

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
October 19, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, October 19, 2023, at the Central Library and remotely pursuant to due notice to trustees. The following members were present:

Alan J. Bedenko, Esq., Treasurer
Prof. Christine P. Bartholomew, Esq.
Kathleen Berens Bucki, MLS*
Lucy A. Candelario
John D. Craik
Frank Gist
Theodore K. Johnson
Sharon M. Kelly, Esq.
Elaine M. Panty
Christopher Sasiadek, Esq.

*Trustee Bucki 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.

Director John Spears preceded the meeting by outlining what the B&ECPL Board of Trustees Bylaws state regarding how to conduct a Board meeting when the Chair, Vice Chair, and the Secretary are absent. He went on to point out that Chair Johnson suggested asking Trustee Bedenko to run the meeting. Discussion ensued regarding the process. Trustee Bedenko accepted the role.

Trustee Bedenko called the meeting to order at 4:04 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. Trustee Craik made a motion for approval, Trustee Panty seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item C – Minutes of the Meeting of September 21, 2023. Trustee Panty made a motion for approval, Trustee Johnson seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair. Trustee Bedenko reported that he went to the Clarence Public Library’s Board meeting in June and had a pleasant experience. They did express that they were hopeful for additional tutor and study rooms for patrons.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on October 12, 2023. A copy of the written report was included in the Board packet. Trustee Johnson moved to have the written report entered into the Minutes, Trustee Panty seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Present: Executive Committee Chair Kimberly Johnson, Vice Chair Carima El-Behairy, and member Elaine Panty. Also present were Director John Spears, Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Purtell and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich.

The meeting of the Executive Committee began at 4:07 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 October 19, 2023 B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting. The only change was, Trustee El-Behairy noted that there will not be a Report of the Foundation agenda item. The agenda was finalized.

Director Spears acknowledged that for the Committee Reports agenda item, the administrative team will be meeting to discuss the policy review schedule and plan a Policy Committee meeting in the future. Trustee Panty noted that she thought that they were on track with reviewing policies. Director Spears explained that internal reporting and organizational changes have affected how policies are reviewed and by whom. An updated policy review schedule will be developed, and policies scheduled for review in 2023 that were not reviewed will be incorporated into the schedule for 2024. Trustee El-Behairy asked if the Finance Committee will begin meeting regularly. Director Spears stated that he and Assistant Deputy Director – Controller Emily Patronik discussed having meetings again.

The Executive Committee discussed reappointments and appointments of the B&ECPL Board of Trustees. Discussion ensued. Trustees also discussed the possibility of incorporating trustee education opportunities during B&ECPL Board of Trustee meetings. This would assist with completing the annual trustee education requirement. Director Spears also mentioned that there is a new edition of the Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State expected to be printed soon. Along with trustee education opportunities being offered during meetings, Chair Johnson also mentioned the benefits of having a City of Buffalo representative present during B&ECPL Board of Trustee meetings. Several Member Libraries have town representatives attend their meetings, and we have a representative from the County.

Director Spears went on to briefly summarize the proposed resolutions to be presented at the B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting. Discussion ensued. For the Report of the Director, Director Spears communicated that he will be discussing the MetLib Conference that was held in Buenos Aires from October 2 to October 4.

There being no further business, Trustee El-Behairy motioned to adjourn and Trustee Panty seconded. The meeting ended at 5:15 p.m.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Year End Transfers in Excess of \$5,000. Assistant Deputy Director-Controller Emily Patronik introduced proposed Resolution 2023-35 as presented. ADD-Controller Patronik explained that this is a routine resolution that occurs during year end. Trustee Johnson motioned for approval, Trustee Panty seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2023-35

WHEREAS, the 2023 year-end closing process is approaching and involves finalizing encumbrances (or commitments to spend budgeted funds), and

WHEREAS, some costs, such as termination payouts for retiring employees, will impact other accounts including the System salary and fringe accounts and individual contracting library salary and fringe benefit accounts, requiring transfers, and in the case of contracting libraries, contract budget amendments, be processed quickly to ensure payroll expenses can be met on a timely basis, and

WHEREAS, it may be in the Library's interest to encumber items that may require budget transfers in excess of \$5,000, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) authorizes the Library Director or designee, with the approval of the Board Chair or the Budget and Finance Committee Chair, to approve transfers within the budget impacting objects of expenditure in excess of \$5,000 for the purposes of making year-end encumbrances and/or expenditures as stated above, and be it further

RESOLVED, that any such transfers be incorporated into the monthly financial statements submitted to the full Board prior to the close of the fiscal year, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL authorizes the Library Director or designee to approve transfers within the budget impacting objects of expenditure in excess of \$5,000.

