

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
December 21, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, December 21, 2023, at the Central Library and remotely pursuant to due notice to trustees. The following members were present:

Kimberly Johnson, Chair
Carima El-Behairy, Vice Chair*
Alan J. Bedenko, Esq., Treasurer
Joel Moore, Esq., Secretary
Prof. Christine P. Bartholomew, Esq.
Kathleen Berens Bucki, MLS
John D. Craik
Sharon M. Kelly, Esq.
Elaine M. Panty
Christopher Sasiadek, Esq.

*Trustee El-Behairy attended the meeting remotely due to an extraordinary circumstance; pursuant to the B&ECPL Procedures for Trustee Videoconferencing, she was a full participant in the meeting.

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. A call of the roll was taken. A quorum was present.

Trustee Moore arrived at 4:06 p.m.

Agenda Item B - Approval/Changes to the Agenda. There were no changes to the proposed agenda. Chair Johnson, however, did mention that during the Report of the Chair she will propose candidates for the Performance Evaluation Committee for Director John Spears.

Agenda Item C - Minutes of the Meeting of November 16, 2023. Trustee Kelly made a motion for approval, Trustee Panty seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Agenda Item D - Report of the Chair. Chair Johnson reported that she attended the Homeless Alliance of Western New York's Luncheon. The Homeless Alliance awarded the Library for its work with the homeless community. She noted that we are not one of their established partners, but the Central Library is particularly active within the

community and provides resources for homeless individuals and the agencies that serve them. Chair Johnson also noted that the Library made connections with other organizations at the Luncheon, such as Leadership Buffalo.

Chair Johnson went on to discuss the legislative visit with Senator Tim Kennedy's aide at the Darwin Martin House. She stated that it went well and was well attended. Trustee Panty was also in attendance for the visit. Chair Johnson went on to describe her experience at the Darwin Martin House and how beautifully done the exhibit on Frank Lloyd Wright's Imperial Hotel was.

Next, Chair Johnson listed the Trustees that agreed to be on the Performance Evaluation Committee for Director Spears. The Trustees are as follows: Chair Johnson, Vice-Chair El-Behairy, Trustee Candelario, Trustee Craik, Trustee Panty, and Trustee Sasiadek. Chair Johnson then asked for approval of these candidates. Trustee Bedenko motioned for approval, Trustee Bucki seconded, and this was approved unanimously. Chair Johnson stated that they will provide notice of the meeting once a date is set.

Following that, Chair Johnson went on to remind the Board to donate to the Library's Year-End Appeal and to complete their annual Trustee Education requirement. Discussion ensued. Chair Johnson also mentioned the Library's appearance and acknowledgment in the Buffalo Business First publication and how meaningful it was to her.

Subsequently, Chair Johnson wanted to discuss how staff should reach out if they have concerns with the Board or administration. Trustee Panty asked whom the employees would address their concerns to. Assistant Deputy Director - Human Resources Judy Fachko said that the current policy states that they should contact Human Resources or their supervisor. Director Spears stated that the Library now has an outside service that conducts investigations.

Finally, Chair Johnson mentioned that Councilwoman Zeneta Everhart wants to collaborate with the Library during Black History Month for a book club. Councilwoman Everhart has an organization with her son that provides books for children. Chair Johnson also noted that The Color Purple event, *The Conversation Continues*, at the Central Library went very well and was informational. The panel included notable community leaders such as Councilwoman Zeneta Everhart, Dr. Ellen Grant, Kelly Diane Galloway, and more.

Chair Johnson went on to explain a number of projects she has coming up, especially during Women's History Month. She also noted the resignation of former Trustee Frank Gist.

Agenda Item D.1 - Election of Nominating Committee. Chair Johnson read the Bylaws of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library that explains the process of nominations for officers for the next year. Chair Johnson nominated Trustee Panty to be the Chair of the

Nominating Committee and Trustee Craik to be on the committee. Trustee Bucki nominated Trustee Bedenko, Trustee Bartholomew volunteered to nominate herself, and Trustee Moore volunteered as well. Trustee Kelly made a motion for approval of the nominations, Trustee Sasiadek seconded, and this was approved unanimously. They will have a report to provide at the January 2024 Board of Trustees meeting.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on December 14, 2023. A copy of the written report was included in the Board packet. Chair Johnson briefly summarized the meeting. Trustee Panty moved to have the written report entered into the Minutes as amended, Trustee Kelly seconded, and this was approved unanimously as amended.

Present: Executive Committee Chair Kimberly Johnson, Vice Chair Carima El-Behairy* and members Lucy Candelario and Christopher Sasiadek. Also present were Director John Spears, Assistant Deputy Director – Controller Emily Patronik, and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich*.

*Trustee El-Behairy and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich attended the meeting remotely.

The meeting of the Executive Committee began at 4:08 p.m. After a call of the roll, it was noted that a quorum was present.

Chair Johnson commenced the meeting by reviewing the proposed agenda for the B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting scheduled for Thursday, December 21. Trustee El-Behairy stated that there will not be a Report of the Foundation and it should be removed from the agenda. Controller Patronik stated that she removed the Minimum Wage Resolution from the proposed agenda and included it in the 2024 Budget Resolution. The proposed re-appointment of Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Purtell will now be resolution 2023-43.

