

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
July 21, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, July 21, 2022, at the Central Library and remotely via Zoom pursuant to due notice to trustees. Per Chapter 417 of the Laws of 2021, which modifies Open Meetings Law through the end of the declared COVID-19 state disaster emergency, trustees attending remotely were counted for quorum and voting. The following members were present; those designated with an asterisk (*) attended the meeting remotely:

Kimberly Johnson, Chair
Carima El-Behairy, Vice Chair
Joel C. Moore, Esq., Secretary*
Alan J. Bedenko, Esq., Treasurer*
Kathleen Berens Bucki, MLS
Lucy A. Candelario*
John D. Craik
Frank Gist
Sharon M. Kelly, Esq.
Elaine M. Panty
Christopher Sasiadek, Esq.

Chair Kimberly Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. A call of the roll was taken. 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 June 16, 2022. On motion by Trustee Panty, seconded by Trustee Kelly, the Minutes were unanimously approved as mailed.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair.

Chair Johnson reported the author talk she hosted on June 17 for the book *The Juneteenth Story* by Alliah L. Agostini was well received and played a video of highlights from the event. She is planning to host another author talk on October 1 for the book *Hush Money* by Jacque Abram.

Chair Johnson also reported she had attended the Lackawanna Public Library Centennial Celebration, which was well attended by local and state officials. The library received multiple donations that day, including one for \$20,000.

Chair Johnson noted her tour of System boards is continuing to go well. She, Trustee El-Behairy, and Library Director John Spears recently attended a meeting of the North Collins Public Library Board of Trustees and were impressed by the board's camaraderie.

Finally, Chair Johnson reported she had attended the Library's mid-year budget hearing. The hearing went well, with only a few positive questions from legislators.

Agenda Item D.1 – Intermit August Meeting. Chair Johnson explained Resolution 2022-22 as presented. She noted the Executive Committee will still meeting in August. Trustee Panty moved for approval, Trustee Kelly seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2022-22

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 1 of *Bylaws of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library* states: "the Board may, by resolution, intermit meetings for a particular month or months," and

WHEREAS, in the past, the Board has suspended meetings during summer months when Library business permits, and

WHEREAS, the Library Board will meet in September 2022, and

WHEREAS, Article VI, Section 1 of *Bylaws of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library* states: "The Executive Committee, in intervals between meetings of the Board of Trustees, shall have all the powers and duties of the Board of Trustees not inconsistent with law. All Trustees should be notified of any actions within three (3) business days," and

WHEREAS, absent other urgent business, this action enables the Library Board to intermit its regular August meeting, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the August 2022 meeting of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees is hereby intermitted.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on July 14, 2022. A copy of the written report was included in the Board packet. Trustee El-Behairy summarized the meeting. Trustee Kelly moved to have the written report

entered into the Minutes, Trustee Panty made a second, and this was approved unanimously.

Present: Executive Committee Chair Kimberly Johnson, Vice Chair Carima El-Behairy, and members Sheldon Berlow, Frank Housh*, and Elaine Panty. Also present were Director John Spears, Chief Financial Officer Ken Stone, Assistant to the Director Erin Vest, and Development & Communications Clerks Melissa Burgess and Leah Mosher. Those designated with an asterisk (*) attended the meeting remotely, as permitted by Chapter 417 of the Laws of 2021.

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.

The Executive Committee reviewed the proposed agenda for the July 21, 2022 B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting. Director Spears noted a resolution would need to be added under New Business to honor the Lackawanna Public Library's centennial. Vest explained Res. 2022-22, noting a resolution needed to be passed to intermit the August Board meeting. The Executive Committee will still meet in August and may conduct urgent business if needed.

Chair Johnson reported she, Trustee El-Behairy, and Director Spears have continued to attend contracting library board meetings, including most recently at the North Collins Public Library. She also attended the Lackawanna Public Library's Centennial Celebration on July 10. The author talk Chair Johnson hosted on June 17 for *The Juneteenth Story* was well received. She is currently in contact with author Jacquie Abram to host one more author talk this year, for Abram's book *Hush Money*.

CFO Stone reviewed proposed Budget & Finance items. Resolution 2022-23 would accept an allocation from Erie County to cover the wage increase for CSEA employees effective July 1, 2022 stipulated by the collective bargaining agreement recently adopted by the Erie County Legislature. He noted the flat rate increase of \$2.50 per hour disproportionately affects the Library when compared to the County, as we utilize more lower-grade titles, but remarked that it was a good sign that an allocation was made to alleviate the impacts this year.

CFO Stone next reviewed recent grants awarded to the B&ECPL from the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority and New York State Library's Love Your Library fund. Resolutions 2022-24 and 2022-25 would accept and budget these two grants.

CFO Stone disclosed the Erie County Budget Office had recently transmitted 2023 budget instructions to the Library. They have not provided all the necessary data yet to prepare the budget request, which is due back by August 15. He reviewed his proposed criteria for preparation of the budget request, including provisions for a potential minimum wage increase, provisions to cover the cost of contracted bargaining unit agreements, and reserves for a potential CMU contract settlement. He noted these increases will necessitate asking for a larger increase in the overall Library budget in 2023 instead of the usual 2%. As demonstrated by the allocation outlined in

Resolution 2022-23, Erie County recognizes the impact of labor agreements, which include salary increases of up to 4% before even considering increases in fringe benefit costs. An argument can also be made that the overall tax levy has increased in previous years due to library-specific provisions, but the excess above 2% has been going to the County. CFO Stone noted sales tax revenue has been doing well, but he cautioned the impacts of inflation can have a false positive effect on those numbers. Trustee Berlow asked Director Spears how the budget process compared to his previous location. Director Spears noted the preparation at his previous position was in some ways more complicated, as they had to do everything on their own, but the political part of the budget process was much less complex.