Agenda Item E.2.b – Central Mixing Box Controllers-Advance Funds. ADD-Controller Patronik explained the proposed Resolution 2023-36 as presented. ADD-Controller Patronik communicated that the mixing box controllers at the Central Library need to be replaced. There is a 12-month lead time in ordering the equipment necessary, therefore they need to get started on the project before more wear occurs. Trustee Craik asked if fund can be retroactively applied when the NYS

Construction Aid funds arrive. ADD-Controller Patronik stated that the NYS Construction Aid will go into a specific fund balance account and can be applied. Trustee Gist wanted clarification on the mixing box controllers and their purpose. Director Spears summarized the function of the mixing box controllers in regards to regulating the temperature inside of the library. Trustee Candelario stated that there is no restriction on when to use the NYS Construction Aid that is awarded. Discussion ensued. Trustee Johnson motioned for approval, Trustee Kelly seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2023-36

WHEREAS, on September 21, 2023, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees approved Resolution 2023-33 recommending \$481,006 in 2023-2024 NY State Library Construction Aid be allocated to fund improvements at the Central Library, and

WHEREAS, the improvements include replacing the failing and obsolete mixing box controllers; rehabilitation of the separating marble columns throughout the library; and reconfiguration of the children's area and media room to create, new, dedicated, teen and children's areas, and

WHEREAS, the Construction Aid review process is estimated to take approximately 13 months and waiting until the Construction Aid is awarded to move forward with the project significantly increases the chance that the mixing box controller's condition would deteriorate to the point that they become completely inoperable, and

WHEREAS, cost estimates for the replacement of the mixing box temperature controllers totaled \$110,715 and the Library has the option of utilizing Library assigned fund balance for grant match to advance funds to allow the project to move forward sooner, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Board of Trustees authorizes the use of grant proceeds to reimburse the County for project related expense undertaken by the County as owner of the building, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL authorizes use of Library Fund grant match assigned fund balance to advance funds to allow the project to proceed until New York State Library Construction Aid funds are available.

Agenda Item E.2.c – RFP Award – Lackawanna Library. ADD-Controller Patronik explained proposed Resolution 2023-37 as presented. ADD-Controller Patronik expressed that in 2022 the Library was approved to obtain \$50,000 in funds for the benefit of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library system for repairs. In the meeting regarding the funds, it was acknowledged that the Lackawanna Branch Library needed a substantial amount of repairs including a building assessment.

ADD-Controller Patronik explained that the RFP ultimately was awarded to DiDonato Associates Engineering and Architecture, P.C. Discussion ensued regarding past and present Directors of the Lackawanna Branch Library. Trustee Gist asked if the city is considering replacing the whole building or refurbishing. ADD-Controller Patronik explained that this first part of the process is an assessment to determine what needs to be completed at the library. Since it is a Carnegie library, there are certain qualifications they would need to have when moving forward with repairs. Discussion ensued. Trustee Bucki noticed a grammatical error in the second paragraph of the proposed resolution. Trustee Johnson motioned for approval with the suggested change, Trustee Panty seconded, and the following was approved unanimously as amended.

RESOLUTION 2023-37

WHEREAS, over the years, the Lackawanna Library has only made modest changes to the facility since 1937 and is the last community to receive a library grant from the Carnegie trustees, and

WHEREAS, the Lackawanna Library needs an entire building assessment to be completed first to identify issues as well as potential opportunities for modification or expansion while preserving the historic preservation of a Carnegie Library, and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL Library issued a Request for Proposal to perform a full building assessment resulting in thirteen organizations submitting proposals which includes firm & personnel information, experience, methodology, references, and fee proposal, and

WHEREAS, a formal Library Evaluation Team was created to review and score all proposals independently which was then weighted and discussed to determine the top three organizations which then picked the organization that best fit the project needs, and

WHEREAS, the proposal was rated highly and Library Evaluation team recommends the B&ECPL Library award the contract to DiDonato Associates, Engineering and Architecture, PC, and

WHEREAS, estimated costs totals \$49,630 and

WHEREAS, funds are available from the 2023 operating budget other expenses account (SAP#530000) outlined in Resolution 2022-49, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library designates DiDonato Associates, Engineering and Architecture, PC proposal as the best and most cost efficient response and authorizes the Library Director and/or designee(s) to execute the necessary documents to enter into an agreement, pursuant to the terms and conditions of the RFP and RFP response.

