

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
November 22, 2022

In lieu of the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, a special meeting of the Executive Committee was held on Tuesday, November 22, 2022 at the Central Library.

Present were: Executive Committee Chair Kimberly Johnson, Vice Chair Carima El-Beahiry, and member Elaine Panty. Member Frank Housh attended via teleconference as a nonvoting participant. Also present were Director John Spears, Chief Financial Officer Ken Stone, and Development & Communications Clerk Melissa Burgess.

The meeting of the Executive Committee began at 4:00 p.m. After a call of the roll, it was noted that a quorum was present.

Agenda Item B – Approval/Changes to the Agenda. There were no changes to the proposed agenda.

Agenda Item C – Minutes of the Meeting of October 16, 2022. On motion by Trustee El-Beahiry, seconded by Trustee Panty, the Minutes were unanimously approved as mailed.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair.

Chair Johnson reported that she had virtually attended a meeting with the Erie County Legislature earlier in the week regarding the Library budget for 2023. She reported that it was a positive meeting. Both Chair Johnson and Trustee Panty commended Director Spears on his efforts and demeanor in working with the Legislature for the first time. Discussion ensued.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. The Executive Committee previously met on November 9, 2022. A copy of the written report was included in the Board packet. Trustee Panty moved to have the written report entered into the minutes. Trustee El-Beahiry seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Present: Executive Committee Chair Kimberly Johnson, Vice Chair Carima El-Beahiry, and members Sheldon Berlow and Elaine Panty. Also present were Director John Spears, Chief Financial Officer Ken Stone, and Development & Communications Clerk Melissa Burgess.

Minutes of the Executive Committee

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The meeting of the Executive Committee began at 4:09 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 November 17, 2022 B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting.

Chair Johnson did not have anything to report.

CFO Stone reviewed four resolutions from the Budget & Finance Committee. The first two resolutions, 2022-41 and 2022-42, will accept and budget awards related to construction aid the Library applied for in September 2021. The state announced awards on October 14, including \$996,308 to rehabilitate the Isaías González-Soto Branch Library building and \$586,549 for replacement of electrical switch-gear and chimney restoration at the Central Library.

Resolution 2022-43 will amend recurring grants accordingly based on changes in the state budget. Recurring aid will increase \$49,117 and will be allocated among seven respective grant project budgets.

Finally, Resolution 2022-44 will authorize the use of \$650,000 from the Library Fund's assigned fund balance to replace approximately 650 computers with Windows 11 capable products. CFO Stone noted that the Library gets a lot of life out of computers, but there still comes a time when replacement is needed. Microsoft will cease to support Windows 10 in 2024. Approval of this resolution will allow the Library to begin purchasing and deploying these replacements.

Director Spears said that ideally, the Library System would set up a technology plan to replace computers and other equipment on a scheduled basis. This has been the intention in the past, but the budget has not always allowed this option. CFO Stone noted that the Library is building this fund as well as a fund for grant matches.

CFO Stone also reported that utility costs appear to be moderating a bit. While they are still projected approximately \$100,000 over budget, costs are not as bad as initially expected. Trustee El-Behairy asked for clarification on the Library's utility budget. CFO Stone noted that the Library System goes through Erie County's aggregate purchasing pool and buys natural gas for all libraries, and electrical service for all libraries except Newstead, Concord and West Seneca. Erie County works with Fluent Energy.

Trustee Berlow asked for an update on construction at the Crane Branch Library. CFO Stone noted that concrete is being poured for the back vestibule, which has been gutted. The project is anticipated to be done and the Library reopened by the end of May 2023. CFO Stone also noted that Crane and the González-Soto Branch are the oldest operating City of Buffalo branches.

Chair Johnson inquired about the ceiling tiles at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch

Library. CFO Stone noted that the Board previously approved replacement of the roof, which needs to be completed first before ceiling tiles can be replaced.

Trustee El-Behairy suggested that the Library and the Library Foundation can use the Crane Branch construction and reopening as a fundraising opportunity, providing hard hat tours and other behind-the-scenes events for elected officials and potential supporters. Discussion ensued about the historic relationship between the Library and Library Foundation.

Director Spears discussed recent media reporting about the Library's potential partnership with SUNY Erie Community College. He noted that discussion about any type of partnership has paused, and that the Library will wait to see how things play out before taking any further action.

Director Spears provided updates on upcoming meetings with state legislators, set up by Western New York Library Resources Council. He noted that board members and member libraries are always welcome and that a schedule of meetings had been emailed. The Library's Information Services Department is compiling an updated list of legislators and their respective districts and libraries.

Finally, he noted that the Regents Advisory Council recently released its vision for New York State libraries. A copy is included in the monthly report, sent to all trustees and staff.

Trustee El-Behairy noted that there would be a Report of the Foundation at the November 17 meeting. The Foundation meets the day prior, including a working session to develop a process for nomination. The Library Foundation Board currently has four members and hopes to recruit more. The group is working on creating a vision, mission and strategy. It currently meets quarterly with the goal to meet more frequently in the future.

Trustee El-Behairy noted that the Foundation will vote on allocating funds to support the upcoming trustee holiday gathering. Discussion ensued. It was noted that no Library business can be discussed at the gathering and that it must remain an informal, social event.

Following review, the Executive Committee had no further changes to the proposed agenda.

With no further business to discuss, the Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Berlow and a second by Trustee Panty.

Trustee El-Behairy also reminded the Board about the upcoming Trustee Holiday Gathering on Wednesday, December 14 at the downtown Central Library.

Agenda Item E.2 - Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Budget Construction Aid Award – Gonzalez-Soto Improvements Phase 2. CFO Stone presented Resolution 2022-41 and reported that the project is close to going out to bid. Trustee El-Behairy moved for approval, Trustee Panty seconded, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2022-41

WHEREAS, the Library has worked cooperatively with the City of Buffalo to undertake major improvements to the Gonzalez-Soto Branch Library, in a two phase project, and

WHEREAS, Phase 1, currently under construction, includes replacing the leaking roof, the original single pane windows the original, asbestos-containing floor tiles on the first floor and circulation area, and

WHEREAS, Phase 2 improvements include rehabilitating and modernizing both floors, rehabilitating the parking lot, and replacing sanitary/storm lines, adding electrical and data outlets, refinishing deteriorated finishes on library wood casework, shelving, door and window frames, moldings and casings, repainting the first floor and basement areas and rooms, removing/replacing basement ceiling and lighting fixtures, replacing deteriorated and unsafe sidewalk paving, and installing a handicap lift to provide ADA access to the stage, and

WHEREAS, to assist in funding the Phase 2 work, the B&ECPL Board of Trustees on September 16, 2021 adopted Resolution 2021-29, authorizing applying for 2021-22 New York State (NYS) Library Construction Aid to support the Phase 2 project, and

WHEREAS, these improvements would provide a more accessible, inviting, safe, and comfortable environment for patrons and staff, and

WHEREAS, the City of Buffalo, as part of its American Rescue Act Spending Plan, has allocated \$800,000 to support Phase 2 work, and

WHEREAS, on October 14, 2022 the B&ECPL received notice that \$996,308 in 2021/2022 NYS Construction Aid has been approved, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Board of Trustees approves amending the Library Grants Budget to establish the Gonzalez-Soto Library Phase 2 grant as shown below:

Gonzalez-Soto Library Phase 2 Space Improvements and Rehabilitation

Revenue:

NYS Library Const. Aid **\$996,308**

Expense:

Reimburse City of Buffalo for Construction Related Expense **\$996,308**, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Board of Trustees authorizes the use of the above proceeds to reimburse the City of Buffalo up to \$996,308 for project related expense undertaken by the City as owner of the building.