Finally, CFO Stone reported that the B&ECPL remains within budget per the latest Monthly Financial Report.

For his report, Director Spears noted he would be taking the advice of Trustee Berlow and highlighting specific events and meetings from the previous month to discuss in detail at the July 21 meeting. He also plans to recap the mid-year budget hearing as well as a recent capital projects meeting. At the latter, he and CFO Stone were asked to prioritize between the escalator demolition and repair of the roof; they chose the roof. He noted the project was actually put forward by the Department of Public Works and had the support of the Department of Environment and Planning and the Division of Sewerage Management in pursuing potential grants. Trustee El-Behairy asked why the latter was interested in the project. CFO Stone noted a green roof would have an impact on reducing storm surges, which is a high priority for the sewer system at the moment.

Trustee El-Behairy noted there would be a Report of the Foundation at the July 21 meeting. Director Spears noted ACT President Richard Earne was invited to the Board meeting, but he was unsure if he would attend to report on behalf of ACT. Chair Johnson again noted the addition of a resolution for the Lackawanna Public Library under New Business.

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 4:33 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Berlow and a second by Trustee Panty.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Amend 2022 Budget: Erie County Allocation for CSEA Salary Increase. Chief Financial Officer Ken Stone explained Resolution 2022-23 as presented. He noted the flat rate increases included in this contract and the AFSCME collective bargaining agreement approved at the end of 2021 were necessary to establish more competitive salaries, especially given recent inflation. However, the increases disproportionately affect the Library in terms of percentage increase in salary cost, as

most Library positions are in lower job grades. Trustee Gist asked about the phrase “one-time” used in the memo composed by the Erie County Departments of Labor Relations and Personnel in support of the contract. CFO Stone noted the phrasing was misleading; the flat increase of \$2.50 per hour was applied once to the entire salary scale on July 1, 2022, and percent increases in future years would apply to the new scale, inclusive of that flat increase. Trustee Sasiadek asked who represented the B&ECPL in negotiations. CFO Stone stated Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Doyle represented the Library, though Erie County ultimately drove negotiations as the largest CSEA employer. The B&ECPL has sole negotiating authority with the Clerical & Maintenance Union of the B&ECPL Contracting Libraries as well as the Librarians’ Association. Trustee Panty asked if the wage/salary increase would help with recruitment. CFO Stone opined it would, noting the increase affected every position and every wage level, including starting salary. He felt this was a major factor considered by Erie County in approving this increase. Following discussion, Trustee Panty moved for approval, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2022-23

WHEREAS, on June 23, the Erie County Legislature adopted a resolution approving a collective bargaining agreement with CSEA Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO covering the period from July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2027, and

WHEREAS, the CSEA union represents employees in white-collar positions at Erie County, Erie Community College, Erie County Medical Center and the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library’s Central Library, Buffalo Branches and Library System Services, and

WHEREAS, Erie County provided \$187,623 to offset the 2022 salary/wage impacts to the Library, which has been received by the Library, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL approves the following amendment to the 2022 Operating Budget, increasing revenues and expenses as follows:

2022 Operating Budget

Account #	Description	Cost Center	Amount
Revenue			
466000	Misc. Receipts	4201010	\$ 187,623
Expense			
500000	Full-time Salaries	4201010	\$ 176,800
500020	Part-time Wages	4201010	\$ 6,793
500030	Regular Part-time Wages	4201010	\$ 4,030
Total Expense			\$ 187,623

Agenda Item E.2.b – Accept & Budget Grant Award: FINRA. CFO Stone presented Resolution 2022-24. Trustee Gist asked for more details on the project. CFO Stone clarified staff would be trained to provide financial literacy education to the public; B&ECPL staff would coordinate the public programming.

Trustee Craik joined the meeting during this explanation, at 4:28 p.m.

Following this clarification, Trustee Bucki moved for approval, Trustee Kelly seconded, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2022-24

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library applied for a Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) Investor Education Foundation Grant to fund the *Become Financially Fit: Earning, Saving & Managing Your Money at the Library* project, and

WHEREAS, the project would provide training to staff who will assist community members in improving their financial literacy skills as well as develop curriculum for public programming, and

WHEREAS, the project would provide financial literacy programming and resources to both children and adults, and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL has been notified by FINRA that the grant application for the *Become Financially Fit: Earning, Saving & Managing Your Money at the Library* project has been approved, and

WHEREAS, a grant budget needs to be established to undertake the program, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL gratefully accepts the award and authorizes amending the 2022 Grants Budget by appropriating grant revenues and expenditures in the amount of \$45,595 to support the establishment of the *Become Financially Fit: Earning, Saving & Managing Your Money at the Library* two-year project, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL authorizes establishing a *Become Financially Fit: Earning, Saving & Managing Your Money at the Library* grant budget in the following amounts:

Grant Project Revenue:	\$45,595
Grant Project Expenditures:	\$45,595 and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Library Director or his designee is authorized to execute the necessary forms and documents to implement this grant.

