

MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
February 16, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, February 16, 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, Secretary  
Michael Amodeo  
Kathleen Berens Bucki  
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 4:00 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 January 19, 2023. On motion by Trustee Panty, seconded by Trustee Amodeo, the Minutes were unanimously approved as mailed.

Trustee Candelario joined the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair.

Agenda Item D.1 – Committee Appointments. Chair Johnson presented the committee slate, noting chairs remained the same as 2022. She thanked Trustee Gist for volunteering to fill in where needed. On a motion by Trustee Craik, seconded by Trustee Amodeo, the following appointments were approved unanimously:

**Budget & Finance**

Joel Moore, Chair  
 Michael Amodeo  
 Alan Bedenko  
 Lucy Candelario  
 Carima El-Behairy

**Building Oversight**

Joel Moore, Chair  
 Kathleen Berens Bucki  
 Kimberly Johnson  
 Ted Johnson  
 Christopher Sasiadek

**Governance**

Alan Bedenko, Chair  
 Carima El-Behairy  
 John Craik  
 Frank Gist  
 Sharon Kelly

**Policy**

Elaine Panty, Chair  
 Michael Amodeo  
 Alan Bedenko  
 Frank Gist  
 Sharon Kelly

**Buffalo Library Services**

Frank Gist, Chair  
 John Craik  
 Kimberly Johnson  
 Ted Johnson  
 Elaine Panty

**Development & Advocacy**

Kimberly Johnson, Chair  
 Frank Gist  
 Elaine Panty

**Planning**

Michael Amodeo, Chair  
 Kathleen Berens Bucki  
 John Craik  
 Frank Gist  
 Kimberly Johnson  
 Elaine Panty

**Special Collections**

Ted Johnson, Chair  
 Kathleen Berens Bucki  
 Lucy Candelario  
 Joel Moore  
 Elaine Panty  
 Christopher Sasiadek

Chair Johnson continued her report, stating she had attended a media event at the Central Library earlier that day. The B&ECPL has partnered with the American Heart Association, Buffalo Bills Foundation, Highmark BlueCross BlueShield, and Lawley Insurance to provide CPR kits for borrowing at all libraries. Kits will be available starting in mid-March. She also announced she would be featured in an article in *Business First*.

Trustee Moore joined the meeting at 4:04 p.m.

Agenda Item E - Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 - Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on February 9, 2023. 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 Bucki made a second, and this was approved unanimously.

Present: Executive Committee Chair Kimberly Johnson, Vice Chair Carima El-Behairy, and members Lucy Candelario, Elaine Panty, and Christopher Sasiadek\*. Also present were Director John Spears, Chief Financial Officer Ken Stone, Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Doyle, and Assistant to the Director Erin Vest.

\*Trustee Sasisadek attended the meeting remotely due to an extraordinary circumstance; pursuant to the B&ECPL Procedures for Trustee Videoconferencing, he was a full participant in the meeting.

The meeting of the Executive Committee began at 4:01 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 February 16, 2023 B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting. Director Spears noted two additional items would need to be added under Budget & Finance.

Chair Johnson stated she would put forward committee assignments for the Board to review. Everyone was able to be assigned to all the committees they volunteered for. She will propose that chairs remain the same.

CFO Stone reviewed proposed budget and finance items. He noted there would not be a monthly financial report, as Erie County does not close out the year until the end of February. There will now be five items under Budget & Finance. Resolution 2023-7 would exercise the first extension of our contract with Spectrum to provide WAN services. Resolution 2023-8 would provide funding up to \$23,000 to support a project to update the lighting in the Ellicott Street underpass. The project was initiated by Buffalo Urban Development Corporation. Chair Johnson asked about the current lighting. CFO Stone stated the new lighting would be brighter, enhancing the safety of the area, as well as able to change colors for different events. She asked if he foresaw any difficulty completing the project with the proposed funds. CFO Stone noted the resolution would set a hard limit of \$23,000 on B&ECPL spending. He noted it was good for the Library to support the project, as it directly benefits us, as well as the city as a whole. Trustee El-Behairy asked about a timeline for the project. CFO Stone noted BUDC wanted to move quickly.

Next, CFO Stone reviewed Resolution 2023-9, which proposed additional projects for the Program Equipment & Facility Improvement program first implemented in 2021. The projects include additional smoke detectors and strobe lights for the Central Library, flooring replacement at the Eden Library, computer lab and meeting room enhancements at the Leroy R. Coles, Jr. Branch Library, and security improvements at the North Park Branch Library. Trustee Candelario asked about the process for requesting and approving these projects for funding. CFO Stone noted that usually a need is identified by staff, for the Eden Library their flooring was becoming a safety hazard, and they reach out to him about options for addressing that need. He noted there was more than sufficient savings in 2022 to cover the four proposed projects. Trustee Candelario asked how we promote these improvements. Director Spears noted he had been having conversations with Assistant Deputy Director Samantha Purpora about this topic. They have received many questions about the closures of the Crane and Isaias Gonzalez-Soto Branches, and while they have been able to answer those questions satisfactorily, it would be better to get that information out to the public more broadly. He noted we usually have announcements when funding is secured and when projects are complete, but more communications during the process is needed.

Trustee El-Behairy suggested reaching out to the editor of *Buffalo Rising's* Construction Watch.

Trustee Panty asked about the New York State Proposed Budget. CFO Stone noted it included reductions in Library Operating Aid and State Aid for Library Construction. This follows the pattern of previous years. Advocacy efforts will be needed to restore the funding. He noted most legislators are supportive of libraries and should be open to those efforts.

CFO Stone noted two items needed to be added to the agenda. Resolution 2023-10 would waive invoicing contracting libraries for certain System-paid expenses that were impacted by unusual conditions in 2022. This includes high utility costs and a System-wide waiver of employee health insurance contributions in December. He also noted some libraries did not meet their salary savings credit target due to low turnover, and it would not behoove the System to punish their successful staff retention. Finally, Resolution 2023-11 addresses a request from the West Seneca Public Library Board of Trustees. The retirement payout of a long-term employee had a material impact on their budget, and they have requested financial assistance pursuant to the terms of their contract. CFO Stone noted there are sufficient funds to cover the costs of both Resolution 2023-10 and Resolution 2023-11.