For the Report of the Chair, Chair Johnson communicated that she attended the Homeless Alliance of Western New York Luncheon this past month. The Library received an award for their work with those experiencing homelessness in downtown Buffalo and the agencies that serve them. The Homeless Alliance commended the Library for the role it has taken in spreading awareness, providing services, and being a bridge that connects organizations with each other to work toward a common goal. Chair Johnson remarked that Director Spears accepted the award and gave an exceptional speech. Chair Johnson noted how fruitful the luncheon was and how connections were made with organizations such as Leadership Buffalo. Chair Johnson also attended a Legislative visit with Senator Tim Kennedy at the Darwin Martin House. She noted how well it went and commented on a tour that was provided and the opportunity to see their new exhibit, created in conjunction with University at Buffalo Archives on the Imperial Hotel.

Chair Johnson went on to mention forming a committee for the evaluation of Director Spears. She stated she has three spots filled but would like to have at least five. Currently, Trustee John Craik, Trustee El-Behairy, and Trustee Sasiadek are on the committee. Chair Johnson also mentioned the importance of Board participation in donating to the Library's Year End Appeal. Chair Johnson went on to mention the Trustee Education requirement and encouraged Trustees to complete it. Trustee Candelario asked if this is a reoccurring annual requirement. Director Spears stated that it is a recent requirement that began this year and will need to be fulfilled every year. He stated that moving forward into 2024, there may be an implementation of trainings as a part of Board meetings to assist Trustees in fulfilling the requirement. Chair Johnson noted that ACT workshops also count toward training.

Finally, Chair Johnson mentioned that the Library was included in the most recent Buffalo Business First. The Library was recognized as the 79th largest non-profit in the region. Discussion ensued.

Trustee El-Behairy left the meeting at 4:19 p.m.

Chair Johnson noted that a Nominating Committee will have to be formed soon to elect officers and members of the Executive Committee. Since Trustee El-Behairy will be absent from the next Board meeting, Trustee Candelario will report on the Executive Committee meeting. Discussion regarding former Trustee Frank Gist occurred.

ADD-Controller Patronik informed the Executive Committee that the monthly financials are still on the right track and projected to trend positively. She also informed the Executive Committee that January will consist of reintroductions and evaluating the flow of past procedures. The Budget & Finance Committee will discuss how to manage the Year End Surplus, such as what projects might be funded and what level of funding will be put in reserves. She mentioned that there are several projects that need attention, such as the Rare Book Room. Discussion ensued on the Year End Surplus.

Director Spears stated that for his report he will discuss New York Library Association advocacy efforts. He also noted that there will be more Legislative visits next week and to notify him if any member of the Executive Committee will be able to attend. Director Spears noted that he will also be discussing how the Library operates as a whole and the duty the System has to focus on the needs of all members when discussing how projects are prioritized. Discussion ensued.

There being no further business, Trustee Sasiadek motioned to adjourn and Trustee Candelario seconded. The meeting ended at 5:37 p.m.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Adoption of 2024 Budget. Director Spears began by acknowledging and offering his gratitude to the County Executive and the County

Legislature for approving an increase of 4.9%, and amount over the 2% that has traditionally been offered. This increase will help the Library combat growing labor costs and inflation. Discussion ensued. Director Spears summarized proposed Resolution 2023-41 as provided below. Trustee Bedenko asked about the budgetary implications of new positions. Director Spears explained that vacant positions were used to create new positions and that personnel changes in the 2024 Budget were largely covered by elimination of unused positions. Discussion ensued. Trustee Panty motioned for approval, Trustee Craik seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2023-41

WHEREAS, on December 7, the Erie County Legislature finalized the County's 2024 Budget allocation for the Library, and

WHEREAS, the County's enacted budget provides a 4.9% increase in County Library Tax funding from 2023's \$28,285,362 to \$29,675,375, and

WHEREAS, this funding will allow the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) to sustain operations, prioritizing public access to resources, programs and services to help us serve our communities, and

WHEREAS, it helps to offset inflation-related impacts on library operating costs, including contractually obligated labor costs, a \$0.80 per hour increase in the minimum wage, and costs of supplies and utilities in this challenging fiscal environment, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees expresses its appreciation to the County Executive for recommending the funding and to the County Legislature in approving the recommended funding, and

WHEREAS, strong public support for the B&ECPL reinforces both the continuing need for innovative and responsive library services in an evolving post-COVID environment, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library adopts the 2024 Budget, utilizing the following sources to provide library services in 2024:

\$29,675,375 – County Property Tax for Library Purposes
\$ 2,415,951 – New York State Aid – Operating Budget
\$ 716,119 – Use of Fund Balance
\$ 298,139 – Library Fines, Fees and Other Revenue
\$33,105,584 – Total Operating Budget

\$ 601,418 – Library Recurring Grants Budget

\$33,707,002 – Combined Operating and Grants Budget, further detailed in the *2024 Budget in Brief Charts* and the accompanying *2024 Budget Operating and Grants by Line Item* document, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the budget documents and schedules be promptly posted on the Library's website and the Library Director or designee(s) are authorized to execute all needed forms and accounting entries to implement this budget promptly.