Agenda Item E.2.c – Accept & Budget Grant Award: Love Your Library. CFO Stone explained Resolution 2022-25 as presented. Trustee Craik moved for approval, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2022-25

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library received notification of the *Love Your Library* grant award from New York State Library, and

WHEREAS, this funding is intended to strengthen and support public library system and member library programs and services for the 2022 Summer Reading Program *Oceans of Possibilities*, and

WHEREAS, a grant budget needs to be established to undertake the program, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL gratefully accepts the award and authorizes amending the 2022 Grants Budget by appropriating grant revenue and expenditures in the amount of \$6,860 to establish the *Love Your Library* Grant, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustee of the B&ECPL approves utilizing these fund to strengthen and support the 2022 Summer Reading Program *Oceans of Possibilities*, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL authorizes establishing a *Love Your Library* grant budget in the following amounts:

Grant Project Revenue:	\$6,860
Grant Project Expenditures:	\$6,860 and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Library Director or his designee is authorized to execute the necessary forms and documents to implement this grant

Agenda Item E.2.d – 2023 Proposed Budget Guidance. CFO Stone presented Resolution 2022-26. He noted the B&ECPL would be asking for a larger budget increase this year to cover these provisions. Trustee Kelly moved for approval, Trustee Panty seconded, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2022-26

WHEREAS, the Library recently received Year 2023 budget instructions from the Erie County Budget Office, with budget requests due to the Erie County Budget Office no later than August 15, 2022, which is before the next scheduled Board meeting, and

WHEREAS, in order to provide a timely response to the County, proposed budget preparation and review criteria were transmitted electronically for review by the Board's Budget & Finance Committee, and

WHEREAS, it is in the Library's interest for Library trustees to articulate guidelines for preparing the 2023 Budget request, designate the Library Director as responsible for preparing a draft budget request consistent with these guidelines, and submit the request to Erie County, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library hereby directs the Library Director to complete the 2023 Budget request utilizing the following criteria:

- Incorporate a provision for another potential increase in the New York State minimum wage impacting page and senior page wage rates;
- Incorporate the cost of contracted bargaining unit agreements, a reserve for units with expired contracts and non-represented personnel pursuant to previously approved Board resolutions, and rate changes for contractually obligated fringe benefits including health insurance and employer contributions to the New York State and Local Retirement System; and
- Prioritize public access to libraries in any budget adjustments needed to balance the 2023 Budget request, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Director transmit the resulting request to the County of Erie's Division of Budget and Management as close to the deadline as schedules and preparation time will allow.

Agenda Item E.2.e – Monthly Financial Report. The monthly financial report for the year as of May 31, 2022 month-end close was included in the Board packet as an information item. CFO Stone again emphasized utility costs have been extremely high, but rates have thankfully begun to taper off. He will continue to monitor.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Spears began by reiterating that the mid-year budget hearing was very positive. They received questions regarding availability of public computers and funding for marketing library services. Trustee Craik asked for more detail regarding the computer question. Director Spears relayed he had explained the Library has enough public access computers to suit the current needs of patrons; there have been no issues with wait times. However, he told those at the hearing that the B&ECPL has expanded how it offers internet use, including upgrades to our Wi-Fi and offering hotspots and laptops for lending, the latter of which is continuing to expand.

Director Spears next spoke about the 2023 capital budget request meeting, attended by himself and CFO Stone. In regards to being asked to prioritize projects, he noted both Library-related projects were much costlier than other proposals being reviewed. CFO Stone provided details on the roof project, noting it would be at least partially a green

roof; there are differences in the load capacity for the east and west portions of the roof that will be taken into consideration. Trustee Kelly asked if there would be public access to the roof. CFO Stone said it was a possibility. Trustee Gist asked about the status of the escalators if the demolition project does not move forward this year. CFO Stone indicated the first floor section would remain walled off. The top of the escalators on the second floor will be capped, and display cases will be placed on top of them. CFO Stone expounded on some possibilities once the escalators are able to be removed, including the possibility of using fire-rated glass to create a view up through the building. Trustee Sasiadek asked if federal or state funding is being pursued for the green roof. Director Spears said yes, the Library was assisting the Department of Public Works with pursuing a variety of grants.

Director Spears reported some contracting libraries have been receiving informal objections to materials, especially children's materials that include LGBTQ or racial themes. Assistant Deputy Director Dorinda Darden reached out to directors to gauge their current experiences, and four libraries have received such objections. One library has been dealing with a particularly vehement series of complaints, which seem to be coming from a coordinated group. Their director is handling it well. So far, none of the objectors has submitted a formal Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials.

Next, Director Spears reported on topics that came up in recent meeting he had attended, as highlighted in the Director Activities section of the Monthly Report. First, he met with the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions Metropolitan Libraries Section Standing Committee on June 9. The group represents libraries around the world who serve over 400,000 people. They discussed outcome measurements for library programming that include actual impact, such as improved skills, not just attendance numbers. This can be difficult to assess. They also discussed the role libraries should play in a democratic society. Trustee Gist asked if that could be getting too political. Director Spears clarified that they were not talking about particular parties or shaping policy or public opinion, but instead how libraries can support participatory government, such as by providing access to government documents.

Also on June 9, Director Spears met with the Erie County Cultural Collaborative Group, a group of the biggest cultural institutions in Buffalo, including the Buffalo Zoo, Buffalo AKG Art Museum, Buffalo Botanical Gardens, and more. The group recently invited the B&ECPL to attend these meetings. They are working on an equity, diversity, and inclusion initiative aimed at reaching everyone in Erie County and touching on everything from collections to marketing.

On June 10, Director Spears attended the OCLC Public Library Advisory Committee Meeting. This committee consists of 12 library directors from around the country. At their recent meeting, they discussed intellectual freedom and the library's role in social justice. One issue that is becoming more prominent is whether libraries have an

obligation to collect materials on both sides of an issue, such as including homophobic materials as well as LGBTQ materials.