Director Spears reported the Central Library is currently experiencing issues with an increase in teens visiting the library during and after school hours. The issues are alarming; incidents include brawls with 30-40 participants. He has been having discussions with Stop the Violence and the Peacemakers. He and COO Doyle have also had discussions with the Sheriff's Office to discuss potential solutions. Chair Johnson asked if there has been any damage. Director Spears noted there hasn't been damage to the building yet, but staff and patrons have expressed that they don't feel safe here. Administration is working on a plan to address the issues in the short-term. He will report more on the progress at the Board Meeting. Chair Johnson suggested looking into having probation officers at the building; they do a similar program at the Galleria Mall. Trustee El-Behairy suggested reaching out to Buffalo Public Schools and looking into the bus schedules. Trustee Candelario suggested reaching out to NFTA to provide officers as well. Director Spears said he would pursue all their suggestions. He noted they ultimately want to be able to strike a balance between dealing with the current extreme issues and planning for the future to provide a positive environment for teens to utilize. In the long-term, there are plans to create a teen space, and staff have proposed creating a teen services department. Chair Johnson suggested theatrical programming; Director Spears noted the Peacemakers had already proposed such a program and will be using the Central Library's auditorium for it. Trustee Panty asked if staff had been affected by the physical violence. Director Spears noted Security and the Sheriff Deputies have been able to move the fights outside. Incidents with staff have been verbal. He stated these teens show no fear; he noted teens have been drastically impacted by the COVID-19 lockdowns. Finally, he stated this problem is not unique to the Central Library; other cultural organizations such as Shea's Performing Arts Center and the Buffalo History Museum have had similar issues.

Trustee El-Behairy stated there would be a report from the Library Foundation. Chair Johnson stated she expects there to be a report from ACT as well. Nothing needed to be added under Unfinished Business or New Business.

With no further business to discuss, the Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Candelario and a second by Trustee Sasisadek.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – WAN Contract: Exercise 1<sup>st</sup> Voluntary Extension. Chief Financial Officer Ken Stone explained Resolution 2023-7 as presented. Trustee Panty moved for approval, Trustee Craik seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2023-7

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System utilizes a complex wide area network (WAN) connecting the Central Library to each of the 36 Buffalo branch and contracting libraries, allowing the System to efficiently provide patron access to the internet, and

WHEREAS, these services are eligible for e-Rate program discounts, which currently pay almost 90% of the cost of the Library System's WAN service, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to e-Rate program requirements, on October 4, 2019 the Library posted an online *FCC Form 470 Description of Services Requested and Certification* and issued a Request for Proposals seeking a 3-year base contract with up to two voluntary extensions of 1 year each, and

WHEREAS, following a review process, on February 20, 2020, the Board of Trustees adopted Resolution 2020-3, awarding the contract to Spectrum Enterprise and authorizing execution of a contract entering into a 3-year agreement with up to two optional voluntary extensions of 1 year each, and

WHEREAS, we are now approaching the end of the initial 3-year term, and

WHEREAS, Spectrum Enterprise has indicated its interest in extending the agreement at the same rates as the current agreement, and the Library is interested in exercising the 1<sup>st</sup> voluntary extension, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL System approves exercising the 1<sup>st</sup> voluntary extension with Spectrum Enterprise, to provide service from 7/1/2023 through 6/30/2024, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Library Director and/or his designee(s) is authorized to execute the necessary documents to implement the 1<sup>st</sup> voluntary extension, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Library Director and/or his designee(s) is authorized to file all necessary e-Rate forms and certifications on or before the respective e-Rate filing deadlines throughout the term of this agreement.

Agenda Item E.2.b – Grant Match for Ellicott Underpass Streetscape Lighting. CFO Stone explained Resolution 2023-8 as presented. He noted a similar grant was used to create the Reading Park. Trustee Panty moved for approval, Trustee Candelario seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2023-8

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation (BUDC) has been working on a public improvement project to improve the Ellicott streetscape in the downtown area, and

WHEREAS, this includes the portion of Ellicott Street running underneath the Central Library, and

WHEREAS, BUDC proposes a lighting project that will illuminate the walls of the Central Library where Ellicott Street passes under the library, and

WHEREAS, this project is intended to create a safe sense of place at the underpass, enhancing the visibility and vibrancy of the area, while also allowing for a color change feature that will allow the library to change colors with our existing lighting as we brand for holidays and special events, and

WHEREAS, BUDC proposes to pay for the lighting equipment with an estimated \$40,000 in funding secured through a General Motors/Projects for Public Spaces Place Making Grant, and

WHEREAS, the Library would provide up to \$23,000 in matching grant funds to support the project, focused on installation of the lighting, and

WHEREAS, this project collaboration will help to enhance the experience of library patrons as well as place making efforts that further the vitality of the City's Central Business District, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Board of Trustees approves the use of the Library's assigned fund balance for grant match, not to exceed \$23,000 to support this project, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Board of Trustees approves amending the Library Grants Budget as follows:

**Revenue:** Use of fund balance \$23,000  
**Expense:** Contracted Services \$23,000, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Library Director or his designee(s) are authorized to execute the necessary documents to effectuate this support.