Agenda Item E.2.b – Budget Construction Aid Award – Central Library Electrical Switch-gear Replacement & Chimney Restoration. CFO Stone presented Resolution 2022-42. Trustee Panty moved for approval, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2022-42

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2021 the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library adopted Resolution 2021-30 authorizing the Library Director to submit a \$34,000,000 NYS Public Library Construction Aid Program funding recommendation in the amount of \$510,458 for the Central Library Electrical Switch-gear Replacement & Chimney Restoration Project, and

WHEREAS, the Central Library project will replace the building's approximately 60 year electrical switch-gear and related components and rehabilitate the chimney located on the building's east roof, and

WHEREAS, the estimated grant funding recommendation was reduced to fit within the available funds allocation estimate for the B&ECPL system, and

WHEREAS, during the aid review process the NY State Library Division of Library Development staff advised that the Central Library project was expected to receive additional funding resulting from allocations not utilized by other library systems being re-distributed, and

WHEREAS, on October 14, 2022 the Library received an aid award notice for the Central project in the amount of \$586,549, which is a \$76,091 increase over the original estimate, and

WHEREAS, a Library Grants budget needs to be established to utilize this funding, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL approves establishing a Grant Budget as follows:

Central Library Electrical Switch-gear Replacement & Chimney Restoration Project

NYS Library Construction Aid Revenue **\$586,549**

Project Expense: **\$586,549**

Agenda Item E.2.c – Amend 2022 Grant Budgets. CFO Stone presented Resolution 2022-43. Trustee El-Behairy moved for approval, Trustee Panty seconded, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2022-43

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) receives recurring state aid to support specific library activities, which the library budgets in the library in the Library Grants Budget, and

WHEREAS, final amounts for the State's 2022-2023 fiscal year for recurring aid budgeted in the Library Grants Budget will increase by \$49,117 over the 2022 budgeted amounts, and

WHEREAS, the Library wishes to adjust the grant budget to reflect the above changes, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Board of Trustees approves amending the 2022 grants budget to implement the following revenue and expenditure changes:

2022 Library Grants Budget

	2022 Adopted Budget	State Enacted Budget	Revenue Change	Expense Change
Central Library Book Aid	\$65,881	\$68,338	\$2,457	\$2,457
Central Library Development Aid	\$285,589	\$296,244	\$10,655	\$10,655
Continuity of Service	\$46,071	\$47,789	\$1,718	\$1,718
Coordinated Outreach	\$155,641	\$183,431	\$27,790	\$27,790
Library Services to County Corrections	\$8,079	\$8,380	\$301	\$301
New York State Library Automation	\$74,487	\$73,112	-\$1,375	-\$1,375
Library Services to State Corrections	\$36,130	\$43,701	\$7,571	\$7,571
Total NY State Recurring Grants	\$671,878	\$720,995	\$49,117	\$49,117

Agenda Item E.2.d – Additional Obsolete Hardware Replacements. CFO Stone presented Resolution 2022-44. He reported that each all-in-one computer costs approximately \$1,000. Upgrades have been happening in stages, and this will allow the Library to finish replacing equipment and pre-fund its fund balance for next year. Trustee Panty moved for approval, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2022-44

WHEREAS, the Library is in the midst of a multi-year process to replace public and staff computers to better position the library to transition to Windows 11, and

WHEREAS, in Resolution 2021-41 adopting the 2022 Budget the Board approved the use of \$400,000 from fund balance to support these replacements allowing approximately 400 units to be replaced in 2022, and

WHEREAS, the Library plans to replace up to an additional up to 650 computers in 2023 at a cost estimated at just under \$1,000 per unit, and

WHEREAS, staff estimates the total cost at \$650,000, and

WHEREAS, putting funding in place now would allow additional orders to be placed in 2022, keeping the process moving forward, and

WHEREAS, the Library has planned for equipment replacements and built up a committed fund balance over a period of years to accommodate this expense, and

WHEREAS, these funds are maintained in the Library Fund's balance sheet as a "Committed fund balance - for equipment and technology replacement" and totaled \$996,887 as of October 31, 2022, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees authorizes the use and budgeting of \$650,000 from the Library Fund's "Committed fund balance - for equipment and technology replacement" balance sheet account to fund these replacements.

Agenda Item E.2.e - Monthly Financial Report. The monthly financial report for the year as of September 30, 2022 month-end was included in the Board packet as an information item. CFO Stone reported that the Library is within budget.

Agenda Item E.2.f - Employee Health Insurance Contribution Waiver for December 2022. CFO Stone presented Resolution 2022-45. Trustee El-Behairy moved for approval, Trustee Panty seconded, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2022-45

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) is responsible for the provision of benefits to its employees, and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL participates in the Labor-Management Healthcare Fund (LMHF) for provision of health insurance to its full-time and regular part-time employees, and

WHEREAS, most B&ECPL employees receiving health insurance through the LMHF are responsible for a portion of the monthly premium cost, and

WHEREAS, in 2022, LMHF achieved cost savings related to health care utilization, and

WHEREAS, Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz has announced that Erie County will waive the base plan health insurance deduction for Erie County employees for the month of December 2022, and

WHEREAS, employees enrolled in a plan greater than the base plan (Value Plan) will still have the difference between the cost of their plan and the base plan deducted from their pay, and

WHEREAS, Senior Library Administration recommends the same waiver for B&ECPL employees, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that B&ECPL employees participating in the LMHF health plan not be subject to payroll deduction of the base plan health insurance premium contribution during the month of December 2022.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Spears noted that a copy of the New York State Library’s Regents Advisory Council on Libraries *Vision 2022* was included in the monthly report. He encouraged all trustees to read the packet and plans to discuss it further at the December meeting.

Director Spears also discussed a collaborative nationwide effort among library systems, publishers, and other groups to speak out against censorship. The ACLU, along with several major publishers, the New York Public Library, PULISDO and NYALS have already signed on as supporters of the effort against censorship. Director Spears hopes to have full Board support for the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library to sign on to the effort. He plans to present more information and a resolution at the December meeting.

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

**B&ECPL Monthly Report
October 2022**

Regents Advisory Council – The Regents Advisory Council on Libraries has worked with library staff and stakeholders throughout the state to create a document (attached to the end of this report) that provides a vision for what libraries in New York should be. It is a bold document, and the State Library is encouraging libraries to discuss, embrace, and provide services that demonstrate these values.