On June 22, Director Spears attended a meeting for Libraries in Times of Crisis. He and the director of the public library in Uvalde, TX were meant to speak on their experiences. They are looking to reconvene and include the director of the Highland Park Public Library.

Director Spears reported he attended the American Library Association Annual Conference in Washington, DC from June 22 – June 28. Many sessions focused on issues he has already highlighted in his report. He noted ALA as an organization seems to be leaning towards supporting social justice issues. One controversial moment from the conference was a prominent speaker advocating for including holocaust denial literature in library collections. He stated most librarians when considering intellectual freedom issues draw the line at blatantly false information. Holocaust denial materials should not be included in collections, in the same way that disproven medical advice should not.

Finally, Director Spears reported he would be attending the IFLA Annual Conference in Dublin, Ireland the following week.

Trustee Moore asked who makes collection development decisions for the B&ECPL. Director Spears stated while contracting libraries do have a role in conveying what materials their communities want, ultimately collection development is done at the System level. However, most challenges are being handled at the local level. He noted he and the contracting library directors have so far presented a unified front when it comes to challenges of materials. Trustee Moore asked if these issues ever come to the System Board. Director Spears noted part of the formal challenge process includes the right to appeal a decision to the B&ECPL Board of Trustees. More informally, members of the public could exert pressure to change the Collection Development Policy.

Discussion ensued. Trustee Gist expressed there are items in the B&ECPL collection that he believes are inappropriate for a child to read. Director Spears relayed the B&ECPL's policy avers the B&ECPL does not stand *in loco parentis*; parents are responsible for monitoring their children's use of library materials. He confirmed there are items in the collection that are offensive, noting the recent example of Dr. Seuss books that are no longer being published due to racist imagery, and there are items that some parents find inappropriate for their children. It is their right to choose not to engage with these materials. However, they cannot dictate what is appropriate for someone else's child or take away the choice from another parent.

Trustee Craik asked that a copy of the Collection Development Policy and ALA Bill of Rights be transmitted to the Board for reference. Director Spears said he would do so.

Trustee Panty asked if these challenges were increasing nationally. Director Spears confirmed that they were, though he hopes they will taper off. Trustee Sasiadek asked if patrons have tried to remove materials from the collection by checking them out and not returning them. Director Spears said he was aware of a nationwide effort to use such a tactic, but so far it has not been used at the B&ECPL. He also conveyed while those making challenges are loud, including in one instance screaming at a contracting library director, the response from the greater community has been supportive of the B&ECPL.

Trustee Panty inquired if the B&ECPL has had issues with first amendment auditors. Chair Johnson asked that the discussion be tabled to the next meeting.

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

B&ECPL Monthly Report June 2022

New Digital Services – On June 1, the B&ECPL soft launched hoopla and Overdrive magazines; a formal announcement about the services went out to the public on June 9. hoopla offers an extensive variety of movies, music, books, television shows, comics, and audiobooks in a digital format that does not require patrons to wait in hold queues for their items. As this resource operates on a “pay per circ” model, every patron is currently limited to five items per month. Overdrive magazines provides full-color digital access to thousands of magazines for all ages and interests, and patrons may check out 20 magazines at a time. In their first month, hoopla had 3,183 checkouts and Overdrive magazines had 7,384 checkouts.

Juneteenth Author Talk – On June 17, local author Alliah L. Agostini held an author talk, book signing, and social at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library. The talk was hosted by B&ECPL Board Chair Kimberly Johnson and discussed Agostini’s children’s book *The Juneteenth Story*.

Library Staff at Pride Weekend – Bookmobile Librarian **Julia Verbanic** arranged for the Library2GO van and staff to be in the Pride Parade on June 5. Staff handed out *Libraries Are for Everyone* stickers during the parade. In addition, Library Assistant **Heather Leaderstorf** supervised a B&ECPL information tent and table at the Pride Festival at Canalside. Over 700 visitors made pronoun or library pride buttons!



Library2GO van at the Pride Parade

Merriweather Branch Community Outreach – Throughout the month of June, the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library collected reusable bags for the various community food distribution sites. On Tuesdays, the Civil Legal Advice Resource Office provided free legal assistance and advice related to debt, credit, and collections. Overall, the Merriweather Branch continued to be a hub of community activity in response to the tragic events of May 14 at Tops Friendly Markets. Tops Associates and other community organizations utilized the space, including World Central Kitchen distributing fresh produce outside the front entrance throughout the month. World Central Kitchen's last day of food distribution outside the library was June 28, 2022.

Summer Reading – The *Oceans of Possibilities Summer Reading Contest* for children, teens, and adults is being held online from June 1 through August 13. Participants submit book reviews for a chance to win prizes. Children's Services and Outreach Manager **Kristi Dougherty** also spoke at Mayor Byron Brown's press kick-off for his *Reading Rules! Kid's Summer Reading Challenge*, held at BPS #74 Hamlin Park Claude & Ouida Clapp Academy on June 2. Assistant Deputy Director of Public Services **Dorinda Darden** and I attended the event as well.

Central Library Class Visits and Tours – Children's Services and Outreach Senior Page **Nancy Smith** and Librarian **Judith Slawinski** conducted class visits for BPS #32 Bennett Park Montessori on June 1 and June 2 respectively. Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Shanley Olszowy** hosted a tour on June 6 for the BPS Adult Education Division and on June 10 for the Rotary Club of Clarence; along with local Rotary members, there were three visiting dignitaries from Thailand. Rare Book and Map Librarian **Charles Alaimo** provided a tour of the Mark Twain Room on June 14 to a small group of book club members who had just reread *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Information Services and Outreach Manager **Daniel Caufield** provided a tour for the City of Tonawanda Public Library Board of Trustees on June 25.