Agenda Item E.2.c – Program Equipment & Facility Improvement Supplement. CFO Stone explained Resolution 2023-9 as presented. He noted the computer lab at the Leroy R. Coles, Jr. Branch Library was the first in the System. Trustee Panty asked what kind of security upgrades were needed for the North Park Branch. CFO Stone stated the funds would be used for cameras and access control. Recent security incidents have necessitated changes. Maintenance staff have already made some adjustments, including repositioning the security post. Trustee Craik asked how much was left from the original program funding of \$667,950. CFO Stone stated little is left; what remains is reserved for projects that are not yet finished. Trustee Craik asked about the process for approval of such projects. CFO Stone stated it was a simplified version of the Construction Aid review process. He and Supervisor of Building Operations and Maintenance Mark Kross assess the proposal for feasibility and cost. Trustee Craik asked if projects ever were rejected. CFO Stone stated projects are not always accepted as originally proposed, but he does his best to get to yes by giving alternatives when costs and logistics are not feasible. Following this discussion, Trustee Gist moved for approval, Trustee Panty seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2023-9

WHEREAS, in 2021, the B&ECPL Board approved Resolution 2021-20, authorizing use of \$667,950 from unassigned fund balance generated from prior year savings and delayed revenue to provide funding for improvements that add to the patron experience, and

WHEREAS, twenty-five libraries participated in this program, implementing a variety of improvements including equipment to facilitate outdoor programming; furnishings; carpet and flooring replacement; interior/exterior painting; décor such as themed wall hangings for children’s or teen areas; HVAC improvements; and additional energy saving LED conversions, and

WHEREAS, since that time, additional projects have been identified, and

WHEREAS, prior year savings are available to support the cost of this work, and

WHEREAS, similar to the New York Library Construction Aid program, this program requires a local match at reduced levels, 25% for libraries eligible for 50% NYS Library Construction Aid funding and 10% for libraries eligible for 75% NYS Library Construction Aid funding, and

WHEREAS, Program Equipment & Facility Improvement Supplement funding requested plus local match are for the following projects:

<b>Library</b>	<b>System Funds</b>	<b>Local Match</b>	<b>Total</b>
Central - fire safety	\$26,868	\$ 2,985	\$29,853
Eden - flooring	\$31,624	\$10,541	\$42,165
L.R. Coles, Jr. - Comp Lab & Mtg. Rm. Enhancements	\$ 8,702	\$ 967	\$ 9,669
North Park Security Imprv.	<u>\$ 6,084</u>	<u>\$ 676</u>	<u>\$ 6,760</u>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$73,278</b>	<b>\$15,169</b>	<b>\$88,447,</b>

now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL approves system funding the Central, Eden, Leroy R. Coles, Jr., and North Park library projects totaling \$73,278, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board approves amending the Library Operating Budget as follows:

**Increase Revenue**

<b>SAP Account #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Change</b>
402190	Appropriated Fund Balance	\$73,278

**Increase Expense**

<b>SAP Account #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Change</b>
506200	Maintenance & Repair Supplies	\$199
561410	Lab & Technical Equipment	\$34,752
561420	Office Equip, Furnishings & Fixtures	\$6,703
516010	CONTRACTUAL PAYMENTS TO:	
	Eden Library	\$31,624
	<b>Total Expense</b>	<u><b>\$73,278</b></u>

and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Director or their designee is authorized to implement the budget changes noted above, award the grants as described herein, and effectuate transfers within operating budget lines as needed within the overall total awarded to implement these projects.

Agenda Item E.2.d - Partial Waiver - Contracting Libraries Exceeding 2022 System Paid Expense. CFO Stone explained Resolution 2023-10 as presented. He noted the total cost for such a waiver would be under \$20,000, and the System-wide savings in health insurance expense alone is estimated to be approximately \$226,000. Trustee Amodeo moved for approval, Trustee Bucki seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2023-10

WHEREAS, pursuant to section "Ninth" of the annual contract between the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library and the Contract Libraries, each Contract



Library's Budget includes a "System Paid" column of Exhibit A [which] details sums allocated within B&ECPL budget accounts to support costs associated with the operations of the Public Library but incurred and paid by the B&ECPL., and

WHEREAS, that section further states: *Should the projected total for these accounts exceed the current year "System Paid" Budget Total for these accounts, the B&ECPL shall invoice the Public Library for the pro-rated share (as of the date of the projection) of the amount estimated to exceed the "System Paid" Budget, and*

WHEREAS, a number of highly unusual conditions impacted the "System Paid" expenses for contract libraries in 2022:

- Natural gas and electricity rates spiking at unprecedented levels, well above what was anticipated in the budget;
- Erie County's waiver of employee health insurance contributions for the month of December 2022; and
- Significant hiring and turnover challenges throughout the year leading to significant savings for most libraries, but causing libraries that were fortunate enough to have low turnover in 2022 being unable to meet their salary savings credit target, and

WHEREAS, these conditions will result in several libraries exceeding their "System Paid" budget totals, triggering an invoice for the amount exceeded, and

WHEREAS, savings elsewhere are estimated to result in the overall 2022 operating budget ending the year well under the expense budget and slightly above the revenue budget, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL hereby waives the contract section "Ninth" invoicing requirement for that portion of any overage resulting from:

- Natural gas and electricity charges exceeding budget;
- The cost of Erie County's waiver of employee health insurance contributions for the month of December 2022; and
- Not meeting their 2022 salary savings credit target.

Agenda Item E.2.e – Unanticipated Expenditure Assistance – West Seneca Public Library. CFO Stone explained Resolution 2023-11 as presented. Trustee Bedenko moved for approval, Trustee Panty seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

#### RESOLUTION 2023-11

WHEREAS, section "Twenty-Second" of the contract between the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library and contracting libraries provides a process for requesting assistance in the event of "unforeseeable circumstances" that "result in a material impact on the Public Library's operating budget," and

WHEREAS, the West Seneca Public Library Board of Trustees has requested assistance to help offset one-time above budget expense associated with the West Seneca Public Library children's librarian's recent retirement, and

WHEREAS, B&ECPL staff worked with West Seneca Public Library staff to identify the best method to address this situation, including an analysis of projected year-end personnel costs, and this review resulted in a recommendation to request assistance in the amount of up to \$14,442, and