Agenda Item E.2.b – 2024 Contracting Library Contract Extensions. Director Spears summarized proposed Resolution 2023-42 as provided below. He stated that this is a routine resolution that occurs every year. He explained that the Library has to do the contracts before they know all the information, such as what the County provides in funds and what the State allocation will be. Trustee Kelly motioned for approval, Trustee Panty seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2023-42

WHEREAS, on June 15, 2023, the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library adopted Resolution 2023-17, which authorized executing 2023 contracting member library contracts, and

WHEREAS, the resolution and the resulting 2023 contracts incorporated a provision to extend the 2023 contract into 2024, thus avoiding the November-December rush to adopt new contracts given many years' recurring pattern of final budget allocations, particularly from New York State, being in flux at the normal contract adoption time, and

WHEREAS, budgetary allocations from Erie County and New York State to the B&ECPL constitute over 95% of the financial resources supporting the contract with each contracting member library, and

WHEREAS, Erie County's 2024 budget allocation was not finalized until December 7, 2023 and New York State's allocation likely will not be finalized before April 2024, and

WHEREAS, this makes it difficult for the B&ECPL and the contracting member libraries to develop, consider and approve a full contract prior to the beginning of the 2024 fiscal year on January 1, 2024, and

WHEREAS, the contract extension provision provides for allocations based upon the 2024 requested budget except that, should the local funds for library services be modified from those projected in the budget request, the allocation shall be based upon the modified estimate, and

WHEREAS, the extension provision will remain in effect until such time as a final 2024 contract is adopted, not to exceed July 31, 2024, and

WHEREAS, implementing the contract extension provision may be made by Board adopted resolution notifying contracting member libraries of said extension, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library authorizes implementing the 2023 contract extension as described above, with budgetary amounts based upon the 2024 Board-adopted budget and any subsequent modifications thereof, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Library Director or his designee is authorized to transmit this resolution to each contracting library.

Agenda Item E.2.c – Monthly Financial Report. The monthly financial report for the year as of October 31, 2023, month-end close was included in the Board packet as an information item. Director Spears noted the Library is operating well within budget. He also mentioned that the Library is running a surplus. Traditionally, the surplus is presented to the Board, however, the funds have already been allocated. Moving forward into 2024, there will be more input by the Budget and Finance Committee on how the funds should be utilized.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Spears began his report by talking about Library Advocacy Day in Albany, New York. Advocacy Day will be on Wednesday, February 7, 2024. Director Spears briefly explained how the process for traveling there works. He mentioned that there may be meetings on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, and asked that if any Board members would like to attend to let him know. Director Spears went on to talk about the legislative visits and how they have been going. He stated that they have been interesting. The instructions from the Governor's office are no increases. It leaves a question as to whether that is based on what was proposed in the Governor's Budget last year for funding or what was actually passed by the Legislature. Discussion ensued. There have been good conversations overall with Legislators, and some have offered advice on how to best convey the library community's desires for funding.

He went on to explain that WNYLRC has contracted lobbyists Masiello and Martucci and that they have been working closely with Max Prime, the Director of Governmental Affairs and Advocacy for the New York Library Association. They want the message presented to be cohesive. Discussion ensued. He also mentioned the need to change the format of the Director's Report to better reflect the new organizational structure and asked the Board to offer suggestions.

Finally, Director Spears stated that he is going to put together a poll to gauge how the Board would like to complete their required Trustee Education in the future. He offered some suggestions, such as taking 20 minutes of each Board meeting to offer training. Discussion ensued.

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

B&ECPL Monthly Report November 2023

Anime Party- On November 11, Central Adult Services Librarian **Kuniko Simon** hosted an Anime Party at the Elaine M. Panty Branch Library. Participants made their own anime tote bags by using fabric paints and markers and Japanese Bento by shaping rice balls, cutting eggs/mini hot dogs into unique shapes, and decorating with vegetables.



Our **8th Indie Author Day** took place on Saturday, November 4, at the downtown Central Library. 75 people attended, and there were six speakers, all of whom were locally-based published writers. The program was planned and run by members of the Development & Communications Department: **Joy Testa Cinquino, Anne Conable, Melissa Burgess, Maureen Germaine, Dawn Stanton, and Darlene Pennachi**. Attendees received a directory to help with their networking and were asked to complete a satisfaction survey to assist with future planning.

Genealogy Lock-in – Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio**, Genealogy Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman**, and Senior Pages **Mary Theresa Seitz, Joell Gilley, and Allison Wilkie**, hosted a Genealogy Lock-in on November 3 in the Grosvenor Room at the Central Library. This was in conjunction with the New York State Family History Conference held in Buffalo. Genealogists received a tour of the Grosvenor Room and researched their family history.

It Takes a Village Action Organization (ITAV) Graduation Ceremony - Mobile Services Manager **Andrew Maines** participated in the It Takes a Village Action Organization's (ITAV) *Graduation Ceremony*, held at the Central Library on November 2. This was the third ITAV graduation of 2023 and the fifth since partnering with the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library. The class of 10 graduates received certificates from local elected officials, celebrated with music by Phenomenal Ladies of Rhythm, and were provided with a potluck meal.

1. Public Services

Central Library:

Genealogy Training –**Rhonda Hoffman** provided training throughout the month, including a presentation titled the *New York State County Miscellaneous Records: They May Be What You're Looking for* at the *New York State Family History Conference*, held at The Buffalo History Museum on November 4; *From Birth to Death: New York State Vital Records* to a group of genealogists at the Newstead Senior Center on November 8; *My House Is Giving Me a Vibe* at the Elma Public Library and the Eden Public Library on November 9 and November 16, where participants learned how to research their house's history for the potential of paranormal provoking events; *Jumpstart Your Genealogy* at the Julia B. Reinstein Library on November 18 on how to get started with genealogy research and the many resources available in the Grosvenor Room; and a webinar on finding Western New York naturalization records using the free website FamilySearch.org on November 29.

Nature Book Club - **Andrew Maines** participated in the *Nature Book Club* meeting held virtually on November 13. *Grandma Gatewood's Walk: The Inspiring Story of the Woman Who Saved the Appalachian Trail* by Ben Montgomery was discussed.