Health and Wellness – **Shanley Olszowy** coordinated *Wellness on the Ramp* at the Central Library on June 16. The National Federation of the Blind, Prevention Focus, Independent Consumer Advocacy Network, and Jericho Road Community Health Center participated in the event.

NASA@ My Library - On June 30, Launch Pad Makerspace Manager **Jordan Smith** hosted Ethan Landers from Old Dominion University virtually in the Ring of Knowledge at the Central Library to present about the James Webb Telescope and how computer coding is integral to off-world space missions.

Straight Talk Kickoff Conference 2022 – **Daniel Caufield** and Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Jacob Rachwal** participated in the *Straight Talk Kickoff Conference 2022* held at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center on June 18, sponsored by the Service Corps of Retired Executives and the Small Business Administration. **Daniel** presented with Susan McCartney, Director of the Small Business Development Center at Buffalo State College during the *Business Basics* session. In addition, during the Networking sessions, **Daniel** and **Jacob** provided information regarding library resources and services for entrepreneurship and small business development. After the initial one-day conference, they hosted four 2-hour follow-up workshops titled the *Straight Talk Evening Seminar Series* in the Mason O. Damon Auditorium at the Central Library on June 21, 23, 28, and 30.

Buffalo's Reading Park – June programming curated by **Anne Conable** included the CreativeMornings/Buffalo series, the Launch Pad's *Plant Swap*, the first Sportsmen's Americana Music Foundation *Music @ the Library* program featuring *Shaky Stage*, Just Buffalo Literary Center's *Buffalo Writes Workshops*, and patriotic music by 23 *Skidoo*. July will include even more music, writing opportunities, wellness activities, and the Colored Musicians Club's Queen City Jazz Festival on July 30!

Retirement Celebration – After a 25-year career as a librarian for the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Special Collections Manager and Librarian **Marguerite (Meg) Cheman** retired on June 24 with a small retirement celebration in the Grosvenor Room. **Meg** began as a reference librarian in the former Humanities and Social Sciences Department at the Central Library. Throughout her career she managed the Fiction Department, Special Projects, and, for the last 10 years, Special Collections. **Meg** was viewed by her staff and colleagues as a thorough and considerate manager and an excellent librarian. She was an asset to the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System and will be missed by all who worked with her.

1. Public Services

System Programming Statistics:

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Regular*				
Adults	637	3,450	2,015	10,557
Children 5 and under	1,512	9,553	2,823	20,289
Children 6-11	1,063	8,578	1,892	15,300
Intergenerational/Combined	4,184	24,673	7,633	40,658
Teens	372	1,942	1,072	3,885
Regular Total	7,768	48,196	15,435	90,689
Regular Total	7,768	48,196	15,435	90,689

Virtual				
Live Virtual				
Adults	10	143	131	1,948
Children 5 and under	0	3	0	38
Children 6-11	0	3	0	71
Intergenerational/Combined	1	21	507	3,570
Teens	14	47	110	415
Live Virtual Total	25	217	748	6,042
Recorded Virtual				
Adults	10	79	181	2,099
Children 5 and under	0	89	0	2,734
Children 6-11	2	24	134	2,240
Intergenerational/Combined	19	125	268	4,946
Recorded Virtual Total	31	317	583	12,019
Virtual Total	56	534	1,331	18,061
Grand Total	7,824	48,730	16,766	108,750

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

B&ECPL Programming Highlights:

Central Library

- In-Person Programs: *Book a Technology Trainer; Crafting at Central; Cultivate Cinema Circle Classic Movies Series; It Takes a Village Employment Entry Program; NASA@ My Library; Saturday Storytime; Sensory Stay n' Play; Stitch Circle; Straight Talk Evening Seminar Series; Teen Advisory Group Meeting; Teen Anime/Manga Club; Wednesday Movie Matinee; Wellness on the Ramp*
- In-Person/Virtual Programs: *Brain Sparks; Computer Basics; Computer Maintenance; Google Photos; Hoopla; Internet Basics; Introduction to Chromebook*
- Virtual Programs: *Battle of the Books Practice; Book a Librarian; Checkers Library TV; Deep Sea Readers; Cooking with a Librarian: Homemade Kombucha Tea; Genealogy 101; Highlights from the Western New York Genealogical Society Collection; Native Nations Partnership: Developing a Business Plan; Proud Innovation: Learning from LGBTQ+ Innovators; Reader's Quest Middle School Book Group; Under 18 and Applying for Your First Job*

Buffalo Branches

- In-Person Programs: *Aquarium of Niagara's Touch Tank Experience (Panty); Arabic Storytime (González-Soto); Button Making on Demand (Merriweather); Circus Storytime with Benjamin Berry (Dudley); Composting and Rain Barrel Workshop (Panty); Dealing with Crisis and Trauma hosted by Every Person Influences Children (Merriweather); Hispanic Heritage Council's Guitar Initiative's Music Classes (González-Soto); Kids Craft Time (Dudley); Make Your Own Aquarium (North Park); One-on-One Technology Trainings; Stitch Circle (East Clinton); Storytimes (Dudley, González-Soto, North Park); Summer Reading Badge Program (East Clinton); The Juneteenth Story Author Talk (Merriweather); Tie-Dye Day (North Park); Water Safety Training with Goldfish Swimming School (Panty)*
- Virtual Programs: *Teen Manga Club Meetings (Coles)*

B is for Book Exhibit:

	Number of Visitors		
	Month	YTD	From Opening (9/2020 to Present)
Non Tour-Related	1,384	8,672	34,766
Tour/Program	246	506	1,642
TOTAL <i>B is for Book</i>	1,630	9,178	36,408

Outreach:

Library on Wheels Bookmobile – In June, the Library on Wheels had 15 regular stops and three special stops, including Kenmore West High School and Orchard Park Summer Camp. A new community stop was added at Vive Shelter. The Bookmobile welcomed 877 visitors and issued 28 new library cards. Programming included *Storytimes* at UB Childcare Center, *Make Your Own Pronoun Pin* at Pride Fest, and *Design Your Own Bookmobile* at the Orchard Park Recreation Center Summer Camp.