WHEREAS, without this assistance, the West Seneca Public Library Board of Trustees has found that having to hold a key position vacant over an extended period, as would otherwise be required to address this cost, would result in inadequate staffing needed to provide committed programming associated with operating the library for the weekly hours of service stipulated in contract Exhibit C, and

WHEREAS, sufficient monies are available within the 2022 B&ECPL operating budget salary and benefits accounts to accommodate this request, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to section "Eighth" of the contract, this change may be implemented by resolution and transmitting a revised Exhibit A to reflect same, now therefore be it,

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library approves a reallocation within the B&ECPL operating budget to utilize vacancy savings in the salary, wage, and fringe accounts to provide up to \$14,442 in salary/wage/fringe benefit funding assistance to the West Seneca Public Library, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the above contracting library.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Spears reported the Central Library is experiencing issues associated with an increase in teens visiting the library in the afternoons and evenings. Problematic behavior has escalated over the past four weeks, including fights among the patrons and threats directed at staff. He has been speaking to other agencies and believes the increase in issues began when a group of teens was forced out of Fountain Plaza, after being forced out of NFTA and the schools.

Director Spears emphasized teens are usually welcome in the library. Staff have increased teen programming and targeted it at the time and space where teens had started to congregate. One recent craft program had 75 attendees. However, these positive experiences have been outweighed by the negative over the past few weeks.

Director Spears stated he has reached out to Stop the Violence and the Peacemakers. He noted the Library has been able to hire more security guards recently, bringing the total

to six full-time/regular-part-time guards and one part-time guard under one senior building guard. Trustee El-Behairy asked what the ideal staffing number would be. Director Spears noted it is not just about numbers; for example, they are looking into hiring social workers who could address some of the issues from another angle.

Trustee Gist asked what happened to the previous contract with Stop the Violence; he stated the Central Library did not have these issues during their tenure. Director Spears conveyed the contract had lapsed around 3-4 years ago. He also noted today's teens are experiencing the aftereffects of COVID-19-related lockdowns, which has created new challenges. Trustee Gist disagreed that this had an impact on their behavior and expressed his disapproval of using Sheriff Deputies in the Central Library as well. He urged the Library to bring back Stop the Violence before things escalate.

Director Spears continued his report, noting another factor in recent events is that the second largest bus interchange in the city is the one on Ellicott Street under the library. All Buffalo Public School students have bus passes that run until 7:00 p.m.

He stated there have been conversations with the Sheriff's Office about potential medium- to long-term solutions, including things like bag searches and metal detectors. He noted they would have to carefully consider the effects of these policies and procedures on library operations. He stated he had reached out to other cultural institutions who have been experiencing similar issues recently to learn from their responses, noting the library is unique in that it is the most public building in the area.

As a short-term solution to the current problems, Director Spears reported the Central Library started enforcing a Zero Tolerance Policy on February 15. Any patron who violates one of the Rules of Conduct will be asked to leave the library for the day, without warnings or exceptions. Repeated violations or escalations will result in longer bans. He noted that previously, different staff members would have different approaches, so this would eliminate any inconsistencies. In the future, the goal will be to move towards a situational approach to rule violations, but this is not the time. Administration and managerial staff have been manning the entrances to inform patrons of the new policy.

Trustee Amodeo asked if this was the best answer. Director Spears noted it is just part of the response. It was needed in the short-term to address some extreme issues. Some of the longer-term solutions involve outreach to teens to find out what they need or want from the Library. Staff are looking into creating a dedicated teen space and expanding teen programming. Trustee Gist noted that a previous teen space at the Central Library did not work. Director Spears stated they would use best practices to avoid some of the issues that came up in the past.

Trustee Amodeo asked if other urban libraries are experiencing the same issues. Director Spears said they were, as are all public places. Chair Johnson noted the Galleria Mall had brought in both the Peacemakers and probation officers to handle issues they had been having.

Trustee Kelly asked if there have been issues with drugs, noting recent closures of libraries in Colorado due to surface contamination with methamphetamine. Director Spears replied the B&ECPL has not had similar issues, but security does monitor the bathrooms for drug use. He stated security staff does a great job with such a small team.

Trustee Craik asked what the response from the public has been to the new Zero Tolerance Policy. Director Spears recounted his experience at the library entrances, stating there were a few negative responses, mostly due to confusion about the policy that was able to be quickly cleared up. Many patrons give no response, perhaps a nod. Significantly, he has gotten a lot of "thank yous," from both adult and teen patrons. He noted staff had anticipated push back or testing of the policy, but so far, that is exceedingly rare.

Trustee Gist asked if there is signage that states "no weapons." Director Spears replied the Rules of Conduct in their entirety are posted and are also made available in print.

Trustee Moore stated the policy could be seen as unwelcoming, but could also be an opportunity to engage with patrons. Director Spears agreed, noting public services staff have started having conversations with teens about what they want in the library. A survey will also be going out. He noted the demographics of those using the Central Library has changed, and the change has accelerated due to the pandemic. The B&ECPL needs to adapt to who is using the library, namely students. He also noted we need to meet the new audience where they are. We cannot expect teenagers to act like businesspersons. However, we can insist on a base level of appropriate behavior. The goal is to work towards creating a positive space for teenagers to use, with some flexibility in the approach to minor behavior issues. Once we have an idea of what that can look like, we can get all staff and all patrons on the same page moving forwards.

Following this discussion, Trustee Moore asked why *The Economist* was dropped from the Library's offerings. Director Spears explained the aggregator the B&ECPL used to obtain the magazine had recently dropped it. He agreed it is a unique news source and indicated he would look into how the B&ECPL could continue to carry it.

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

## B&ECPL Monthly Report January 2023

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration** – On January 12, the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Library was the host location of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Community Celebration Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The event included master of ceremonies Hon. Clifford Bell, poet laureate Jillian Hanesworth, performances by We All Storytellers, and poetry/dance performances from the students at the Buffalo Academy for the Visual & Performing Arts.