Agenda Item E.2.d – Monthly Financial Report. The monthly financial report for the year as of August 31, 2023, month-end close was included in the Board packet as an information item. ADD-Controller Patronik noted the Library is operating well within budget. ADD-Controller Patronik stated that the Board can reach out to her if they have any questions. Director Spears went on to explain updates about the Budget. Discussion ensued.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Spears began his report by explaining that he and Grosvenor Room Manager Susan Buttaccio attended the MetLib Conference 2023 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He noted that it was the first library conference to be held in South America in 40 years. Susan Buttaccio is part of a group called the International Learning Circle and was nominated and accepted to attend. She presented about the security situation with teens at the Central Library this past year. Director Spears described his trip to the MetLib Conference and the topics covered. Discussion ensued.

Director Spears presented the Board with an updated organizational chart and explained the role of each administrator. He also explained positions in the Library and how certain ones were created. He wanted to commend Assistant Deputy Director, System Services Dorinda Darden and Assistant Deputy Director, Buffalo Libraries Samantha Purpora for successfully and creatively staffing System Services and Buffalo Libraries. Trustee Craik asked about the separation between System Services and Buffalo. Discussion ensued. Director Spears explained the difference between the B&ECPL Policies and the System-Wide Policies.

Trustee Gist asked about a grant provided by Senator Tim Kennedy for the William A. Miles Center for African and African-American Studies room in the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library. Director Spears stated that he is working closely with Branch Manager Joshua Mitch in order to best meet the intentions of Senator Kennedy. Discussion ensued.

Agenda Item F.1. – Annual Report of the Director. Director Spears explained the proposed Resolution 2023-38 as presented. Director Spears thanked Assistant Deputy Director Joy Testa Cinquino and her team for their work on putting together the report. Trustee Panty motioned for approval, Trustee Johnson seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

WHEREAS, all public and association libraries in New York State must meet minimum standards of service according to Section 90.2 of the *Regulations of the Commissioner of Education*, and

WHEREAS, to meet these minimum standards, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library must provide a board-approved written annual report to the community on the library's progress in meeting its mission, goals and objectives, as outlined in the library's long-range plan of service, and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL *Annual Report of the Director – 2022* has been prepared to fulfil this standard, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, the B&ECPL Board of Trustees approves the B&ECPL *Annual Report of the Director – 2022*.

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

B&ECPL Monthly Report September 2023

The Library was privileged to play host to the **Polish Ambassador to the United Nations** on September 1. Ambassador Krzysztof Szczerski spoke before a full audience in the Central Library's Auditorium. The program was presented by Erie County in partnership with the General Pulaski Association, Daemen University, the WNY Chapter of the Kosciuszko Foundation, and the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America.

The Library launched a major community education campaign around the freedom to read, books unite us, and censorship divides us themes on September 26 at the downtown Central Library. Media from all stations heard Library Director **John Spears** discuss opportunities for the community to learn about the danger of censoring books from public and school libraries. The media event, planned by Assistant Deputy Director **Joy Testa Cinquino**, took place in the Central Library's Reading Park now featuring large images of book covers that have been banned over the years. The wall design, Ring of Knowledge display, new library cards, posters and flyers were created by the Graphics Manager **Dawn Stanton** and Assistant **Darlene Pennachi**. Librarian **Michelle Snyder** was instrumental in gathering a "banned books" staff committee, scheduling programs and speakers during Banned Books Week, as well as creating a webpage, buttons and stickers to help promote the campaign.

Doors Open Buffalo – On September 30, the Central Library welcomed over 500 visitors as part of the Doors Open Buffalo Event. Community Engagement Manager **Anne Conable** and Assistant Deputy Director **Samantha Purpora** worked with Explore Buffalo to coordinate visits for participants on the Family Friendly Doors Open trail. Children's Department librarians **Dan Lewandowski** and **Erin Burke** had a very popular button making station that featured historic local buildings. Information

Services Librarian **Jacob Rachwal** assisted with tours and Special Collections Librarians **Adam Rubin** and **Isaac Johnson** provided tours of the Grosvenor Room.