Library2GO Van – The Library2GO Van continued its regular stops and added new stops at Humboldt House, Walden Park Apartments, and Trier Woods Apartments.

Library by Mail – Library by Mail added 19 new users (206 total).

Buffalo Autism Project Resource Fair - Children's Services and Outreach Librarian **Jennifer Lelinski** tabled and spoke with families about library resources at the *Buffalo Autism Project Resource Fair* held at Highmark Stadium on June 25.

Buffalo Public Schools - Jennifer Lelinski participated in the BPS Say Yes Academy at BPS #97 Harvey Austin School on June 11, and on June 16, she visited BPS #32 Bennett Park Montessori to read stories, sing songs, and present a craft to a Pre-K/kindergarten class.

Canalside - Children's Services and Outreach Librarian **Erin Burke** participated in *Storytime at Canalside* presented by Every Person Influences Children on June 29.

2. Collection Development

Physical Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	3,383	16,341	380	1,883	545,816
Young Adult Print	751	3,200	118	600	79,569
Adult Print	4,057	23,527	841	5,027	1,803,885
Media	2,599	17,179	323	2,114	570,056
Other*	2,090	11,840	132	200	175,208
Subtotal	12,880	72,087	1,794	9,824	3,174,534

*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other

Electronic Collections*:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	2,141	11,975	1,146	7,179	87,691
eAudiobooks	3,553	17,078	294	1,706	40,699
Videos	0	0	0	0	202
Digital Magazines	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4,064
Subtotal	5,694	29,053	1,440	8,885	132,656

* 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	18,574	101,140	3,234	18,709	3,307,190

Purchase Suggestions:

	Received	% Owned*	Unique Titles	% Ordered
Patron Initiated	737	6.5%	735	64.3%
Staff Initiated	32	0%	32	75%

*Items in system or on-order at time of suggestion.

Digital Collections – Special Collections Librarian **Susan Buttaccio** edited and uploaded three digital items to the Rich Newberg Reporting Collection on June 28. The pieces take a critical look at the case against the Lackawanna 6. Overall, the Digital Collections page, which is facilitated by and whose content is largely from Special Collections, had 55,164 visits in the month of June.

3. Fundraising**Fundraising:**

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1 – June 30, 2022	\$168,068.06

FINRA Grant – The Library has received confirmation of a \$45,595 grant award for a 2-year public education program called *Become Financially Fit: Earning, Saving & Managing Your Money at the Library*. The grant is from the FINRA Investor Education Foundation.

Eclipse Glasses Request – The Library submitted a grant request to the STAR Library Education Networks. The request is for 2,000 eclipse glasses distribute to the community.

Online Store – In the first six months of 2022, the Library sold 25 online store items totaling \$691.43.

Library Night at the Ballpark – We will once again host *Library Night at the Ballpark* on Friday, July 29. Tickets are \$15 each. Fireworks will follow the game. To purchase tickets, contact Maureen Germaine at 716-858-7197 or germainem@buffalolib.org.

4. Staff Development

Number of Staff Trainings Presented (B&ECPL)		Number of Staff Training Attendees (B&ECPL/External)	
Month	YTD	Month	YTD
6	14	773	2,022

Staff Training Presented – *Evacuation Team Training* (presented by B&ECPL); *Harassment Prevention: A Commonsense Approach* (presented by Kantola Productions); *Hoopla Introduction Training* (presented by B&ECPL); *Ladder & Stairway Safety Training* (presented by WNYCOSH); *Protecting Yourself and Your Patrons: Important Lessons for Library Leaders and Staff from School Shootings* (presented by Library 2.0); *Workplace Violence: The Early Warning Signs* (presented by Kantola Productions).

Conferences Attended – *ALA Annual Conference* (presented by ALA); *NPELRA Conference* (presented by NPELRA).

Webinars Viewed – **42 webinars, including** *Dealing with the Aftermath of a Crisis: Caring for People* (presented by WNYLRC); *Fun for All: Game-Based Programming Across the Generations* (presented by NYSED); *Grant Writing Kit Workshop* (presented by ESLN); *Queer Peers and Graphic Novels: Creating Space for LGBTQ+ Readers* (presented by Booklist); *Strategies to Help You Recruit and Retain Staff* (presented by SirsiDynix).

Other – *21-Day Racial Equity Challenge* (presented by United Way).