Tours and Visits – On November 20, 2023, **Susan Buttaccio** provided a tour to Phyllis Banas, a member of the Friends of the Orchard Park Library, and two guests on November 20 at the Central Library. Participants took an in-depth look at the Grosvenor Room Collection, including the Mark Twain Room and the Rare Book Room's *Four Centuries of Book Binding: The Jordan Collection* exhibit. **Susan** provided the monthly Special Collections tour to interested patrons on November 25. The tour included stops in the Local History, Genealogy, Map, and Music collections, as well as an in-depth look at the Mark Twain Collection and book binding exhibit.

Together as One Collaboration for Black History Month: The Library is a partner in the community-wide cultural collaboration led by the Buffalo African American Museum. In February, Central will host the "Together as One Black History Partners Exhibit," the "Dolls & Crowns Princess Fest" Black Doll exhibit, and the Black History Month Speaker Series (Fridays at noon). Activities across the Library System are being encouraged, and enhanced resource guides and reading lists are in development. A free bus tour connecting sites important to local black history is planned. The free annual B&ECPL program honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. will occur on Thursday, January 11 at 6 p.m. at the Merriweather Library Auditorium.

Buffalo Branches:

Crane Programming Highlights:

- Branch Manager **Taylor Harding** hosted a theme storytime on November 18, afterwards participants were invited to make their own animal paper bag puppets. **Taylor** was assisted by MLS Student Kenneth Axford who prepared and led the craft. There were 12 people in attendance.
- On November 18, Crane hosted its first Old Time Music Jam. The program was led by Neia Lively, a local musician. Musicians of all levels were invited to attend and play music.
- On November 21, Crane hosted author Drew Remignanti, MD, MPH, to discuss his book *The Healing Connection*.
- On November 25, Crane hosted children's author Michael Keefe-Feldman who wrote *The Phantasmic Gumball Machine*. Michael Keefe-Feldman held a scavenger hunt to find hidden gumballs. The participants created their own stories and played card games.

Gonzalez-Soto Programming Highlights:

- The Isaías González-Soto Branch Library offers a weekly story time on Friday mornings.
- The Isaías González-Soto Branch Library held a Thanksgiving Bingo all month; children were encouraged to find all nine Thanksgiving images hidden around the children's section and to pick a prize.
- The Isaías González-Soto Branch Library offers Lego Night every Monday evening from 5:00 to 7:00; Legos are made available for young patrons to create designs that are then put on display at the circulation desk.
- The Isaías González-Soto Branch Library hosted 21 kindergarteners plus four teachers from PS 3 on Friday, November 17; a Thanksgiving themed story was read and a turkey headband craft was fun for all!

Outreach:

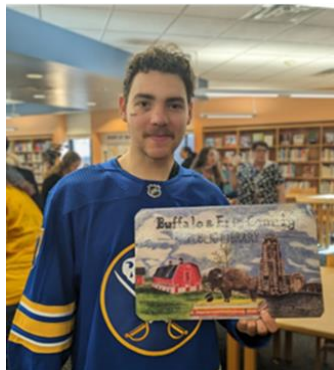
Central Adult Services Librarian **Kuniko Simon** attended SUNY Buffalo State Librarian Justin Crossfox's Library 101 class to introduce academic resources that their international students can access using our Hoopla and Libby apps.

Kuniko attended a Buffalo Public School Adult Education's English as a Second Language class to introduce non-English library streaming services through Hoopla and Libby. Also, Tech 360's sessions were run by Mission: Ignite's digital navigator in collaboration with TechKnow Lab Librarian **Jacqueline Hovey**. Half of the ESL students signed up for the upcoming session.

System Adult Outreach Services Manager **Carol Kowalik-Happy** coordinated an *Unclaimed Funds Workshop* presented virtually by the Office of the New York State Comptroller on November 8. Participants could view the presentation at the Central Library or remotely at home.

Jacqueline Hovey attended *Tech Connect: Unlocking the Potential of Nonprofits with Tech Resources* event at the Seneca One building in Buffalo on November 16. This event was co-hosted by TechBuffalo, New York State Assembly Majority Leader Crystal-Peoples Stokes, and Microsoft TechSpark. **Jacqueline** promoted library services at the event.

System Youth Outreach Services Manager **Chelsey Lonberger** attended the opening of Buffalo Sabres *Literacy Hub* at Buffalo Public School #45 The International School on November 13. This event was organized by the WNY Education Alliance, Teach My Kid to Read, and the Buffalo Sabres Foundation. **Chelsey** was able to meet and discuss current ideas of collection development and literacy through the lens of decodable books. She also met Sabres player Tyson Jost and the Sabres' Mascot Sabretooth.



Chelsey Lonberger provided tabling at the South Buffalo Charter School's *Literacy Night* on November 16. The focus was on reading engagement for students in grades K-8 along with their families. When the children visited the library table, they or their parents read aloud from *The Book with No Pictures* by B.J. Novak, earning them a chance to play a toss game to win candy, stickers, or pencils.

TechKnow Lab Library Associate **Sean Goodrich** provided an outreach table at the *Digital Equity Community Resource Fair* hosted by the Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc. (NACS) at their Grant Street location in Buffalo on November 18.

System Adult Outreach Services Librarian **Jacob Rachwal** participated in the Buffalo Educational Opportunity Center's *Literate Is Lit!* event on November 21. The event was held in honor of *Family Literacy Month*. Information on library resources, such as databases, Hoopla, Libby, and library programs, were made available to those in attendance. Many of the attendees took library card applications, as well.