**Buffalo's Neighborhoods: Exploring Our Migrant & Immigrant Heritage Online Exhibit** - Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio** and Genealogy Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman** launched a new online exhibit, *Buffalo's Neighborhoods: Exploring Our Migrant & Immigrant Heritage* on the New York State Heritage site: [nyheritage.org/exhibits/buffalos-neighborhoods-exploring-our-migrant-immigrant-heritage](https://nyheritage.org/exhibits/buffalos-neighborhoods-exploring-our-migrant-immigrant-heritage). The project is supported with American Rescue Plan Act funds allocated to the New York State Library by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The Western New York Library Resources Council oversees the funds locally. The exhibit features historical narratives on Buffalo's neighborhoods as well as digitized photographs, newspaper clippings, maps, books, programs, and other historical documents. Many local organizations collaborated on the exhibit to promote an understanding of and foster connections with Buffalo's evolving ethnic communities, as well as to highlight local genealogical societies and repositories including Buffalo Genealogy Society of the African Diaspora, Buffalo Irish Genealogical Society, Iroquois Genealogy Society, Italian Genealogical Society of Western New York, Jewish Buffalo History Center, Polish Genealogical Society of New York State, and Trinity Old Lutheran Church.

**On the Road** – The Mobiles Department had a record setting January in which Bookmobile Manager **Julia Verbanic** created 1,114 Dinosaur Terrariums for 17 school stops. The Library2GO van visited 24 older adult living facilities. In addition, Library Assistant **Heather Leaderstorf** dropped off Road2Reading early literacy bins to 15 daycare center throughout Erie County.

**Copernicus' 550<sup>th</sup> Birthday** - Rare Book Curator **Amy Pickard** and Special Collections Rare Book Clerk **Nicole Kondziela** set up a temporary exhibit on January 30 in the Grosvenor Room featuring the Library's first edition copy of Nicolaus Copernicus' *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium*. The book will be on display for the month of February in celebration of Copernicus' 550<sup>th</sup> birthday on February 17.

**Monthly Music Series** – An ongoing collaboration with the Sportsmen's Americana Music Foundation is bringing music into the Central Library each month. Based on the NPR "Tiny Desk" model, each performance is filmed and available on the Library's YouTube channel. The popular local Western Swing band *Skiffle Minstrels* appeared on January 28 before a lively crowd of 55, with dancing in front of the Grosvenor Room! Next up: *Rear View Ramblers* on February 25. The series is expected to move outdoors to the Reading Park starting in July.

**Digital Collections for Classroom Use - Susan Buttaccio** provided a presentation on *Digital Collections for Classroom Use*, held virtually on January 3 to a group of librarians and educators in partnership with WNYLRC and the New York State Library.

**Launch Pad Makerspace** - Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz visited the Launch Pad Makerspace at the Central Library on January 29. He played some of the various instruments available to library patrons, including the electric guitars and digital drum set. County Executive Poloncarz shared his experience via a post on Facebook, which after just three days had over 500 comments, 570 shares, and 2,000 likes.

**Online Winter Reading Contest** - *The Online Winter Reading Contest* for children, teens, and adults with the theme *Snow is Falling Books are Calling* began on January 1 and runs through February 28. Participants read books and submit reviews for a chance to win prizes including a Kindle Fire as the grand prize for each group.

**WHAT'S YOUR STORY? Videos** - Launch Pad Makerspace Manager **Jordan Smith** began collecting testimonials from Launch Pad users to create a short video clip to help promote all the various services provided by the library for the *WHAT'S YOUR STORY?* initiative sponsored by WNYLRC. Videos from libraries throughout Western New York will be shared with New York State representatives during the New York Library Association's annual *Library Advocacy Day* that will be held on February 28 in Albany.

## 1. Public Services

### Central Library:

**Toddler Open Play** - The *Toddler Open Play* began on January 11 in the *B is for Book Exhibit Kids'* area on the second floor of the Central Library. Once a month, toddlers and their families are invited to drop in for a social hour.

**Legal Services Walk-In Clinic** - On January 20, the Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo began providing a bi-weekly Legal Services Walk-In Clinic at the Central Library. Legal Aid staff will provide consultations for people seeking assistance with civil legal matters.

**SCORE Workshop: Starting and Managing Your Own Business** - Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Carol Kowalik-Happy** coordinated the full day SCORE Workshop: *Starting and Managing Your Own Business* held at the Central Library on January 14. She shared information about library resources and services and our *Book a Librarian* program with the participants.

**Virtual Programs** - Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Kuniko Simon** aired a promotional video on January 25 for the *Take & Make: New Year Fortune Box* via the Central Library's Facebook page and provided bags with written step-by-step instructions at the Information Services desk for patrons. On January 30, **Kuniko** aired the virtual program *Easy Asian Cooking: Miso Soup* via Facebook.

**Tours & Class Visits** – Children’s Services and Outreach staff welcomed class visits that included programs and tours throughout the month for Buffalo Public School #32 Bennett Park Montessori, Stanley G. Falk School, and Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES – East Aurora High School. In addition, a pop-up tour of the Central Library including the Launch Pad Makerspace was provided to a 4-H group. Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Shanley Olszowy** conducted a tour for Kenmore Middle School on January 9, and Rare Book and Map Librarian **Charles Alaimo** provided a tour of the Central Library on January 14 to a group known as the Xennials. The tour consisted of highlights of all public services, the closed stacks, the Grosvenor Room, and Rare Book exhibits, including the Mark Twain Room.

**Buffalo Branches:**

**Programming** – The Buffalo Branches provided various storytimes, seasonal take and make crafts, as well as crafting hours. Each Buffalo Branch welcomed patrons with a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day display and craft. All Buffalo Branches provided one-on-one technology assistance.

**Outreach:**

**University Express** – As part of Erie County Senior Services’ University Express program, TechKnow Lab Librarians **Brendan Chella** and **Jacqueline Hovey** provided *Computer Basics* classes at Baptist Manor Senior Apartments in Buffalo, Orchard Park Senior Center, and Westminster Commons Senior Housing throughout the month.