5. Communications//Media Coverage/Media Releases/Social Media

Media:

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
Mass Email /Media Announcement	Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries announce the addition of two exciting digital services available to cardholders!	Step Out Buffalo, June 9
Media Event featuring Director John Spears	Auto bureau satellite office at the Merriweather Branch Library on Mobile Mondays	WGRZ TV, The Buffalo Challenger, WKBW TV, June 13
Live radio interview with Director John Spears	Summer reading and other library activities and events	WUFO, June 13
Media Release	Juneteenth children's book author talk program presented by B&ECPL System Chair Kimberly Johnson	WGRZ TV 2, The Buffalo News, June 17 & 18
Interview and article featuring Library Trustee Elaine M. Panty	Elaine Panty's generous volunteer history with the Library System and her dedication to the Panty Branch Library	Forever Young, June issue

Photo Op with Director Johns Spears	Upcoming feature in Spree Magazine	September 2022 issue
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Social Media:

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
Facebook	114	717	2,945	20,067	27	10,667
Flickr	39	146	3,933	34,908	-	58
Google Ads ¹	n/a	n/a	2,172	15,327	n/a	n/a
Instagram	35	212	21,120	36,790	42	4,246
Pinterest	138	278	77	685	-3	2,122
Podcast ²	4	23	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
TikTok	2	9	254	1,499	11	378
Twitter	66	381	509	3,399	28	11,023
YouTube	15	63	1,803	8,208	22	410
Total	413	1,829	32,813	120,883	127	28,904

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.

6. Partnerships

Community Arts & Healing – Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Maria Lowe** attended the *Community Arts & Healing* initial discussion meeting on May 27 with Erie County arts, cultural, and educational agencies. The meeting was organized by Michele Agosto, Director of Arts for the Buffalo Public Schools, to help support young people dealing with the Buffalo and Uvalde mass shootings. **Daniel Caufield** attended follow-up meetings on June 17 and June 24. More meetings will be scheduled for the fall.

New York State Library - Special Collections Librarian **Susan Buttaccio** met with educators and facilitators on June 29 to create content for the New York State Library's *Consider the Source* website. The site's purpose is to "connect educators across New York State to the valuable primary source materials found in the churches, museums, historical organizations, libraries, and state and local governments with a series of highly-engaging learning activities designed to guide and encourage students at all grade levels to make discoveries using critical thinking skills."

University Express - TechKnow Lab Librarians **Brendan Chella** and **Jacqueline Hovey** taught *Computer Basics* and *iPad/iPhone Basics* classes at the Tosh Collins Community Center on June 3 and June 6 respectively. Genealogy Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman** taught a class on the Grosvenor Room's collection of Erie County Poorhouse records on June 1 at the Lancaster Senior Center, and she presented a lecture called *The Records of Western New York* at the Orchard Park Senior Center on June 10. All classes were part of the Erie County Senior Services' University Express program. In addition, Kevin Quinn from the Center for Elder Law & Justice

presented *Tenant's Rights and How the Eviction Laws Work* as part of the University Express program at the Central Library on June 6.

7. Director Activities

Meetings/Events Attended by Director John Spears June 2022

Date	Meeting/Event
June 1, 2022	Department Shadowing - Graphics
June 1, 2022	Event - Writing Dreams Together Workshop
June 1, 2022	Department Shadowing - Development & Communications
June 1, 2022	Meeting - Amherst Public Library Board of Trustees
June 2, 2022	Meeting - Administrative Team
June 2, 2022	Event - Mayor's Summer Reading Kick-Off
June 2, 2022	Virtual Meeting - Larry Boatright, Ithaka
June 2, 2022	Meeting - Town of Collins Public Library
June 3, 2022	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
June 5, 2022	Event - Pride Parade
June 7, 2022	Virtual Meeting - The Great Give Back
June 7, 2022	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
June 7, 2022	Virtual Meeting - Alden Ewell Free Library Board of Trustees
June 8, 2022	Conference Call - Marisa Wigglesworth, Buffalo Museum of Science
June 8, 2022	Virtual Meeting - Managers & Directors
June 8, 2022	Department Shadowing - Business Office
June 8, 2022	Virtual Meeting - Larry Boatright, Ithaka
June 8, 2022	Meeting - Joshua Mitch
June 8, 2022	Meeting - Newstead Public Library Board of Trustees
June 9, 2022	<i>Virtual Meeting - IFLA Metropolitan Libraries Section Standing Committee</i>
June 9, 2022	<i>Virtual Meeting - Erie County Cultural Collaborative Group</i>
June 9, 2022	Meeting - Judy Fachko, Jeannine Doyle
June 9, 2022	Meeting - Kristi Dougherty
June 9, 2022	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees Executive Committee
June 10, 2022	<i>Virtual Meeting - OCLC Public Library Advisory Committee</i>
June 10, 2022	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
June 13, 2022	Event - Erie County Auto Bureau Mobile Services Launch at Merriweather Branch Library
June 13, 2022	Media Interview - WUFO
June 14, 2022	Virtual Meeting - PULISDO
June 14, 2022	Meeting - Boston Free Library Board of Trustees
June 15, 2022	Department Shadowing - Information Services
June 15, 2022	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
June 16, 2022	Meeting - Concord Public Library Board of Trustees
June 16, 2022	Meeting - Administrative Team
June 16, 2022	Virtual Meeting - Public Library System Directors
June 16, 2022	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees
June 17, 2022	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino

June 21, 2022	Meeting - Library Foundation
June 21, 2022	Virtual Meeting - NYS Senator Timothy Kennedy
June 22, 2022	Department Shadowing - Technical Services
June 22, 2022	Meeting - NYS Assemblymember Jon Rivera
June 22, 2022	Meeting - Joshua Mitch and Joy Testa Cinquino
<i>June 22, 2022</i>	<i>Virtual Meeting - Libraries in Times of Crisis</i>
<i>June 23, 2022</i>	<i>Conference - American Library Association</i>
<i>June 24, 2022</i>	<i>Conference - American Library Association</i>
<i>June 25, 2022</i>	<i>Conference - American Library Association</i>
<i>June 26, 2022</i>	<i>Conference - American Library Association</i>
<i>June 27, 2022</i>	<i>Conference - American Library Association</i>
<i>June 28, 2022</i>	<i>Conference - American Library Association</i>
June 29, 2022	Department Shadowing - Interlibrary Loan
June 29, 2022	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
June 29, 2022	Event - Central Library Staff Forum
June 30, 2022	Meeting - Administrative Team
June 30, 2022	Meeting - Ted Johnson

Appendix Contracting Member Library Activity Reports

Cheektowaga Public Library – submitted by Glenn Luba, Director

Summer Reading – The program is in full swing and kicked off at the Julia Boyer Reinstein Library with Magician Cris Johnson and his *Oceans of Possibilities*-themed magic show for families. The Anna Reinstein Memorial Library kicked off with a July 4th party with Librarian **Lilly Reynolds**, who entertained with stories, a craft, and treats. Reading logs and incentives are available for three categories of readers: children, teens, and adults.