TechKnow Lab Librarian **Brendan Chella** presented a Children's version of the *Internet Privacy and Safety* class to a group of local Girl Scouts at the Lake Shore Public Library on November 22.

The Library on Wheels Bookmobile driven by **Andrew Maines** participated in the *Hamburg Holiday Parade* on November 25.

B is for Book Exhibit:

| | Number of Visitors | | |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Month | YTD | From Opening (9/2020 to Present) |
| Non Tour-Related | 1,519 | 22,435 | 71,018 |
| Tour/Program | 44 | 752 | 3,278 |
| Total | 1,563 | 23,187 | 74,296 |

2. Collection Development

Physical Collections:

| | Item Adds | | Title Adds | | Collection Size |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|
| | Month | YTD | Month | YTD | |
| Juvenile Print | 1,683 | 31,595 | 212 | 3,113 | 530,273 |
| Young Adult Print | 463 | 6,184 | 64 | 1,029 | 78,484 |
| Adult Print | 3,543 | 39,739 | 652 | 8,374 | 1,786,837 |
| Media | 2,466 | 29,240 | 331 | 2,923 | 543,284 |
| Other* | 2,088 | 20,391 | 12 | 680 | 172,403 |
| Subtotal | 10,243 | 127,149 | 1,271 | 16,119 | 3,111,281 |

*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other.

Electronic Collections*:

| | Item Adds | | Title Adds | | Collection Size |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | Month | YTD | Month | YTD | |
| eBooks | 4,227 | 44,416 | 1,293 | 14,871 | 119,679 |
| eAudiobooks | 8,370 | 66,225 | 376 | 3,767 | 69,327 |
| Digital Magazines | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 5,299 |
| Subtotal | 12,597 | 110,641 | 1,669 | 18,638 | 194,305 |

*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 | 22,840 | 237,790 | 2,940 | 34,757 | 3,305,586 |

Digital Collections - Special Collections Librarian **Adam Rubin** added three items to the digital collections: *Manny Fried: Life Reflections* and *Manny Fried: A Guiding Presence* to the Rich Newberg Reports collection and the *1917 Farm Journal Illustrated Rural Directory of Erie County, New York*. The *Directory* was digitized by Rare Book Clerk **Nicole Kondziela**.

Genealogy Collection - In order to support the diverse needs of the library's genealogical community, **Rhonda Hoffman** has developed a circulating genealogy

collection for the Grosvenor Room. This growing collection, mainly consisting of how-to books, is now accessible on a display unit in the Grosvenor Room. The materials are also available to fulfill patron holds and Interlibrary Loan requests.

Manuscript Collection - Rare Book and Map Librarian **Charles Alaimo** completed work on an Index to the B&ECPL Manuscript Collection. This project, which began years ago with various staff from the Rare Book Room, presents a comprehensive list of all of the library’s donated handwritten letters, cards, notes, signatures, etc., beyond the collections held before the library merger. Over 1,700 items are present, including items by Ray Bradbury, Charles Burchfield, Booker T. Washington, Grover Cleveland, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Willa Cather, Lars Gustav Sellstedt, and Woodrow Wilson.

3. Funding/Fundraising

Funding:

The Erie County Legislature has passed the 2024 County Budget. The Library will receive a funding increase of \$1,614,197 (4.9%). The additional funding will help offset inflation related impacts on library operating costs, including contractually obligated labor costs and the escalating cost of supplies in this challenging fiscal environment.

County funding of \$29,675,375, combined with New York State operating aid funding of \$2,415,951, use of \$716,119 in Library fund balance, and \$298,139 in other library revenue, brings the Library’s 2024 proposed operating budget to \$33,105,584; a 5.4% increase over the 2023 County Adopted Budget. In addition to the operating budget, \$601,418 in estimated state aid is included in the Library Grants Budget.

Erie County’s 2024 Capital Budget supports improvements to the county owned downtown Central Library and to system related improvements, specifically:

- \$ 700,000 in bond funds for “Various Improvements & Upgrades”
- \$ 130,000 in “Pay As You Go” funds for a Shipping and Maintenance Vehicle Replacement

The next and final event in the budget review process will be the presentation of the Budget to Board at the December meeting for approval.

Fundraising:

| Campaign Name | Campaign Dates | Raised to Date |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Annual Appeal Total | January 1 - September 30, 2023 | \$ 228,295.32 |
| 2023 Year End Appeal | Mailers sent in late November | \$ 26,491.05 |
| Bucks for Books | | \$ 55, 115.72 |

Highlights:

The Library's **Year End Appeal** mailing was sent to 100,000 Erie County residents, including past donors and library cardholders. To date, 459 gifts have been received totaling \$26,491.05 in donations.

Giving Tuesday, a national day of giving, occurred on November 28. The Library received 21 gifts Giving Tuesday totaling \$1,681. Patrons also purchased books from an Amazon Wish List that will be added to the Library's collection, totaling approximately \$300 in materials.

Mass email sent in November prompting Giving Tuesday - email was sent to over 94,000 library cardholders and patrons.

4. Facilities

Jen's Glass Co. started construction of the office wall in the new children's area with expected completion in mid-December. Carpeting installation will follow.

Replacement of the original tile in the front vestibule began at Dudley Branch Library.

Staff confirmed the shutdown for the Central switchgear will be at 10:00 p.m. on Monday, December 18. At this time, Square D Services will be able to access the switchboards and take all of their measurements that they need for the replacement. Due to lead time for equipment and supplies, the replacement is tentatively scheduled for Fall/Winter of 2024.