**Tabling** – Information Services and Outreach Librarian **Jacob Rachwal** attended the *New York Power Authority Grow Your Business and Career* event at the Northland Workforce Training Center in Buffalo on January 10, and on January 11, he attended a *Job Fair* sponsored by the New York State Department of Labor in their Williamsville office. Jacob provided a Library outreach table highlighting library resources for job hunting and resume writing and the *Book a Librarian* program at each event. Children’s Services and Outreach Librarian **Jennifer Lelinski** participated in the *Raising a Reader* event at Buffalo Pubic School #59 Dr. Charles R. Drew Science on January 25. She provided library information and distributed library card applications to families. **Kuniko Simon** provided an outreach table at the Chinese Club of Western New York’s *Lunar New Year Celebration Gala* held at the University at Buffalo's Center for the Arts on January 22. She shared information on library programs and services.

***B is for Book Exhibit:***

	<b>Number of Visitors</b>		
	Month	YTD	From Opening (9/2020 to Present)
Non Tour-Related	2,750	2,750	51,333
Tour/Program	164	164	2,690
<b>TOTAL <i>B is for Book</i></b>	<b>2,763</b>	<b>2,914</b>	<b>54,023</b>

## 2. Collection Development

**Collections - Susan Buttaccio** added five items to the Rich Newberg Reports Collection on the Library's digital collection platform, including content on the Crash of Flight 3407 and a 4-part retrospective on the Love Canal Crisis of the 1970s-1980s.

### Physical Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	3,009	3,009	407	407	541,011
Young Adult Print	791	791	129	129	79,262
Adult Print	3,357	3,357	903	903	1,799,079
Media	3,406	3,406	370	370	566,448
Other*	1,832	1,832	66	66	171,573
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>12,395</b>	<b>12,395</b>	<b>1,875</b>	<b>1,875</b>	<b>3,157,373</b>

\*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other

### Electronic Collections\*:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	2,823	2,823	1,381	1,381	103,760
eAudiobooks	3,557	3,557	309	309	68,331
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,516
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6,380</b>	<b>6,380</b>	<b>1,690</b>	<b>1,690</b>	<b>176,607</b>

\* 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	
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,775</b>	<b>18,775</b>	<b>3,565</b>	<b>3,565</b>	<b>3,333,980</b>

## 3. Funding/Fundraising

### Funding:

**New York State Proposed Budget** - On February 1, Governor Hochul released her Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Budget (the State fiscal year runs from April 1, 2023 - March 30, 2024). Highlights may be found at [www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-highlights-fy-2024-executive-budget](http://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-highlights-fy-2024-executive-budget). More information about the State Budget may be found at: [www.budget.ny.gov/pubs/archive/fy24/ex/index.html](http://www.budget.ny.gov/pubs/archive/fy24/ex/index.html).

The State FY 2024 Budget provides library operating and construction aid for our calendar year 2023 Budget. The Proposed Budget reduces library aid from what was provided in the FY 2023 Enacted Budget:

1. Operating aid is reduced \$3.5 million (3.7%) to \$96.1 million statewide. For the B&ECPL this would mean aid would fall short of the 2023 budget by approximately \$145,000.



2. State Aid for Library Construction is reduced \$20 million (59%) down to \$14 million statewide. This would lower the funding allocation available for B&ECPL and its member libraries by \$914,226 (from \$1,551,184 to \$639,958).

The document linked below shows the changes:

[www.buffalolib.org/sites/default/files/library-system/finance/2023/NY\\_2023-2024\\_Budget\\_vs\\_BECPL\\_2023\\_Adopted\\_Budget\\_Feb\\_1\\_2023.pdf](http://www.buffalolib.org/sites/default/files/library-system/finance/2023/NY_2023-2024_Budget_vs_BECPL_2023_Adopted_Budget_Feb_1_2023.pdf)

The Library community will advocate for improved support.

### Fundraising:

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1 - January 31, 2023	\$34,257.53

**2022 Recap** - Annual Appeal fundraising for 2022 totaled \$371,111.

### Grants submitted in January:

- NYS Conservation and Preservation - \$20,887 - Microfilming Buffalo and suburban phonebooks and directories.
- FCC Affordable Connectivity Program - \$25,000 - Partner on application submitted by Mission: Ignite to provide computer trainings in libraries.

## 4. Facilities

**Construction Projects** - NY State Aid for Library Construction applications for projects at the Angola, Boston, Central, Coles, Concord, Grand Island, and Merriweather Libraries have passed the initial round of review by the NY State Library. The applications will then move to the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) for in-depth review. DASNY is the entity that will issue bonds to finance the allocation of \$1,554,184 for B&ECPL projects. This process can take a number of months, with awards estimated to be made between late summer and early fall.

## 5. Staff Development

**ACT Meeting** - The Association of Contracting Library Trustees held a meeting on January 21. As part of the event, System staff provided presentations on *Challenges to Library Content, Book Selection and Weeding, and System Updates and Trustees Requirements* to a group of 50 contracting library trustees and directors.

**LibLearnX - Julia Verbanic** attended ALA's LibLearnX Conference in New Orleans, LA from January 27 - 30. She attended learning sessions and committee events and was able to network with other innovative librarians to learn more about new products, practices, and ideas for outreach and library services.

**Webinars** - Staff attended many pertinent webinars in January, included *Conflict Resolution for Managers* (presented by Niche Academy), *Level Up Your Book Displays*

(presented by Niche Academy), and *Sustainable Living Library Programs* (presented by LILRC).