NARCAN Training – All Buffalo Branch Library staff have been trained on administering NARCAN. Trainings took place at Coles, North Park, Panty, Merriweather and East Clinton branch libraries throughout the month of October. Facilities Manager **Andrew Wiede** and Assistant Deputy Director **Samantha Purpora**

coordinated scheduling so all branch staff, as well as other staff throughout the system, could attend.

Halloween Happenings – The **Dudley Branch Library** hosted a Halloween Bash on Thursday, October 11, while the **East Clinton Branch Library** hosted a *Hocus Pocus* Day which included movies, popcorn and board games. In addition, the **East Clinton Library** hosted a special treat table on Sunday, October 30, for Kaisertown’s Beggar’s Night. Candy, pencils, library applications were provided to 1,709 patrons! The **North Park Branch Library** hosted a Halloween parade on October 31 and the **Panty Branch Library** hosted a Halloween Party. The **Library on Wheels Bookmobile** attended “Trunk or Treat” events presented by the Grand Island Memorial Library and the Town of Tonawanda.

Author Visit – International best-selling and award-winning author of *Hush Money: How One Woman Proved Systemic Racism in her Workplace and Kept her Job*, Jacquie Abram, presented a public program at the **downtown Central Library** on October 1. The well-received event was sponsored by the Library Foundation and presented by Board Chair Kimberly Johnson (AKA Ladybug Sharin’), the Library and Buffalo Chapter of the NAACP.

Anne Frank Project's 14th Annual Social Justice Festival: Healing through Stories - Information Services and Outreach Manager **Daniel Caufield** participated as a living book at the *Anne Frank Project's 14th Annual Social Justice Festival: Healing through Stories*, hosted by Buffalo State College on October 12. Attendees of the “The Human Library” sat in small groups hearing from the “books” and asked questions on topics covering diversity and equality, free speech, religious freedom, etc. **Daniel’s** focus was on libraries and their role in fighting censorship and how libraries benefit all communities. Participants had many questions about the recent book challenges occurring throughout the country and were happy to hear about the efforts of public libraries fighting for everyone’s right to read.

Buffalo Baby & Toddler Expo - The annual *Buffalo Baby & Toddler Expo* presented by Every Person Influences Children (EPIC) was held at the Central Library on October 1. Community organizations provided information to parents and parents-to-be on early childhood resources. Participants enjoyed presentations on topics including car seat safety, early literacy, breastfeeding support, wellness care, massage therapy, safe sleep, child care information and nutrition. Free raffles and a play room were also offered. There were 238 in attendance.

Digital Scriptorium (DS) - Rare Book Curator **Amy Pickard** attended and presented at the *Annual Meeting of the Digital Scriptorium (DS)* held virtually on October 12. Buffalo & Erie County Public Library is now a member. Amy spoke about the Library’s recognition of the importance of having its medieval and renaissance manuscripts records represented in this database platform when DS 2.0 goes live in 2023. Retired Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Collections at Columbia University Consuelo Dutschke is generously and voluntarily cataloging the collection.

Intersect Unconference 2022: Libraries as Evolving Organisms - The Central Library hosted the Western New York Library Resources Council Continuing Education Committee's annual *Intersect Unconference 2022: Libraries as Evolving Organisms* on October 7. The event featured 11 different presentations on various topics in public and academic librarianship. TechKnow Lab Librarian **Brendan Chella**, Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Jacob Rachwal** and Library Technology Clerk **Amanda Brown** were presenters at the event. **Daniel Caufield** provided tours of the Central Library.

Literacy Library for Equity, Social Justice and Peace - Project Flight has sponsored the *Literacy Library for Equity, Social Justice and Peace* for the **Central Library, Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library** and Buffalo State College. Over 100 books have been ordered for each location as part of the collection.

May 14 Community Collecting Initiative - The Library, in partnership with The Buffalo History Museum, hosted informational community meetings about the *May 14 Community Collecting Initiative* on October 11 at the **Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library** and virtually on October 12. Assistant Deputy Director **Dorinda Darden** provided welcoming remarks. Dr. Eva M. Doyle, a local educator, historian, writer and community leader, and Library Board Chair Kimberly Johnson provided supporting remarks. Cynthia Van Ness, Director of Library & Archives for The Buffalo History Museum, presented an overview of the initiative. Members of the community spoke on the importance of collecting the items left at the Tops site from the Buffalo mass shooting. Director **John Spears**, Assistant Deputy Director **Joy Testa Cinquino** and Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Manager **Joshua Mitch** were also in attendance. Planning is underway for the preserving of the artifacts and capturing the stories to create a historical record for current and future generations.

Retirement Celebration - A retirement celebration was held at the Central Library for Children's Services and Outreach Senior Page **Nancy Smith** in honor of her 44 years of service to Library System. Nancy worked in Extension Services and Outreach, Buffalo Branches and the Central Library. She is known for her wonderful storytelling that has captivated children, parents, teachers and staff. Nancy was an asset to the Library System and will be missed by all who worked with her.

Spooky Library Party - Children's Services and Outreach staff presented the **Spooky Library Party** on October 22 at the Central Library. Children were encouraged to wear costumes for trick-or-treating, crafts and sensory activities. In addition, the Launch Pad Makerspace provided free family costume portraits, had *Little Shop of Horrors'* real carnivorous plants on display and provided a Mad Scientist Lab; the Teen Advisory Group (TAG) designed and worked at the Creepy Sensory and *Hocus Pocus* trick-or-treat booths, assisted in the Mad Scientist Lab and helped out in the Kids' Space. There was also a Bubble Show presented by WOW Party Buffalo, with 175 attendees.

Trick or T'reading - Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Maria Lowe** collaborated with the Just Buffalo Literary Center (JBLC) to offer activities at their *Trick or T'reading* event held in the Reading Park at the Central Library. Teens passed out

candy and had a Halloween-themed spoken word tent. Maria made slime with the teens.

1. Public Services

Central Library:

Central Library Programs - A multitude of in-person, virtual and hybrid programs were offered throughout the month of October. In-person programs included: Buffalo Public School (BPS) #32 Bennett Park Montessori class visits, *Crafting at Central*; *Friends and Family Day Open House* sponsored by the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision; *Halloween Scavenger Hunt*; *Homework Help*; *It Takes a Village Employment Entry Program*; *Pop-Up Bilingual Stories*; *Stitch Circle*; *Teen Anime/Manga Club*; *Town Hall Meeting - Racism in America* presented by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Xi Omega Chapter; *University Express: Inside the White House*; *Wednesday Movie Matinee*; *Wellness at Central* and *Why Public Health Matters* presented by Dr. Lito Gutierrez. Virtual programs included *Cut and Paste Genealogy: The Grosvenor Room's Scrapbook Collection*; *How to Make a Halloween Lantern* and *My House Is Giving Me a Vibe*. Hybrid programs offered included *Book a Librarian*; *Book a Technology Trainer*; *Brain Sparks*; *Files and Folders*; *Intro to U.S. Church Records: Why We Care Where Grandma Went to Church* presented by author, editor and lecturer Sunny Morton; *Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, Podcasting*; *Reader's Quest Middle School Book Group*; *Saving Your Stuff/File Management* and *Teen Advisory Group (TAG) Meeting*.