The Library awarded its conditional contract to DiDonato Engineering & Architectural Professionals for the Lackawanna Public Library Facility Assessment with Option for Project Design and Management Services. Library staff will soon be meeting with Lackawanna and DiDonato to begin this project.

Staff from the NYS Division of Library Development sent a second round of review comments for the most recently submitted construction aid applications. They requested clarification on the proposed marble column repair and the first floor teen and children's reconfiguration at Central, in addition to questions regarding the carpeting and brick repointing work at Coles. Their comments were addressed and returned.

Proposals were provided to Library staff in regard to the RFP to provide architectural and engineering services for the Central Library Roof Replacement. Seven proposals were returned in total. The team from the Library will review and rank the proposals in advance of a selection meeting with Erie County.

5. Staff Development

NYLA Conference - NYLA's 2023 Annual Conference was held in Saratoga Springs from November 1 - 4. Ten B&ECPL staff attended this year's conference, which centered on the theme *Revive, Refresh, Rekindle*. Attendees found sessions on teen

programming, Summer Reading, and library promotion most useful, with many reporting feeling inspired by new ideas they could bring back to their libraries. In addition, two B&ECPL employees presented at the conference: Orchard Park Librarian **Samantha Adelman** presented *Reviving Teen Engagement Through "Subscription Service" Programming*, and Amherst Library Director **Kristi Dougherty** presented *Library Movement: De-Stress with Everyday Exercises*.

NYLA Developing Leaders Program - Four B&ECPL employees were accepted into the 2024 cohort of NYLA's Developing Leaders Program. Development & Communications Clerk **Melissa Burgess**, Lackawanna Library Director **Pamela Edholm**, West Seneca Library Assistant **Rowan Narvaez**, and Adult Services Librarian **Kuniko Simon** will be participating in the six-month program, which focuses on strengthening individuals' skills and capacities in personal and organizational leadership.

Patron De-Escalation Training - The B&ECPL arranged access to the Library 2.0 webinar *Patron De-Escalation Techniques: Using the Science of Human Communications to Get Better Results* on November 30. The training provides techniques to improve one's abilities to prepare for and quickly resolve conflict before it turns into something more serious. Fifteen employees viewed the live training, and archival access is being provided to all staff.

Webinars - Staff attended many pertinent webinars in November, including *Elder Justice Networks and Libraries* (presented by FDLP), *Living Our Values Out Loud: Programs that Walk the Talk* (presented by WebJunction), *The Science of Reading: Phonics and Decodable Books* (presented by Booklist), and *Tired of Hearing "I Didn't Know the Library Did That?" Here's Your Fix* (presented by WNYLRC).

6. Communications

Media:

| Type of Communication | Topic | Air Date/Publish Date |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| Taped media interview with Central Children's Librarian Dan Lewandowski | NASA @ Your Library, solar eclipse materials from libraries | Spectrum News, date tbd |

Social Media: November 2023

| | Staff Activity | | Public Activity | | Followers | |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------|-----------------|--------|-------------|--------|
| | Month | YTD | Month | YTD | Month (New) | Total |
| Facebook | 85 | 1,083 | 1,388 | 40,817 | 28 | 13,017 |
| Flickr | 20 | 327 | 2,879 | 49,246 | - | 60 |
| Google Ads ¹ | N/A | N/A | 2,216 | 20,294 | N/A | N/A |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|-------|-------|---------|-----|--------|
| Instagram ³ | 8 | 142 | 265 | 19,479 | 31 | 4,926 |
| Pinterest | 11 | 430 | 110 | 957 | - | 2,110 |
| Podcast ² | - | 11 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Twitter | 54 | 643 | 318 | 5,129 | -3 | 10,930 |
| YouTube | 11 | 90 | 1,389 | 12,810 | 23 | 558 |
| TikTok | - | 2 | 162 | 1,769 | 16 | 551 |
| Total | 189 | 2,717 | 8,727 | 150,501 | 95 | 32,152 |

¹ Google Ads is provided to the Library through a grant. Monthly activity based on public clicks.

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

³ Effective September 2023, Instagram stats are for @buffalolibrary only. (Mobile Services account deleted.)

7. Partnerships

Mission: Ignite - Jacqueline Hovey continues to work with Mission: Ignite in providing *Digital Navigation* and *Tech 360* programming at Central and other library locations. Currently, Central, City of Tonawanda, Lancaster, and Julia Boyer Reinstein libraries are offering Mission: Ignite programming.

Nichols School - System Borrower Services Manager **Linda Rizzo** is working with Rebecca Braungart, Librarian at Nichols School, to provide students with library cards.

TechBuffalo - Brendan Chella met with a representative of TechBuffalo on November 20. **Brendan** provided a list of class topics the TechKnow Lab can offer. Partnership opportunities are being explored.

WNY Digital Equity Coalition - Jacqueline Hovey assisted Don Matteson of the WNY Digital Equity Coalition in regards to finding and booking a space for the New York State Digital Equity Plan *Public Comment Session* in northern Erie County. It was held at the Audubon Library on November 28.

8. Planning for the Future

Susan Buttaccio and **Chelsey Lonberger** met at the Erie Canal Discovery Center in Lockport on November 14 with Heidi Ziemer, Outreach & Digital Equity Coordinator for the Western New York Library Resources Council, Librarians RoseAnn Haseley and Kelly Menzel from Lockport Public Library and North Tonawanda Public Library of the NIOGA (Niagara, Orleans, & Genesee Counties) Library System, respectively, and Ann Marie Linnabery, Assistant Director and Education Coordinator at the Niagara History Center. They discussed programming and resources for the *Erie Canal 200th Anniversary* in 2025. Topics of discussion included a badge program for students, programming kits for libraries, and a reference list for entertainers and speakers.