Scavenger Hunts – These are set up in the children's areas for both locations in an effort to have fun discovering the different collections and thus explore new reading material. Children receive a treat upon completing the adventure.

Girl Scout Visit – A group of 15 Girl Scouts visited the Julia Boyer Reinstein Library and was given a tour of the children's/young adult areas by part-time Clerk **Heather Luce** to enlighten them to a broad range of reading material options.

Take and Make Crafts – Originally started during the modified library existence over the past two years, these continue to be some of the most popular ongoing "programs." Conducted at both of our locations, families take in excess of 500 crafts home each month.

Lego Club – Children were elated once we were able to restart the Lego Club. It remains as one of our most popular ongoing programs at both locations, limited only by space and Lego parts.

Cheektowaga Y.E.S. – Cheektowaga’s Youth Engaged in Service offers ongoing assistance with programming including craft nights, movie days, and assisting with our larger programs such as holiday themed gatherings. Thank you to Alicia S. Hark, Cheektowaga Y.E.S. Coordinator, and all her helpers.

WNY Iris Society – The WNY Iris Society held their annual Iris Show at the Julia Boyer Reinstein Library in early June (iris blooming season). The entire meeting room was set up to display numerous different varieties of irises, and the event culminated with an awards ceremony for best in show categories.

Agenda Item G – Report of the Foundation. Trustee El-Behairy reported the Library Foundation met on July 13. They discussed potential projects, including future author talks and fundraising receptions. They plan to meet with Director Spears in August for further discussion.

Agenda Item H – Report of the Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT)/ Contracting Library Trustee Report. There was no representative from ACT at the meeting. Director Spears reported ACT is planning their next meeting.

Agenda Item H.1 – Contracting Library Liaison Report(s). Trustee Kelly reported she had attended a meeting of the Elma Public Library Board of Trustees. She noted the meeting was very positive; their library has been holding a lot of programming, including classes from University Express. They also have a popular fish tank.

On a separate note, Trustee Kelly asked that trustees consider making their annual contribution to the B&ECPL early. She will continue to follow-up throughout the year.

Trustee El-Behairy reported she had attended the Angola Public Library’s hot dog fundraiser and bake sale on July 16. In addition, while not her liaison library, she noted the Orchard Park Public Library Board of Trustees was great to meet during their System tour.

Assistant to the Director Erin Vest stated Trustee Amodeo had informed her he attended the Lancaster Public Library Board of Trustees meeting in July and would provide a report at the September Board meeting.

Agenda Item I – Public Comment. Odessa Hunter asked for an update on the requests detailed in the letter presented to Chair Johnson at the May Board meeting. She also questioned where the framed poem she had presented to the Board at their April meeting had been hung, since she did not see it in the Joseph B. Rounds Board Room. Director Spears responded it had been hung in a more public place.

Agenda Item J – Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item K – New Business.

Agenda Item K.1 – Recognition of Lackawanna Public Library Centennial. Chair Johnson explained Resolution 2022-27 as presented. Trustee El-Behairy moved for approval, Trustee Panty seconded, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2022-27

WHEREAS, the Lackawanna Public Library, located at 560 Ridge Road in Lackawanna, New York, is celebrating 100 years of library service to its community in 2022, and

WHEREAS, its origins date to the early 20th century, when local resident Clara Whealen and the *Pioneer Study Club* lobbied for the establishment of a library for Lackawanna, a thriving city of over 15,000 people, and

WHEREAS, industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, who gave money to establish 2,500 libraries across the world, agreed in 1917 to a \$30,000 grant to provide the seed money to build the Lackawanna Library, and

WHEREAS, Ms. Whealen later advocated for and secured additional funding from the City of Lackawanna and the Federal Works Progress Administration to enlarge and operate the Library, and

WHEREAS, the Lackawanna Public Library has been an anchor of the community since its establishment, serving hundreds of thousands of children and adults from all walks of life with a wide variety of free resources that enrich, enlighten and entertain, and

WHEREAS, the Lackawanna Public Library is today an essential cultural institution, providing programs for all ages, highlighting local history and serving its diverse community as part of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library extends its warmest congratulations on the occasion of the Lackawanna Public Library's centennial year, with hearty thanks to its past and present board, staff and volunteers.

Trustee Sasiadek reminded trustees that the Boston Free Library was holding their summer fundraiser that evening. Chair Johnson also noted the steering committee of the Buffalo 5/14 Survivors Fund was holding a public meeting that evening to review a draft protocol regarding how funds will be disbursed.

Director Spears noted B&ECPL Genealogy Specialist Rhonda Hoffman recently had an article published in the *New York Researcher*. He also thanked Assistant Deputy Director Joy Testa Cinquino for her work on the *2021 Annual Report of the Administration*.

There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee Sasiadek with a second by Trustee Panty, the meeting was adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Moore
Secretary