Buffalo Branches:

In-Person Programs - All Buffalo Branches provided one-on-one technology trainings and take-and-make crafts. Highlights included: *Erie Canal Traveling Museum* and *Adult Craft Hour* at the **Dudley Branch Library**; *Tradition Keepers: Black Storytellers of WNY Storytelling Program* at the **Merriweather Branch Library**; *Polymer Clay Magnet Craft* and *Rollerball Perfume and Pillow Spray Class* at the **North Park Branch Library** and *"Where Are My Antlers?" Interactive Story Time with Beaver Meadow* at the **Panty Branch Library**.

Outreach:

Mobile Services and Outreach - The **Library on Wheels** visited 21 regular stops and nine special events. The **Library2GO van** visited 25 older adult facilities. Branch Manager **Julia Verbanic** partnered with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to hold a reading to dogs program at the Kenmore Farmers Market called "Paws in Print." It was attended by 151 people. Bookmobile staff created a "Welcome to the Library" activity packet for all students at school stops. A total of 1,231 were handed out. **Julia** held two story times at UB Childcare Center - South Campus. The Library on Wheels issued 583 new library cards in the month of October!

Community Events - Children's Services and Outreach Librarian **Kelly Woods** provided fun pre-concert activities at the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra's *BPOkids Symphonic Spooktacular*. Children's Services and Outreach librarians **Jennifer Lelinski**

and **Jennifer Slagus** attended *Mayor Byron W. Brown's Awards Ceremony for Champion Readers* held at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center. **Jacob Rachwal** attended the *Mobile Market* at Buffalo Public Schools Adult Education Division in association with the Massachusetts Avenue Project. Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Carol Kowalik-Happy** was the guest speaker at Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church's Golden Agers Club located in South Buffalo.

Genealogy Classes - Genealogy Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman** taught two classes on finding vital records for the *Annual Buffalo Family History Fair* at the Buffalo Family History Center in Williamsville. Rhonda also taught a class on *Genealogy 101* at the Evans Senior Center, *DNA for Genealogy* and *I Have My DNA Results, Now What?* at the Orchard Park Senior Center and *Getting the Most Out of Ancestry Library Edition* at the Elma Public Library.

Technology Trainings - **Brendan Chella** and TechKnow Lab Librarian **Jacqueline Hovey** taught classes on computer basics at the Tosh Collins Community Center, Westminster Commons Senior Housing and Schiller Park Senior Center.

Forever Young Expo - Assistant Deputy Directors **Joy Testa Cinquino** and **Samantha Purpora** participated in *Forever Young Magazine's Senior Expo* at the Buffalo Marriott on October 20. Attendees received information about library services including Library by Mail and *Indie Author Day*.

B is for Book Exhibit:

	Number of Visitors		
	Month	YTD	From Opening (9/2020 to Present)
Non Tour-Related	2,798	18,371	44,465
Tour/Program	80	950	2,086
TOTAL <i>B is for Book</i>	2,878	19,321	46,551

2. Collection Development

Physical Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	2,385	26,150	163	2,726	544,632
Young Adult Print	483	5,092	76	939	79,018
Adult Print	3,758	39,681	576	7,844	1,803,438
Media	3,135	27,564	364	3,380	568,448
Other*	1,816	19,308	55	354	174,313
Subtotal	11,577	117,795	1,234	15,243	3,169,849

*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other

Electronic Collections*:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	

eBooks	4,272	23,598	1,786	13,153	93,184
eAudiobooks	7,344	34,572	531	3,261	47,094
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,320
Subtotal	11,616	58,170	2,317	16,414	144,598

* The B&ECPL also provides access to all *hoopla* eBooks, eAudiobooks, videos, and music albums. These titles are not included in the collection size total, as they are not owned by the B&ECPL.

All Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Total	23,193	175,965	3,551	31,657	3,314,447

Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio** added *The Colored Musicians Club* and *The Buffalo Story: History Happens Here* to the *Rich Newberg Reports Collection*. The *Rich Newberg Reports Collection* seeks to provide a lasting chronicle of life and issues in Buffalo during the latter part of the 20th century and into the new millennium.

Special Collections has also temporarily accepted a small number of hardcopy videotapes from the *Rich Newberg Reports Collection* for preservation purposes. The tapes will be stored in the Rare Books vault under the care of **Amy Pickard** until such time as a permanent place for the collection may be found.

Rare Book and Map Librarian **Charles Alaimo** completed processing an archive of materials related to the 1993 World University Games held in Buffalo. Materials, long held in our stacks, include articles about the events from around the U.S. and other parts of the world as well as guide books, maps, brochures, publications and other ephemera. A finding aid has been created and the unique collection will soon be cataloged.

Amy Pickard installed two volumes of the recently-acquired Alexander Wilson’s *American Ornithology* (1808-1814) alongside the two plates of John James Audubon’s *Birds of America* (1827-1838) on display in the Grosvenor Room.

3. Funding/Fundraising

Funding:

Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz released his 2023 Proposed Budget on October 14. He is recommending a County funding increase of \$1,849,674 (7.0%) to libraries through funds generated by growth in the equalized full-value property tax base. As the tax base is reported to have grown by 13%, the Library Tax Rate per \$1,000 will decline. The additional funding will help offset inflation-related impacts on library operating costs, including contractually-obligated labor costs, costs of supplies and utilities in this challenging fiscal environment.

County funding of \$28,285,362, combined with New York State operating aid funding of \$2,321,930, use of \$716,119 in Library fund balance and \$167,976 in other library revenue, brings the Library’s 2023 proposed operating budget to \$31,491,387; a 6.2%

increase over the 2022 County Adopted Budget. In addition to the operating budget, \$721,839 in estimated state aid is included in the Library Grants Budget.

Erie County’s 2023 Proposed Capital Budget supports improvements to the county owned downtown Central Library:

- \$2,000,000 in bond funds to replace the Central Library’s roof; and
- \$250,000 in “Pay As You Go” funds for other Central Library Improvements/Upgrades (which are anticipated to leverage \$250,000 in state funds for a total of \$500,000).

The next event in the budget review process will be the Library’s budget hearing before the Erie County Legislature’s Finance & Management/Budget Committee expected to be scheduled for a date in approximately mid-November. A public hearing/comment opportunity on the overall County Budget is expected to be scheduled later in November. The Legislature’s deliberations will continue until their vote on the proposed budget, scheduled for December 1. Should there be any vetoes, the Legislature has scheduled a veto override vote on December 15.

Information on the proposed budget may be found at:

<https://www.buffalolib.org/budget-information/2023-budget>.