Assistant Deputy Directors **Dorinda Darden** and **Joy Testa Cinquino**, along with Development & Communications Clerk Typist **Allison Hansen** met at the Central Library on November 21 with Amy Alduino, Gary Carrel, John Hood, Tracy Skalski, and Chloe Van Nelson from the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning. They discussed exploring a partnership that would provide environmental items for lending that would expand *Library of Things* at select libraries throughout the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System.

Dorinda Darden, **Andrew Maines**, Facility Operations Manager **Andrew Wiede**, and Supervisor of Building Operations & Maintenance **Mark Kross** met at the Central Library on November 21 with Amy Alduino, Gary Carrel, and Tracy Skalski, from the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning. They discussed the possibility of getting a *Jackery Solar Power Generator System* for the Library on Wheels Bookmobile. This will be explored.

9. Director Activities

Meetings/Events Attended by Director November 2023

| Date | Meeting/Event |
|-------------------|--|
| November 1, 2023 | Event - New York Library Association (NYLA) - Saratoga, New York |
| November 2, 2023 | Event - NYLA - Saratoga, New York |
| November 3, 2023 | Event - NYLA - Saratoga, New York |
| November 3, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom (IF) Manual |
| November 4, 2023 | Event - NYLA - Saratoga, New York |
| November 6, 2023 | Meeting - Administrative Team |
| November 6, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - Western New York Library Resources Council (WNYLRC) Personnel Committee |
| November 7, 2023 | Meeting - Emily Patronik |
| November 8, 2023 | Meeting - Managers/Directors |
| November 8, 2023 | Lunch - Ken Stone |
| November 8, 2023 | Meeting - Dorinda Darden |
| November 8, 2023 | Meeting - B&ECPL Executive Committee |
| November 9, 2023 | Meeting - Samantha Purpora and Dorinda Darden |
| November 9, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - Dept. of Library Development and Public Library System Directors Organization Library Policies Working Group |
| November 9, 2023 | Event/Speaking - BABEL: Michelle Zauner |
| November 13, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - 2024 Budget Discussion w/ Tracy Palicki and Emily Patronik |
| November 14, 2023 | Meeting - Samantha Purpora |
| November 14, 2023 | Meeting - Erie County Legislature 2024 Budget Hearing |
| November 14, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - American Library Association (ALA) Publications |
| November 15, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - ErieNet Audit RFP Selection Committee |
| November 15, 2023 | Meeting - Jeannine Purtell |
| November 15, 2023 | Meeting - Dorinda Darden |
| November 15, 2023 | Tour - Central Library with Vic Martucci, Tony Masiello, and Sheryl Knab |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| November 15, 2023 | Meeting - Library Foundation |
| November 16, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee |
| November 16, 2023 | Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees |
| November 17, 2023 | Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino |
| November 18, 2023 | Meeting and Presentation - Association of Contracting Libraries Trustees General Meeting |
| November 20, 2023 | Meeting - Administrative Team |
| November 21, 2023 | Meeting - Samantha Purpora |
| November 21, 2023 | Meeting - ErieNet Board of Directors |
| November 22, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - IF Manual |
| November 23, 2023 | Meeting - Samantha Purpora and Dorinda Darden |
| November 24, 2023 | Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino |
| November 27, 2023 | Meeting - Staff Concern |
| November 27, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - New York State Department of Library Development |
| November 27, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom |
| November 28, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - International Federation of Library Associations Public Library Guidelines Work Group |
| November 28, 2023 | Meeting - Emily Patronik |
| November 28, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - ALA Committee on Professional Ethics |
| November 28, 2023 | Virtual Meeting - Vic Martucci, Tony Masiello, and WNYLRC Staff and Board Members |

Appendices
A. Monthly Statistics

System Programming Statistics:

| Regular/Virtual | Number of Programs | | Total Attendance | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|------------------|---------------|
| | Month | YTD | Month | YTD |
| Regular* | | | | |
| Adults | 950 | 8307 | 2621 | 29001 |
| Children 5 and under | 1103 | 12957 | 4497 | 46605 |
| Children 6-11 | 1163 | 17015 | 3366 | 39956 |
| Intergenerational/Combined | 4408 | 50319 | 7517 | 118766 |
| Teens | 366 | 3968 | 1122 | 11299 |
| Regular Total | 7990 | 92566 | 19123 | 245627 |
| Regular Total | 7990 | 92566 | 19123 | 245627 |
| Virtual | | | | |
| Live Virtual | | | | |
| Adults | 16 | 193 | 106 | 2015 |
| Children 5 and under | 0 | 9 | 0 | 33 |
| Children 6-11 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 167 |
| Intergenerational/Combined | 5 | 62 | 200 | 2316 |
| Teens | 2 | 83 | 6 | 355 |
| Live Virtual Total | 23 | 353 | 312 | 4886 |
| Recorded Virtual | | | | |
| Adults | 4 | 61 | 35 | 1192 |
| Children 5 and under | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Children 6-11 | 2 | 21 | 308 | 3849 |
| Intergenerational/Combined | 9 | 96 | 295 | 2945 |
| Teens | 0 | 1 | 0 | 20 |
| Recorded Virtual Total | 15 | 180 | 638 | 8010 |
| Virtual Total | 38 | 533 | 950 | 12896 |
| Grand Total | 8028 | 93099 | 20073 | 258523 |

*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/2023-circulation-public-access-computer-wifi-and-library-visits-detail.