**6. Communications**

**Media:**

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
Taped newspaper interview with Children’s Librarian Kristi Dougherty	Winter Reading	Bee Publications, mid-January
Live radio interview with ADD Joy Testa Cinquino	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day onsite and virtual programs	WUFO Radio, January 10
Radio interview on the program <i>Buffalo, What’s Next?</i> with Library Director John Spears	Library’s new collection on Equity, Social Justice and Peace	WBFO Radio, January 10
Media release & event coverage	Annual Community Celebration Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Thursday, January 12 @ Merriweather Library in Buffalo	The Buffalo News, The Buffalo Criterion, WKBW TV Channel 7, WBFO Radio, January 12
Radio segments on the program <i>Buffalo, What’s Next?</i>	Interviews from the January 12 Celebration honoring Dr. King’s legacy	WBFO Radio, January 16
Media release	Legislature Chairwoman April Baskin Presents 2023 Black Doll Exhibit at Buffalo’s Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Thursday, February 2 w/Connie Porter, Lackawanna native and author of the American Girl <i>Addy</i> Books	January 24

**Social Media:**

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
Facebook	100	100	3,695	3,695	246	11,541
Flickr	-	-	5,092	5,092	-	59
Google Ads <sup>1</sup>	N/A	N/A	2,405	2,405	N/A	N/A
Instagram	26	26	552	552	214	4,790
Pinterest	37	37	72	72	1	2,116
Podcast <sup>2</sup>	2	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TikTok	-	-	128	128	7	395
Twitter	63	63	340	340	33	11,020
YouTube	15	15	1,240	1,240	18	481
<b>Total</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>13,524</b>	<b>13,524</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>30,402</b>

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

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

### 7. Partnerships

**Meetings** – B&ECPL staff were in contact or attended meetings with representatives of the following organizations:

- Buffalo Bills Foundation
- Buffalo Urban League
- Erie County Department of Health
- Erie County Legislative Chair April Baskin’s Office
- Erie County Medical Center
- Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of WNY
- New York State Attorney General’s Office
- New York State Library
- New York State Office of General Services
- Polish Arts Club
- Project Flight
- Western New York Library Resources Council Committees
- Zeneta and Zaire’s Book Club

### 8. Planning for the Future

**Folger Institute Spring Workshop - Susan Buttaccio, Amy Pickard,** and Community Engagement Manager **Anne Conable** met with Barbara Bono from the University at Buffalo English Department on January 5 to continue planning for the upcoming *Folger Institute Spring Workshop*, which will be held at the Central Library on April 26-27, 2023. A second meeting took place on January 30 with additional conference participants Stacy Hubbard from the UB English Department and Alan Nowicki, Program Director of the Roycroft Campus Corporation, to continue the planning process.

### 9. Director Activities

#### Meetings/Events Attended by Director January 2023

Date	Meeting/Event
January 3, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
January 3, 2023	Meeting - Ken Stone
January 4, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
January 4, 2023	Meeting - Jeannine Doyle, Judy Fachko, Tracy Palicki
January 5, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Erie County Cultural Collaborative Group
January 5, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden, Samantha Purpora
January 9, 2023	Meeting - Administrative Team
January 10, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Kimberly Johnson, Jeannine Doyle
January 10, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
January 10, 2023	Virtual Meeting - PULISDO
January 10, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Ken Stone
January 11, 2023	Virtual Meeting - B&ECPL Managers/Directors
January 11, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden

January 11, 2023	Meeting - Lackawanna Public Library Board of Trustees
January 12, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden, Samantha Purpora
January 12, 2023	Event - Community Celebration Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library
January 12, 2023	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees Executive Committee
January 13, 2023	Meeting - Architectural Resources
January 13, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
January 17, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
January 17, 2023	Virtual Meeting - WNYLRC Board of Trustees
January 17, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Ken Stone
January 18, 2023	Virtual Meeting - WNY Digital Equity Coalition
January 18, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
January 18, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Library Foundation
January 19, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden & Samantha Purpora
January 19, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Public Library System Directors
January 19, 2023	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees
January 20, 2023	Meeting - May 14th Oral History Planning
January 20, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
January 20, 2023	Virtual Meeting - ErieNet Executive Director Interview
January 21, 2023	Event - Association of Contracting Library Trustees Meeting
January 23, 2023	Virtual Meeting - ErieNet Executive Director Interview
January 23, 2023	Meeting - Administrative Team
January 23, 2023	Meeting - ErieNet Board of Directors
January 24, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
January 24, 2023	Conference Call - Robert Patterson, Bond, Schoeneck & King
January 24, 2023	Meeting - Ken Stone
January 24, 2023	Webinar - Digital Equity Ecosystems Measurement Framework Report Launch Event: A Panel
January 25, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Heidi Ziemer, WNYLRC
January 25, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
January 27, 2023	Meeting - Judy Fachko and Jeannine Doyle
January 27, 2023	Meeting - Security Staff
January 27, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
January 27, 2023	Virtual Meeting - ErieNet Executive Director Interview
January 30, 2023	Department Shadowing - Shipping
January 31, 2023	Meeting - Security Staff
January 31, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
January 31, 2023	Meeting - Ken Stone

**Appendices**

**A. Monthly Statistics**

**System Programming Statistics:**

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
<b>Regular*</b>				
Adults	816	816	1,895	1,895

Children 5 and under	905	905	3,275	3,275
Children 6-11	1,342	1,342	3,029	3,029
Intergenerational/Combined	4,167	4,167	6,947	6,947
Teens	164	164	698	698
<b>Regular Total</b>	<b>7,394</b>	<b>7,394</b>	<b>15,844</b>	<b>15,844</b>
<b>Regular Total</b>	<b>7,394</b>	<b>7,394</b>	<b>15,844</b>	<b>15,844</b>
<b>Virtual</b>				
<b>Live Virtual</b>				
Adults	26	26	300	300
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	0	0	0	0
Intergenerational/Combined	6	6	251	251
Teens	9	9	39	39
<b>Live Virtual Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>590</b>
<b>Recorded Virtual</b>				
Adults	1	1	105	105
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	0	0	0	0
Intergenerational/Combined	8	8	255	255
<b>Recorded Virtual Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>360</b>
<b>Virtual Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>950</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>7,444</b>	<b>7,444</b>	<b>16,794</b>	<b>16,794</b>

\*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](http://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](http://www.buffalolib.org/monthly-statistics/2023-circulation-public-access-computer-wifi-and-library-visits-detail).