New York State Library formally issued award notices for 2021-2022 Library Construction Aid (applications were submitted in September 2021). Award notices were distributed on October 14 and posted to the library community listserv NYLINE with links to the awards. For the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library:

Library Name	Library Address	Award Amount	Project Description	County
Isaías González-Soto Branch Library, Buffalo	280 Porter Ave., Buffalo, NY 14201	\$996,308.00	Renovate interior on both floors; increase electrical service; restore parking lot/sidewalks; replace/reconfigure backup prone sanitary/storm piping.	Erie
Buffalo & Erie County Public Library - Central Library	1 Lafayette Square, Buffalo, NY 14203	\$586,549.00	Replace 60 yr old electrical switch-gear; rehabilitate/re-point chimney.	Erie
Newstead Public Library	33 Main Street, Akron, NY 14001	\$33,750.00	This construction project will involve the removal and replacement of two rooftop HVAC units.	Erie
Town of Collins Public Library	2341 Main Street, Collins, NY 14034	\$147,852.00	Replace leaking 21 year old roof with a new roof. Replace 21 year old incandescent lighting fixtures with energy efficient LED fixtures and bulbs.	Erie

NY State Senator Sean Ryan and Assemblymember Jon Rivera, in a release announcing the awards, noted the González-Soto Branch renovation project received “the fifth-highest total granted among the 223 projects statewide funded by the State Aid for Library Construction Program this year.”

Fundraising:

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1 – October 31, 2022	\$252,349.36
Bucks for Books	Current	\$45,003.35

Highlights:

The 75,000 piece Year End Appeal mass mailing is expected to be mailed in November.

4. Facilities

Gonzalez-Soto – The roof replacement portion of the construction project at the **Isaías González-Soto Branch Library** is nearly complete.

5. Staff Development

Collection Development – Staff attended trainings including *5 Ways to Increase Nonfiction Circulation and Create Passionate Nonfiction Readers; Creating a Diverse, Patron-Driven Collection; Phenomenal Picture Books; Weed ‘Em and Reap: Getting Your Collection from Awful to Awesome; Library of Things: The Why, What, How of Lending Objects and Big Reads from Small Presses.*

Public Service – Staff attended trainings including *Accessibility for Your Library; Intentional Inclusion; Mastering Uncomfortable Conversations with Library Visitors; Composting and Beyond for Library Staff; Erie County Disability Awareness Training; Federal Depository Library Conference and Building a Better Home: Archiving and Preserving Black Local History.*

Advocacy – Trainings attended included *Best Publicity Practices to Promote Your Library; Advocacy: The Lessons Learned and the Next Steps.*

6. Communications

Advocacy:

Libraries received letters for patrons to sign, requesting their Erie County Legislator vote in favor of Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz’s proposed 2023 budget.

A community survey was launched to help libraries plan for the future in accordance with the Library’s Strategic Plan. The survey can be found here: tinyurl.com/LibrarySurveyFall.

Media:

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
Taped TV interview with Assistant Deputy Director Dorinda Darden	Upcoming meetings about the May 14 Community Collecting Initiative.	<i>Spectrum News</i> , October 11, 12
Quote from Library Director John Spears included in NYS Senate media release	Senator Sean Ryan, Assemblyman Jon Rivera Announce Significant State Funding for Buffalo Library - Isaías González-Soto Branch Library to Receive Nearly \$1 Million to Help Fund Major Renovation Project	Sent October 13
Media Release	<i>National Friends of Libraries Week</i> is Oct. 16 – 22 - “Friends of Libraries” Help Make Your Local Libraries Great!	Sent to media October 17
Media Release	Indie Author Day	Sent to media October 19
Mass Email to 200,000 + Library cardholders, media and library friends	Updates	Sent October 21
Phone conversation with AP reporter and Assistant Deputy Director Joy Testa Cinquino	Background on the May 14 Community Collecting Initiative.	October 28
<i>Buffalo News</i> interview with Library Director John Spears	Background about Library and E.C.C. discussions	Statements used in <i>Buffalo News</i> articles in November

Social Media:

October 2022

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
Facebook	89	1,115	3,367	31,381	80	11,235
Flickr	24	224	3,110	49,359	-	59
Google Ads ¹	N/A	N/A	3,334	26,998	N/A	N/A
Instagram	22	304	2,474	40,938	77	4,456
Pinterest ³	-	-	-	-	-	-
Podcast ²	2	32	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Twitter	56	593	345	5,116	-55	11,002
YouTube	6	84	1,389	13,766	12	456
TikTok	1	10	40	1,660	3	387
Total	200	2,362	14,059	169,218	117	27,595

¹Google Ads is provided to the Library through a grant. Monthly activity based on public clicks and verified calls from the Library's online advertisement.

²Podcast public activity measurement cannot be tracked accurately because it is available through multiple applications.

³Pinterest analytics currently unavailable.

7. Partnerships

Partnerships - Library staff were in contact or attended meetings with representatives from the following organizations: The Buffalo History Museum; Erie County Department of Health; Erie County Climate Change Action Initiative; Every Person Influences Children (EPIC); Literacy Buffalo Niagara; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People - Buffalo Chapter and Western New York Invention Convention and Western New York Library Resources Council (WNYLRC) committees.

8. Planning for the Future

Student Leadership Network - Assistant Deputy Directors **Dorinda Darden** and **Samantha Purpora** and Librarian **Daniel Caufield** met with Ivanna Jimenez, Associate Director of College Access, and Caroline Marciszewski and Joell Stubbe, Senior Managers of College Access from the Student Leadership Network, virtually on October 24. The Student Leadership Network partners with the Buffalo Public Schools to provide support for students in underserved communities with college access services. Potential collaborations with the Library to help promote equity, access and opportunity were discussed. An *Instant Decision* event where college applicants will immediately learn from participating colleges if they have received admission will be held at the Central Library on March 28, 2023. Other collaborations are being explored.

Trustee Gathering - Library Board Vice Chair Carima El-Behairy, with support from the Library Foundation, is planning a holiday gathering with trustees from all Member Libraries on Wednesday, December 14, from 5 - 7 p.m. in the Collections Gallery at the downtown Central Library. Trustees should watch for an email with details.

9. Director Activities

**Meetings/Events Attended by Director
October 2022**

Date	Meeting/Event
October 1, 2022	Event - Jacquie Abram
October 3, 2022	Meeting - Administration Team
October 4, 2022	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
October 4, 2022	Meeting - Ken Stone
October 4, 2022	Webinar - Public Library Staff and Diversity: Results from PLA's 2021 Survey
October 5, 2022	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
October 6, 2022	Virtual Training - Empowered Against Book Bans
Oct. 10, 2022	Meeting - Association of Contract Libraries Board
Oct. 10, 2022	Meeting - Discussion of Partnerships between Erie Community College and B&ECPL: David Balkin, Adiam Tsequai, Jewel De la Rosa, and Hadeen Stokes from ECC; Dorinda Darden, Jeannine Doyle, and myself from B&ECPL
Oct. 10, 2022	Felix Klempka, President of the Polish Art Club

