

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER:   G.1.  



Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees  
Executive Committee Meeting Report  
January 14, 2021

Present via Zoom conference call: Executive Committee Chair Kathleen Berens Bucki; Vice Chair Kimberly Johnson; members Sheldon Berlow and Katie Burd; and ex-officio members Frank Housh and Ted Johnson. Member Elaine Panty was present in person at the Central Library, as was 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 202.87 issued December 30, 2020 which extends previous Executive Orders regarding emergency adjustments to the Open Meetings Law in response to the COVID-19 pandemic through January 29, 2021, 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. After a call of the roll, it was noted that a quorum was present.

The Executive Committee reviewed the proposed agenda for the January 21, 2021 B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting. Trustee Burd reported the Nominating Committee had met the previous week and unanimously decided on a slate of officers to present at the January meeting. Chair Bucki noted she had remained in touch with Director Jakubowski regarding openings and closings of libraries over the past month.

C.F.O. Stone reviewed items from the Budget and Finance Committee. He reported the B&ECPL remains within budget, as does Erie County as a whole. He noted there is a possibility the 20% of State Aid withheld in 2020 could be paid back if federal aid to state and local governments comes through in February/March. However, the budget is balanced without such a payment.

Director Jakubowski reported the Central Library and Buffalo Branches are currently operating under the guidelines set forth in the amended B&ECPL COVID-19 Micro-Cluster Plan. This week, the Dudley Branch Library is closed for in-person services due to the zip code in which it is located, 14220, exceeding the designated COVID-19 metric. Nine libraries system-wide are closed for in-person services this week. She continues to monitor the situation. Use of libraries remains steady, though not equivalent to pre-COVID levels; however, use of eResources has increased tremendously.

Director Jakubowski mentioned staff in libraries that are open for in-person services have been dealing with issues regarding proper usage of masks, especially having masks over

both the nose and mouth. Anecdotally, Director Jakubowski attended a 40 minute meeting on the first floor of the Central Library on Wednesday and personally had to ask 3-4 patrons to use their masks properly. The County Executive has sent a letter to Mayor Byron Brown about ensuring prompt response times from Buffalo Police if staff in Buffalo Branches need help with enforcement of COVID-19 policies. Trustee Housh asked how many incidents so far have risen to the level of calling the police. Director Jakubowski responded that there have been 5-6 incidents at this point – the vast majority of issues are minor, but they are constant for public-facing staff.

Director Jakubowski conveyed the Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT) did not have a report for this month.

The public had no comment.

Director Jakubowski noted Resolution 2021-2 under New Business. She explained the resolution would recommend raises of 2.5% on January 1, 2021 and 2% on January 1, 2022 and January 1, 2023 for managerial/confidential staff, excluding administration (Assistant Deputy Directors, Deputy Directors and the Library Director). She would be submitting a separate wage request for administration. Resolution 2021-2 would also amend and clarify the benefits package for all managerial/confidential employees and administration. Proposed adjustments to the benefits package are nominal; changes bring benefits closer to the level of union-represented employees.

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

Chair Bucki entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session at 4:20 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter. Trustee Berlow moved, Trustee Burd seconded, and approval was unanimous. All trustees on the call were invited to a Zoom Breakout Room; staff and public were asked to remain on the main line or leave the in-person meeting room as applicable. At 4:49 p.m., on motion by Trustee Burd and seconded by Trustee K. Johnson, the Executive Committee concluded Executive Session and reconvened in public session. No action was taken in Executive Session.

With no further business to discuss, the Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Berlow and a second by Trustee K. Johnson.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Johnson