Crane Library Reopening - The Crane Library welcomed back Elmwood Village patrons on Monday, September 11 after being closed for construction for a full year. The community was thrilled to see the newly redesigned building that offers study rooms and a large meeting space on the second floor, made accessible for all patrons because of the new elevator. In addition there was a grand reopening celebration at the Crane Branch on Friday, September 22 with music, refreshments, community members, the media and elected officials including Senator Sean Ryan, Assemblyman Jonathan Rivera, Deputy Buffalo Mayor Callie Johnson, PhD, Deputy Erie County Executive Lisa Chimera, Erie County Legislative Chairwoman April Baskin, and Delaware District Common Council Member Joel Feroletto. Library Director **John Spears** was the Master of Ceremonies, the event was planned by Assistant Deputy Director **Joy Testa Cinquino**.

Baby & Toddler Expo - The annual, *Baby & Toddler Expo* presented by Every Person Influences Children (EPIC) was held at the Central Library on September 30. Organizations provided early childhood resources information and presentations to parents, caregivers, and expectant parents. System Youth Outreach Services Manager **Chelsey Lonberger** provided tabling at the event. She promoted the *Read Aloud 15 MINUTES National Campaign* and explained how reading aloud from birth can help a child develop early literacy skills. **Chelsey** also gave away free board books that were donated by Project Flight.

Job Fair - In partnership with the New York State Department of Labor, System Adult Outreach Services Librarian **Jacob Rachwal** coordinated a *Job Fair* held at the Central Library on September 13. There were over 70 employers who participated in the well-attended event.

National Voter Registration Day - In celebration of *National Voter Registration Day*, representatives from the *League of Women Voters* provided tabling at the Central Library on September 19. They shared voter information, created awareness of the upcoming elections, and assisted those who were interested in registering to vote.

1. Public Services

Central Library:

Genealogy Training - Genealogy Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman** provided an online presentation to the Erie Society for Genealogical Research from Pennsylvania on September 13. The presentation titled, *The Grosvenor Room: The Gateway to Buffalo Research*, featured the Grosvenor Room's in-house and digitized genealogical resources. On September 20, **Rhonda** provided a webinar titled, *Finding Western New York Holland Land Company Plots* to a class of genealogists, and on September 26, she presented *Getting the Most out of Ancestry Library Edition* at the Lancaster Public Library to family genealogists.

Health and Wellness - Sophia Charles, Public Health Specialist II with the New York State Public Health Corps Fellowship Program, coordinated the *Wellness @ Central* tabling event held on September 21 at the Central Library. At the event, organizations participated in providing health and wellness resources to patrons that included information on employment, housing, literacy, food assistance, mental health services, and other programs. **Jacob Rachwal** was also on hand to assist.

Tours and Visits – Teachers from the Buffalo Public Schools’ English Language Arts Department visited the Central Library on September 5, to explore resources to incorporate into an AP African – American Literature Course. Rare Book Librarian **Charles Alaimo** and Rare Book Curator **Amy Pickard** provided them with a general tour of the Grosvenor Room collection and shared some resources that may be of use in the classroom. Gregory Doran, Artistic Director Emeritus of the Royal Shakespeare Company visited the Grosvenor Room on September 8, as a part of his *Folio Roadshow*, a podcasting project documenting the various institutions across America that hold copies of *Shakespeare’s First Folio*. **Amy Pickard** presented all four of the *Shakespeare Folios* in B&ECPL’s collection to Mr. Doran, as well as a 1640 book of Sonnets and other relevant materials. Special Collections Librarian Trainee **Isaac Johnson** provided the monthly tour of the Grosvenor Room to visitors on September 23. **Jacob Rachwal** provided two tours of the Central Library during the *Doors Open Buffalo* event on September 30. Special Collections Librarian **Adam Rubin** and **Isaac Johnson** provided tours of the Grosvenor Room as part of the *Doors Open Buffalo* event. This event provides the public an opportunity to have free tours of downtown Buffalo landmarks and historic sites.