Oct. 11, 2022	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
Oct. 11, 2022	Meeting - B&ECPL Governance Committee
Oct. 11, 2022	Meeting - Ken Stone
Oct. 11, 2022	Event - Community Information Session for May 14 Collecting Initiative
Oct. 12, 2022	Virtual Meeting - B&ECPL Managers and Directors
Oct. 12, 2022	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
Oct. 12, 2022	Meeting - West Seneca Public Library Board
Oct. 12, 2022	Virtual Event - Community Information Session for May 14 Collecting Initiative
Oct. 13, 2022	Virtual Meeting - Erie County Cultural Collaborative Group
Oct. 13, 2022	Virtual Meeting - Holly Peacock, Division of Library Development
Oct. 13, 2022	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees Executive Committee
Oct. 13, 2022	Event - Reception for Elizabeth Kolbert
Oct. 14, 2022	Event - Creative Mornings
Oct. 14, 2022	Event - Erie County Budget Press Conference
Oct. 14, 2022	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
Oct. 15, 2022	Angola Public Library Harvest Dinner Fundraiser
Oct. 17, 2022	Administration Team Meeting
Oct. 17, 2022	Meeting - Sheryl Knab and Heidi Ziemer, WNYLRC
Oct. 18, 2022	Meeting - Sam Purpora
Oct. 18, 2022	Meeting - Ken Stone
Oct. 19, 2022	Virtual Meeting - Western New York Digital Equity Coalition
Oct. 19, 2022	Meeting - B&ECPL Foundation
Oct. 19, 2022	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
Oct. 20, 2022	Virtual Meeting - Regents Advisory Council Vision 2022 Kickoff
Oct. 20, 2022	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees
Oct. 21, 2022	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
Oct. 25, 2022	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
Oct. 26, 2022	Meeting - Association of Contract Libraries Member Library Contract Discussion
Oct. 26, 2022	Meeting - Felice Krycia, Erie County Veterans Services Director
Oct. 27, 2022	Virtual Meeting on Staff Safety
Oct. 31, 2022	Meeting - Marisa Wigglesworth, Buffalo Science Center
Oct. 31, 2022	Meeting - New York Telehealth Capital Program (WNYLRC and Best Self)

Appendices

A. Monthly Statistics

System Programming Statistics:

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Regular*				
Adults	362	6,010	2,801	18,661
Children 5 and under	1,698	17,090	4,412	36,672
Children 6-11	1,116	14,930	2,363	33,425
Intergenerational/Combined	4,721	45,002	16,348	94,099

Teens	221	3,103	528	6,583
Regular Total	8,118	86,135	26,452	189,440
Regular Total	8,118	86,135	26,452	189,440
Virtual				
Live Virtual				
Adults	8	179	169	2,756
Children 5 and under	0	5	0	57
Children 6-11	0	5	0	114
Intergenerational/Combined	4	42	350	5,481
Teens	9	89	48	734
Live Virtual Total	21	320	567	9,142
Recorded Virtual				
Adults	13	121	201	2,735
Children 5 and under	0	89	0	2,734
Children 6-11	3	37	282	3,503
Intergenerational/Combined	17	211	379	7,655
Recorded Virtual Total	33	458	862	16,627
Virtual Total	54	778	1,429	25,769
Grand Total	8,172	86,913	27,881	215,209

*Regular programs include group programs, one-on-one programs, and self-directed programs (including individual take & make crafts).

Other Statistics:

Consolidated statistics on library visits, website visits, circulation, computer sessions, wifi usage, and program attendance and a summary of open hours can be found at www.buffalolib.org/about-becpl/monthly-statistics.

Detailed reports on circulation, computer sessions, wifi usage, and library visits can be found at www.buffalolib.org/monthly-statistics/2022-circulation-public-access-computer-wifi-and-library-visits-detail.

B. Contracting Library Activity Reports

Town of Collins Public Library - submitted by Abigail Barten-McGowan, Director

Book Clubs - The Collins Public Library features two book clubs each month. November’s Evening Book Club will be reading *Nine Perfect Strangers* by Liane Moriarty. The YA Book Club will read *Damselfly* by Chandra Prasad.

Children’s Programs - LEGO Club, held the last Tuesday of each month, is always well-attended, with parents building just as enthusiastically as kids. Weekly take and make kits bring families into the Library; they can follow along with Miss Ashley on Facebook to complete the activities. A *Dragons Love Tacos* storytime, coinciding with the November scavenger hunt theme of dragons, was held on November 7.

Upcoming Programs include:

- November's monthly adult craft program features *Snowy Mason Jar Candle Holders* on November 12. December's program will feature an *Ornament Extravaganza!*
- A Thanksgiving family story hour with a special turkey-themed treat will be offered on November 22.
- In December, the Library will work with its patrons to select new items to add to the Library of Things collection. As soon as the snow flies, snowshoes will be brought out for borrowing!
- A special story hour featuring stories by Jan Brett will be offered on December 6, while the ever-popular graham cracker house program will be held on December 20.

West Seneca Public Library – submitted by Robert Alessi, Director

Story Times - After wrapping up a busy summer schedule, Children's Librarian **Emily Moser** has started her fall toddler and preschool story times. For the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began, **Emily** has returned to conducting the popular Baby & Me story time, along with her fun *Be a Library Kid* school-age reading/craft program on select Monday evenings. **Emily** also continues (thanks to the unwavering support of our Friends of the Library) to assemble take and make bags. Nearly 1,200 bags were put together over the summer and during the first 2 months of fall!

Outreach - Children's Librarian **Emily Moser**, with assistance from the Friends of the Library, attended the West Seneca Recreation Department Halloween gathering on October 21. Approximately 750 people came by the library table to trick-or-treat and receive candy, bookmarks and more. A second holiday activity, Halloween Tales, was held inside the library itself the following week for nearly 100 people featuring guest readers, songs, a craft and candy!

Teen Programs - Crafty Library Assistant **V. Narvaez** has been busy presenting several exciting programs for school-age and teen visitors to the library. Recent activities include monthly fuse bead sessions; water marbling activities with jars and coasters; painting nights, and origami bat bookmarks.

Author Talk - On October 17, local author and former Buffalo Bills front office executive Don Purdy and co-author Billy Klun presented a talk on their book *Thunder Snow of Buffalo*. This book tells the story of how Western New York and the Buffalo Bills organization dealt with the October 2006 surprise storm that devastated the region like none since 1906.

Upcoming Programs include:

- Local mystery author Mary Jean Zajac will speak on November 14.
- On November 21, paper bag stars and snowflakes crafts will be available.
- Thanksgiving and Christmas story time sessions will be offered.
- Retired Buffalo police detective Dennis Adams presents on his books *Motive* and *City Hall Secrets* on January 31, 2023.

C. Regents Advisory Council on Libraries Vision 2022

Regents Advisory Council on Libraries

VISION 2022

Regents Advisory Council on Libraries

Meg Backus (2025), Vice Chair
Greg Benoit (2023)
Tatiana Bryant (2023)
Greta Byrum (2026)
AnnaLee Dragon (2025)
Sandra Michele Echols (2026)
Chancey Fleet (2024)
Susan Kowalski (2022)
Miranda Mims (2025)
Beth Patin (2026)
Susan Polos (2022)
Grace Riario (2023), Chair
Juan Rivera (2022)
Jamie D. Smith (2024)
Alicia Thompson (2024)

New York State Library Staff

Lauren Moore
Carol Desch
Liza Duncan
Natalie McDonough
Amy Heebner
Amy Peker
Sarah McFadden
Larissa Brenner
Ashley Gauvin-Manning
Jessica Golden

New York State Library

Adopted by the Regents Advisory Council on Libraries
June 24, 2022

The Vision 2022 was funded through the Federal Library Services and Technology Act, with funds awarded to the New York State Library by the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services. The New York State Library is a program of the Office of Cultural Education in the New York State Education Department.