B. Contracting Library Activity Reports

Hamburg Public Library - submitted by Brian R. Hoth, Director

Christmas Shopping in Buffalo - On Thursday, November 16, Explore Buffalo presented a talk on what it was like to shop and visit Downtown during Christmas. Thirty attendees got to relive memories including the wonderful window displays at AM&As, getting dressed up and going to stores like Berger’s, Kleinhans, and Hengerer’s. Other stores mentioned were The Sample, Sattler’s and Hens & Kelly’s.

Library Advocacy - On Wednesday, December 13, a library advocacy event with Senator Patrick Gallivan, sponsored by the Western New York Resources Council (WNYLRC), will be held. This will be an opportunity for members of the community to show support for the library.

Stories with Santa - This very popular program, part of Hamburg Holidays, will be held on Tuesday, December 12 and 19. Children will experience stories read by Santa and Mrs. Claus and craft making. Hot chocolate, and donuts are being provided and served by the Kiwanis Club of Hamburg.

The Golden Snowball Trophy - The Hamburg Library was honored to display The Golden Snowball Trophy during November. The trophy has made the rounds in Western New York, including the Buffalo Wing Festival, Buffalo Museum of Science, Vidler’s 5 & 10 store, the downtown Central Library, the Bflo. Store, and many more. Recently it was on display at the Blueberry Treehouse Café in West Falls, NY and Becker Farms in Gasport.

WNY Foster Closet - The Hamburg Library is serving as a drop off location for WNY Foster Closet. They provide clothing, toys, and other items to children who have been

placed in the foster care system. They are located in the old LensCrafters store in the McKinley Mall. Donations are being accepted from October through December. Baby Bounce is held on second and fourth Mondays with 2 sessions beginning at 10:00 am with an average of 70 participants. Join Miss Laurie for silly stories, music, movement, and more! This is geared for children ages 0 to 24 months with a caregiver.

Storytime Shookup is held on Wednesdays at 10:30 am with 100 participants. Join Miss Laurie for an hour of stories, music, dancing, and more! This is geared for children 3 to 5 years of age.

Tales at Twilight is held on Monday's beginning at 6:00 pm, with the exception of the last Monday. Join Miss Ashley for stories, songs, sensory play, and process art.

Registration is limited to 30. This program is geared toward children 3 and up.

Lake Shore Library - submitted by Brian R. Hoth, Director

Music Garden Grand Opening - On Monday, October 30, a grand opening was held for our new music garden at the Lake Shore Library. Several people were in attendance despite the weather conditions. Attendees included Assemblymember Jonathan Rivera, Catherine Lee, Trustee of the Hamburg Public Library Anita Metzger, B&ECPL System Director John Spears, Vice Chair of the B&ECPL System Board of Trustees Carima El-Behairy, Councilmember Elizabeth Farrell Lorentz, Field Director of Congressman Nick Langworthy Phillip Gow, President of the Friends of the Hamburg Public Library Paula Gober, and Marketing and Communications Manager for Arts Services, Inc. Kelsey Capruso. A short ceremony was held outdoors with refreshments served afterward. Children from Bright Path, formerly EduKids, came by to play the instruments.

Polar Express Hot Chocolate Party - On Saturday, December 16, a holiday party is scheduled at 3:00 pm. There will be stories and crafts for the children. Children will also be treated to a showing of the movie, The Polar Express. There will also be a special appearance by Santa!

Storytime with Miss Stephanie is held on Tuesday's at 10:00 am for children ages 3 to 6. Programming is based on a weekly theme with crafts afterwards. This program averages 20 children and adults attending weekly.

Cookbook Club is held on the second Monday of the month with 10 attendees. Each participants choose a recipe from a chosen cookbook, make it at home, and bring it in to share. Afterwards, they take turns discussing their creations.

Adult Craft Night is held on the third Monday of the month with 24 attendees. December's craft is a snowman ornament.

Agenda Item G - ACT Report. Martha Buyer started off by thanking Assistant Deputy Director Dorinda Darden for her hard work with assisting ACT on planning meetings. She summarized the most recent ACT meeting that was held at the Frank E.

Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library. People came that have never been to that library before, and it was a really productive meeting. Martha Buyer also stated they are revisiting their bylaws and are looking for new people to join their Board.

Agenda Item G.1. – Contracting Library Liaison Report. None.

Agenda Item H – Public Comment. None.

Agenda Item I – Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item J – New Business. Chair Johnson introduced the proposed Resolution 2023-43 to extend Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Purtell’s contract.

Agenda Item J.1 – Reappointment of Deputy Director Jeannine Purtell. Chair Johnson summarized the proposed resolution as provided below. Trustee Panty motioned for approval, Trustee Bucki seconded, and the following was approved unanimously. Director Spears wanted to emphasize how exceptional COO Purtell is.

RESOLUTION 2023-43

WHEREAS, the Library Director has determined that the performance of Deputy Director - Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Purtell has been exceptional, and

WHEREAS, the Library Director recommends the reappointment of Jeannine Purtell to the position of Deputy Director - Chief Operating Officer, and

WHEREAS, Deputy Director Purtell has indicated a willingness to accept another 3-year appointment, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees hereby approves the reappointment of Jeannine Purtell to the position of Deputy Director - Chief Operating Officer for a 3-year appointment effective January 1, 2024, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the terms of Jeannine Purtell’s current benefit package shall remain the same as at the time of this Resolution, unless otherwise amended by future vote of the B&ECPL Board of Trustees.

Agenda Item K – Adjournment. There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee Panty with a second by Trustee Sasiadek, the meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Moore
Secretary