Buffalo Branches:

North Park Programming Highlights:

On Saturday, September 23 North Park hosted a Comic Book Bash to celebrate National Comic Book Day which falls on September 25. We had eight members from the Justice League of WNY available for a photo booth, as well as several game stations, activities, and super hero themed snacks. Senior Page **Byanca Temmons-Barnwell**, Librarian **Stefanie Anawald**, and Librarian **Alyssa Clark** all worked together to decorate the meeting room the day prior – **Alyssa and Stefanie** ran the activity stations day of.

Panty Programming Highlights:

On Saturday, September 16 Dare to Repair with The Tool Library of Buffalo welcomed patrons to get household items repaired. More than 35 people stopped by, 22 items successfully repaired, 78% of repairs were successful, 107.5lbs of potential waste diverted from local landfills and \$1,264 saved on replacement costs

Outreach:

Library on Wheels Bookmobile staff had their busiest month of 2023, working with 2,456 patrons and spending over 83 hours at school stops and outreach events. In

addition to regularly scheduled stops, the Library on Wheels Bookmobile participated in the annual *African American Veterans Parade* at the Johnnie B. Wiley Amateur Athletic Sports Pavilion on September 2; *Annual Local Environmental Awareness Fair* in the Town of Boston on September 9; *Massachusetts Avenue Party in the Park*, a resource fair, back to school event, and backpack giveaway hosted by New York State Assembly Member Jonathan Rivera and Buffalo Common Council Member David Rivera, and the *Erie County Fall Fest* held at Como Lake Park on September 30. Thousands attended this event, with 461 patrons stopping on the Bookmobile. Staff issued library cards and checked out materials for the patrons. Many of whom reminisced about their personal childhood experiences on the Lookie Bookie and RAM Van, two former mobile vehicles used by the B&ECPL. In addition to live music, hay rides, food trucks, and vendors, *Erie County Fall Fest* attendees were able to talk to and meet with many Erie County departments.

New partnerships have formed with the Clemmon H Hodges Senior Community Center in Buffalo and the National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE). Throughout the month of September, TechKnow Lab Librarian **Brendan Chella** provided technology training that included teaching *Internet Privacy & Safety* for NARFE and a series of classes at the Clemmon H Hodges Senior Community Center to teach patrons about the Amazon Fire tablets the community center owns.

Chelsey Lonberger tabled at the *One-Stop Family Services Fair* presented by the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority and the Erie County Department of Health, held at the Northwest Buffalo Community Center on September 1. She distributed free book giveaways provided by Project Flight.

Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio** presented to Social Studies teachers and librarians from the Buffalo Public Schools about B&ECPL's Digital Collections. The event took place at The Buffalo History Museum as a part of the Buffalo Public Schools' *Superintendent Conference Days* on September 5.

Adam Rubin tabled at the Polish Genealogical Society of New York State's *Annual Genealogy Fair* on September 9. He provided an overview of the Grosvenor Room's Genealogy collection for attendees.

Susan Buttaccio and Library Director **John Spears** visited the Garret Club in Buffalo on September 14. They presented about the history of the library and some of its rare treasures to members of the club and guests, both in-person and via zoom.

System Adult Outreach Services Manager **Carol Kowalik-Happy** and Central Children's Librarian **Jennifer Lelinski** participated in the *BubbleFEST* at the Buffalo Museum of Science on September 16. They made bubble wands out of pipe cleaners and a Buffalo Bills craft with children attending.

Jacob Rachwal participated in the *Townsquare Media Job Fair* at the McKinley Mall on September 27.

Carol Kowalik-Happy and Librarian **Carol Veach**, from the Julia Boyer Reinstein Library participated in the *Food in Community Festival and 4-H Celebration*, held on September 30 at the Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve in Depew.

B is for Book Exhibit:

	Number of Visitors		
	Month	YTD	From Opening (9/2020 to Present)
Non Tour-Related	2,308	18,843	67,426
Tour/Program	2	702	3,228
Total	2,310	19,545	70,654

2. Collection Development

Physical Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	3,442	26,222	224	2,537	533,833
Young Adult Print	474	5,258	83	851	79,065
Adult Print	3,813	32,145	821	6,821	1,788,345
Media	2,893	24,731	287	2,416	547,505
Other*	1,772	16,554	14	518	171,967
Subtotal	12,394	104,910	1,429	13,143	3,120,715

*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other.