INTRODUCTION

When the pandemic halted many in-person services, we were inspired to see how libraries across the state demonstrated their ingenuity and dedication by shifting to virtual services and making difficult decisions about how to best protect the safety of staff and patrons in the face of unprecedented challenges and change.

As the pandemic continues to disrupt daily life, we've seen how the disruption in library services disproportionately affects traditionally marginalized communities, compounding the impact of reduced services in other sectors, including schools and public transportation, which exacerbates existing inequities.

The way out of this crisis is to seize the opportunity to reaffirm the vital role libraries play in community restoration and building. We firmly believe that the future of libraries and equity depends on what we do now as a profession. Libraries are experiencing a paradigm shift, from a focus on sharing materials to prioritizing building relationships and collaborating with stakeholders to work toward shared outcomes. We can maximize this critical moment to rebuild connections, center the community, and embody the public's imagination.

The following document provides a road map for the future of New York libraries, reflecting our shared value and vision of the future. Let the journey begin!

Regents Advisory Council on Libraries

Our Values

As part of the Regents Advisory Council on Libraries Vision 2022 process, multiple interviews were held with stakeholders, focus groups, and surveys collecting data from hundreds of libraries around the state.

Academic, public, school, and special libraries took part in the process, revealing the shared values of New York's library community, which inform our vision of the future. These values are the basis for the strategic priorities in our Vision framework, guiding both internal and external decision-making.

Our shared values include:

- Universal Access
- Equity for All
- Resilient Communities
- Passionate Advocates
- Innovation Engines

Universal Access

All New Yorkers have a right to excellent library service. Libraries play an essential role in ensuring all New Yorkers have the information they need to participate in public life fully. New York libraries believe the public's right to freely access a wide range of resources and services is essential for informed decision-making, lifelong learning, and self-actualization. To support universal access, we champion intellectual freedom and the right for people of all ages to read freely. Information literacy requires critical thinking skills, honed by reading and interacting with multiple viewpoints, evaluating and identifying authoritative sources, and encouraging lively debate and conversation.

The 21st century requires navigating the digital terrain, and digital equity is critical for an informed populace. New York libraries play an active role in ensuring people can connect to the Internet, are comfortable using technology in their everyday lives, and understand how to evaluate and contribute content. Many people affected by the digital divide face other structural obstacles, limiting their ability to participate in civic life, enjoy remote work and learning, or access content. The library is the sole point of connection for some communities -- allowing people to work remotely, develop content representing diverse views, take classes, be active citizens, and communicate with loved ones.

Resilient Communities

The success of libraries is inextricably bound to the success and growth of our communities. Libraries are part of a sustainable ecosystem, requiring active participation in and with their communities. Libraries embrace respectful, collaborative partnerships. We work with other stakeholders and community members to maximize our impact and leverage economies of scale to benefit the public good. We understand the link between community health, social wellbeing, and resilient communities and strive to create spaces for people of all walks of life to converge, exchange ideas, and become informed. Our libraries' mission, vision, and strategic directions align with our communities' goals and aspirations.

Passionate Advocates

As trusted institutions, libraries advocate for the public good through intellectual freedom, transparency, net neutrality, digital justice and inclusion, and creating equitable, inclusive organizations that welcome all experiences, talents, and perspectives. Our profession emphasizes data-informed decision making. Library workers use their expertise in aggregating and analyzing data to benefit our patrons, organizations, communities, and stakeholders. We hold ourselves accountable by operating with transparency. We appreciate the investment and value the trust communities place in libraries.

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Equity for All

New York benefits from having one of the most diverse populations in the country. Multiple languages and ethnicities contribute to a vibrant, dynamic population that requires flexible, innovative libraries able to meet the needs of patrons from around the globe. Our libraries champion equity, diversity, and inclusion and model how to incorporate it by having collections, staffing, programming, and leadership reflect our communities. We foster brave environments where community members may convene authentic conversations around racial and social justice and advocate for the needs of our communities.

Libraries serve their communities in many ways. Students are connected to resources to ensure their success, and first-generation college students benefit from personalized reference services. People experiencing unemployment or underemployment or returning to the workforce benefit from workforce development services, including assistance in finding, preparing for, and securing jobs or embarking on a new career. Adult learners can become better readers and obtain high-school equivalency certification through adult literacy classes, enabling them to apply for more competitive jobs. Recent arrivals attend English Language Learning classes to acclimate to their new home, make friends, build new networks, and navigate daily life. Incarcerated patrons benefit from library services at their facilities. For those returning from incarceration, libraries may be the first step to connecting with resources to facilitate the transition to life outside of an institution.

Innovation Engines

Libraries spark curiosity, excite learners, and cross-pollinate innovation across sectors and industries. By strategically collaborating with stakeholders, libraries continuously evolve -- learning, growing, and recalibrating services to support their communities.

We're courageous. We take risks and learn from our mistakes. We leverage our expertise to help people compete in a global marketplace by providing space, tools, and resources to help them innovate and succeed, ensuring our communities have a vibrant economic base.

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Our Vision

How can libraries help communities navigate a landscape where the social, environmental, and political tectonic plates are constantly shifting?

That's the conundrum the Regents Advisory Council on Libraries has been exploring. To help chart a way forward, the RAC gathered information from hundreds of stakeholders.

After distilling multiple conversations, surveys, and written feedback, we created the following framework.

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Strategic Priority 1: Libraries Ensure All New Yorkers Have Access to Information & the Internet

New York libraries are dedicated to universal access, based on the idea that society benefits when everyone has an equal opportunity to leverage the power of the Internet. By focusing on solutions and working in intentional partnership with our communities, libraries can help New York achieve its vision of digital equity. Closing digital equity gaps in New York will require the coordination, cooperation, and intentional capacity-building of the many organizations working to support digital inclusion.

To support statewide digital equity efforts, libraries may employ the following strategies:

- Promoting information fluency for all New Yorkers by providing services that address information literacy challenges.
- Protecting the privacy and digital security of library users and community members, by providing secure networks and devices for public use within library spaces and by educating the public about digital security threats and ways to protect individual privacy online, both in the library and at home or work.
- Ensuring digital tools are fully accessible and usable for all users, and that vendor contracts ensure and protect the privacy of library users.
- Identifying and developing solutions to digital inequity at a societal level to ensure ubiquitous, high-speed, wired, and wireless internet access for all New Yorkers.
- Building, maintaining, and supporting digital equity ecosystems across community sectors.
- Developing and employing digital inclusion strategies that address the intersectional conditions contributing to digital inequity.

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Libraries Advance the Public Good

New York's libraries are part of the state's critical infrastructure. They ensure every New Yorker has reliable, equitable access to crucial information, services, and lifelong learning and connection opportunities. As disinvestment in critical social infrastructure has weakened faith in institutions and government, libraries have stepped up to meet the needs of New Yorkers.