**B. Contracting Library Activity Reports**

**Boston Free Library** – submitted by Lydia Herren, Director

The Boston Free Library was extremely grateful to receive \$25,000 secured by New York State Assembly Member David DiPietro (District 147). This funding will be used to improve the library with updates and additions to the building, grounds, and programming spaces.

**Library Art on Display** – During a Plein Air Painting program at the Boston Free Library over the summer, the Holland Tuesday Painters created artwork based on the library building and grounds. The one-of-a-kind pieces will be on display along with other works by these same artists during the months of February and March. The library features a rotating display of local artists in our display case and on our gallery wall.

**Snow Slime** - The library's popular snow slime program returned in January with 37 participants of various ages making two different slime recipes for icy glitter slime and fluffy snow slime.

**Take Your Child to the Library Day** - On Saturday, February 4 the library celebrated Take Your Child to the Library Day with library card sign-up giveaways, a coloring contest, a scavenger hunt, book mark creations, and a guided book craft.

**Valentine's Craft** - The library's all age craft programs continue on a monthly basis with Valentine's Craft sessions on Thursday, February 9 and Friday, February 10 featuring multiple crafts options geared toward a wide range of ages and crafting abilities.

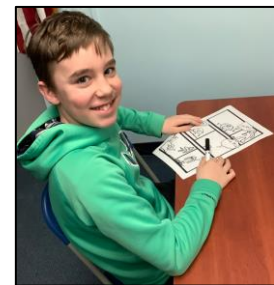
**Outreach** - The Boston Free Library takes its preschool storytime on the road by visiting the Churchill Child Center in Boston and presenting stories, songs, crafts, and games to the preschool and toddler groups once each month.

**Lancaster Public Library** - submitted by Kara Stock, Director

**Little Free Library** - Our library partnered with the Lancaster-Depew Rotary Club to install this library at the former location of the Depew Branch. Our staff is responsible for keeping it stocked with books for all ages.

**Partnerships** - We worked with several of our partners to provide a range of programming in January. Certified Literacy Specialist and Lancaster Educator Beth Farrar taught two Family Literacy workshops, and New York State certified math teacher Catherine Thielmann offered free tutoring each Tuesday evening. A volunteer from the SPCA Paws for Love organization brought a therapy dog to the library so children could practice reading out loud to the dog, and volunteers from the Lancaster Youth Bureau held a hands-on winter craft program for school-age children.

**Programming** - Our staff regularly offers a variety of programs for all age groups. This month Youth Services Librarian **Meagan Carr** held 16 storytime sessions, two LEGO® Clubs, and a Comic Book Club. Part-time Librarian **Michael Green** held his monthly YA Book Club, and Library Assistant **John Benzee** held five one-on-one technology training appointments assisting patrons with searching on the internet, using an email account, organizing files, and navigating Microsoft Excel.



**Seed Library** - 625 vegetable, flower, and herb seed packets were picked up in 2022! This library debuted last year and the response from our community has been tremendous.

**Social Narrative** - Part-time Librarian **Genevieve Maynard** created a social narrative for our library: [www.buffalolib.org/locations-hours/lancaster-public-library](http://www.buffalolib.org/locations-hours/lancaster-public-library). This learning tool helps people with Autism Spectrum Disorder navigate social situations

and learn social skills by simply stating the social expectations of a space as well as providing pictures of important details so they know what to expect when they visit.

**Sustainable Libraries Initiative** - Our library is the first library in Western New York to join this program. We are currently working our way through *Section A: Getting Started*, the first section out of 13 that need to be completed for the certification process. We wrote a Sustainability Policy, conducted a waste audit for our library, and completed a carbon footprint exercise. Ideas are being explored for less paper waste, better recycling practices, more environmentally friendly crafts, composting for staff, and a community assisted pollinator garden in front of our library.

Agenda Item G – Report of the Foundation. Trustee El-Behairy reported the Library Foundation had met twice recently, once to review their Bylaws and once to discuss board recruitment.

Agenda Item H – Report of the Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT)/ Contracting Library Trustee Report. There was no representation from ACT at the meeting.

Agenda Item H.1 – Contracting Library Liaison Report(s). Trustee Bucki reported she attended a meeting of the Amherst Public Library Board of Trustees on February 7. The meeting was held at the closed Audubon Branch; construction is nearing completion. She reported the library plans to have a soft opening on February 27 and a grand opening sometime in April. She relayed long-time Amherst Library Director Roseanne Butler-Smith is retiring and Kristi Dougherty, the current Children’s Programming and Outreach Manager at the Central Library, has been hired for the position. Finally, she reported they are looking into expanding hours at the Williamsville Branch.

Agenda Item I – Public Comment. Chris Weinert noted he lives next door to the Central Library and has been a patron for years. He commented there were problems in the library beyond what the Board had discussed earlier in the meeting. He noted adults also caused issues, including those with mental illnesses, drug dealers, and those recently incarcerated. He had previously reported an incident to security of a patron pulling a knife, and the day before he had witnessed a large fight at the top of the escalators. He agreed that something needs to be done to address the current issues and noted the need for social workers and advocates in the library. He also stressed the need for a more stringent security response when an incident is reported, as well as more visible Sheriff Deputies.

Odessa Hunter commented she had listened to the discussion about teenagers in the library and felt her incident with security staff 15 months previous was symbolic of the issues faced today. She stated diversity is the key to any response. She also expressed she had not received a response to the letter she had given Chair Johnson the month

before. Director Spears noted the response was the same as those given to previous communications. Chair Johnson stated they would resend the most recent response.

Agenda Item J - Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item K - New Business. None.

There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee Kelly with a second by Trustee Panty, the meeting was adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Moore  
Secretary