aid programs will be releasing funds.

C.F.O. Stone indicated the Request for Proposal for work at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library is out for bid. Work to be completed in this project includes, but is not limited to, parking lot repair and auditorium sound system replacement. The funding for this project is a State and Municipal Facilities Program (SAM) grant, sponsored by New York State Senator Timothy M. Kennedy.

Director Jakubowski stated she and Library Administration are reviewing current open hours and use statistics. She anticipates open hours at the Buffalo Branch Libraries and the Central Library will be expanded. At present, public services staff is being surveyed regarding open hours at Central. Some part-time staff would need to return to work if hours expand. Further, the opening of meeting rooms, within the restrictions set forth by Executive Orders, is under discussion. She noted Minimum Standards for Public Libraries remain in abeyance as the State of Emergency continues. The State of Emergency is set to expire, unless extended, on September 7, 2020. She is monitoring the situation.

Director Jakubowski noted the Human Resources (HR) Department is reviewing various programs associated with COVID-19 which may impact personnel. It is not known at this time how many staff members may be eligible for leave as covered by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) in particular due to child care, schooling, etc. HR, under the direction of C.O.O. Jeannine Doyle, is working on associated policies. It is important to note most positions within the Library require staff to be onsite. Discussion ensued. Director Jakubowski will keep the Board abreast of the situation.

Director Jakubowski noted visits to libraries remain impacted by the pandemic. While there have been a few situations regarding the wearing of facial coverings, most have been resolved without incident. In one case, the Buffalo Police Department was called.

Director Jakubowski conveyed the Library, while not legally obligated to do so, had sent over 5,000 donors notification of the Blackbaud ransomware attack. In mid-July, Blackbaud informed the B&ECPL of the ransomware attack, indicating that the cybercriminal did not access any credit card information, bank account information, passwords or Social Security numbers. It is noted that the Library did not put any of this information into the Blackbaud database. Joy Testa Cinquino, Assistant Deputy Director is monitoring the situation and responding to questions.

Director Jakubowski asked the Executive Committee to confirm the August meeting of the Board of Trustees is to remain intermitted. She noted that should any additional information need to be provided or action need to be taken, a special meeting of the Board would be called. The Committee confirmed the August meeting continues to be intermitted.

The public had no comment.

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Burd, with a second by Trustee Panty.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Johnson