The stress of responding to these needs without additional funding for services places libraries in a precarious environment. It creates a substantial obstacle to successfully and effectively serving and supporting communities.

In response to this challenge, the Regents Advisory Council on Libraries has established the following framework identifying strategic priorities and collaborative action to help libraries devote necessary resources to ensure community resilience during an uncertain and tumultuous time.

Strategic Priorities

- Libraries Ensure All New Yorkers Have Access to Information & the Internet
- Libraries Advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging
- Libraries Are Essential to the Social Wellbeing of Communities

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Strategic Priority 2: Libraries Advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging

Libraries work toward equity for all by making a material difference in the lives of people who have been denied power and opportunity based on race, gender, sexuality, national origin, spoken language, or disability. We advance and model socioeconomic and racial equity policies and practices.

New York libraries may advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging using the following strategies:

- Advancing the State Education Department's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Framework.
- Promoting intellectual freedom by curating diverse library collections and public programs and preserving access to extensive community repositories.
- Recognizing, acknowledging, and eliminating systemic barriers to library services, including those within the library profession and governance structure.
- Centering justice by identifying, sharing, and promoting resources and opportunities that restore dignity, acknowledge past harm, and celebrate diversity.
- Resisting surveillance technologies and corporate control of core library services to protect the interests of the public.
- Prioritizing diversity in the library profession, ensuring that library staff, administration, trustees, Friends, and volunteers reflect their communities.
- Investing in scholarships to attract diverse students to the profession.
- Eliminating systemic barriers to hiring and retaining talented staff with a variety of lived experiences.
- Working with vendors committed to upholding diversity, equity, and inclusion principles.

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Strategic Priority 3: Libraries Are Essential to the Social Wellbeing of Communities

As community anchors, libraries strengthen civic relationships and build social cohesion by creating a shared space, convening and hosting critical conversations, and providing resources and programs to inform, create, entertain, and weave broad social networks. We will continue to build collaborative relationships to develop thriving, resilient, and responsive communities.

To achieve this vision, libraries may use the following strategies:

- Incorporating historically marginalized perspectives into planning, processes, narratives, and decision-making about what is best for a community.
- Building community relationships and taking deliberate action to achieve shared or co-created objectives.
- Mapping the connections of knowledge, talents, resources, and aspirations among residents or groups by utilizing Asset Based Community Development.
- Securing sustainable funding for libraries to adapt and grow with their communities.
- Advocating for all New Yorkers to have access to certified librarians in their communities and schools.
- Providing library trustees with education and resources to help them best serve the interests of their institutions and communities, now and into the future.
- Planning for and responding to disasters and crises, including climate change, mass incarceration, public health emergencies, and widespread disinformation, and ensuring the continuity of library services when communities most need them.
- Preserving library materials and the cultural history of communities.
- Constructing, renovating, and maintaining sustainable, accessible library buildings that welcome the entire community.

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Each system supports different types of libraries throughout the state:

- **Academic Libraries** support the instructional and research needs of students, faculty, and administration at colleges and universities. While access to these libraries requires attendance at the attached institution, the collections include government documents that the public may access. Academic libraries often have archives, which collect, preserve, organize, describe, and share original material and special collections for research. Archives conserve history while providing transparency and accessibility to significant collections.
- **Public Libraries** provide programs, services, and resources for the public. Designated “the people’s university” in 1938 by Alvin Johnson, public libraries are usually funded by and support the communities they serve through taxes, grants, and donations. Residents can obtain a library card at no additional cost, gaining access to a wide range of materials, programs, meeting space, professional reference and research services, workforce development support, and bridging the digital divide through the internet and computers.
- **School Libraries** provide access to resources for public or private school students, teachers, school administrators, and parents. These resources include materials supporting the educational curriculum, computers, and access to the internet to support digital equity, train students in information and digital literacy, spark curiosity, develop a love of lifelong learning, and prepare students for college and careers.

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New York’s Libraries

When it comes to libraries, New York is a treasure trove. More than 7,000 libraries provide New Yorkers with educational, informational, and recreational resources. There are three types of library systems that coordinate to meet the needs of New Yorkers: public library systems, reference and research library resources systems, and school library systems. Each system serves specific types of libraries, as outlined below:

Public Library Systems support the 757 public libraries, with 1,070 outlets throughout the state. Each of the 23 public library systems serves a specific geographic region, coordinating interlibrary loan, professional development, and outreach services—including support for libraries in correctional facilities throughout the state. Each system has a central (or co-central) library to provide reference and information services to patrons throughout the state.

The nine regional Reference and Research Library Resources Systems include libraries in public and private colleges and universities, special libraries, public libraries, public library systems, and school library systems. These systems support 286 degree-granting higher education institutions. They provide a range of professional development and serve as a bridge between the different types of libraries in New York.

New York has 40 School Library Systems that work with 4,236 school libraries in 731 school districts and 1,656 nonpublic schools to provide professional development, share resources, and provide exemplary services to students throughout the state. As liaisons to the State Education Department, school library systems support school librarians as co-educational partners with teachers to ensure that all students develop the information literacy skills needed to be active, informed citizens and lead successful lives.

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- **Special Libraries** curate collections and materials to support specific interests or fields of study and may support institutions such as hospitals, museums, the military, law practices, professional associations, and historical sites. These libraries provide materials and resources to support a specific focus of the organization. Special libraries may have archives, which include a wide range of material, including but not limited to governmental records, maps, audio recordings, electronic documents, art, films, and photographs.

Moving Forward

The Regents Advisory Council shares this framework as a springboard for the future. We hope everyone in the library community sees themselves in this document and uses their creativity and imagination to act on the strategic priorities which resonate with their communities. We look forward to watching New York’s libraries breathe life into the Vision 2022 plan.

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Agenda Item G – Report of the Foundation. Trustee El-Behairy reported that the Library Foundation approved funding the Trustee Holiday Gathering.

Nonvoting participant Housh exited the meeting at 4:27 p.m.

Agenda Item H – Report of the Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT)/Contracting Library Trustee Report. Director Spears noted that the new ACT President, Martha Buyer, wants to be a visible presence within the Library System.

A brief discussion ensued about the importance of having an in-person quorum at Board meetings. Chair Johnson will send a message to Trustees reminding them of this, as well as the extenuating circumstances by which Trustees are permitted to attend meetings virtually. She will also reiterate the importance of Trustees giving timely notice as to whether or not they are able to attend a meeting.

Agenda Item H.1 – Contracting Library Liaison Report(s).

Trustee El-Behairy exited the meeting at 4:48 p.m.

Trustee Panty reported that she had recently visited the City of Tonawanda Public Library, which has compiled a design plan for its new outdoor garden space. Director Spears reported that he has now visited with all 22 contract member libraries.

Agenda Item I – Public Comment. None.

Agenda Item J – Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item K – New Business. None.

There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee Panty with a second by Trustee El-Behairy, the meeting was adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carima El-Behairy
Vice Chair – Executive Committee