Electronic Collections*:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	5,292	33,846	1,286	12,223	115,623
eAudiobooks	7,607	51,766	347	3,003	69,755
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5,134
Subtotal	12,899	85,612	1,633	15,226	190,512

*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	25,293	190,522	3,062	28,369	3,311,227

Donated Collections - The Special Collections Department graciously accepted 26 volumes of the handwritten minutes of the Erie County Board of Supervisors, spanning the years 1830-1926 from The Buffalo History Museum. The Special

Collections Department gratefully acknowledges the receipt of a small collection of books from the estate of Wayne and Janet Wisbaum. Wayne Wisbaum was a long-term member of the B&ECPL's Board of Trustees and an avid supporter of the Grosvenor Room.

Lucky Day Collections - *Lucky Day Collections* launched at the Kenmore Branch Library and the Orchard Park Public Library on September 18. *Lucky Day Collections* include the most popular and best-selling fiction titles that are on the request list. They are available to patrons when they visit the library, on a first-come first-served basis. A hold cannot be placed on Lucky Day books, they are not able to be renewed, and don't appear in the library catalog.

3. Fundraising

Fundraising:

2024 Budget request submitted on time - Between supply chain and other inflationary factors, costs are forecast to increase significantly faster than in recent years. The combined impact of recently settled Erie County labor agreements and another expected minimum wage increase result in 2024 will also have an effect on expenses, and we are seeing increases in other operating accounts, as well. Overall, net expense is expected to increase approximately \$1.6 million (5%).

Feedback from the County Budget office to date has been supportive. The next major 2024 budget event is the release of the County Executive's Proposed Budget, expected in mid-October of 2023.

We will keep you informed as the budget process continues.

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1 - September 30, 2023	\$139,565.74

Highlights:

Bucks for Books annual mailing was sent to over 1,200 donors that have given in the past. To date, 328 gifts have been received totaling \$34,034.72 in donations.

The Library recently added a *Banned Book* tote bag on the *Online Store*. There has been an incredible response selling out within a week. The bags will be restocked. In September, there were 87 store orders, resulting in \$1,551.44 in sales.

Mass emails sent in September:

- Books, Bites & Banter Happy Hour - sent to over 2,000 past donors.
- Fall Email - sent to over 230,000 library cardholders.

4. Facilities

Updates have been made to the Emergency Evacuation Team roster taking into account new employees.

Maintenance department is currently working with Erie County Purchasing to start repair of the broken shaft in one of Central’s cooling towers. New shaft, bearings, and bushings will be installed. Cost estimate was roughly \$18,200.

Library staff and Architectural Resources finalized the contract to provide A/E for the Crane rooftop access project.

Shipping/Receiving department coordinated the pickup of 37 additional AED’s provided by the Erie County Department of Health that will eventually be distributed throughout the system.

Library staff reviewed 2 applications submitted for NYS Library Construction Aid. Hamburg and Kenilworth libraries submitted applications for the 2024 fiscal year. Hamburg library is planning a rehabilitation of their parking lot, with a recommended aid award of \$43,750. Kenilworth library is planning a reconstruction of their restrooms to comply with ADA guidelines, with a recommended aid award of \$123,093. Applications for Central Library and East Clinton Branch Library were also submitted. Central Library improvements included replacement of the mixing box temperature controllers, rehabilitation of the marble columns, and reconfiguration of the teen/children’s areas. East Clinton Branch Library improvements included rehabilitation of the roof, door and window replacement, brick repointing, rehabilitation of the sinking concrete slab, floor tile replacement and asbestos abatement, and security camera installation.

Library staff met with Erie County personnel to discuss options to move forward with the Central Library’s roofing work. The library and county seem ready to issue an RFP for the design of the repair of the roof, which will initially include options for a second phase which could include green/solar capabilities.

5. Staff Development

Webinars – Staff attended many pertinent webinars in September, including *Backup Training: How to Back Up a Coworker During a Crisis* (presented by Homeless Institute), *Super Searchers for Library Workers* (presented by PLA), *Supercharged Storytimes* (presented by NY State Library), and *The Dos and Don’ts of Interviewing* (presented by LILRC).

6. Communications

Media:

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
Live radio interview with Library Director John Spears	Update on security measures at Central Library	September 5, WBEN radio

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

Recorded newspaper interview with Library Director John Spears	Banned books	September 20, The Buffalo News
Editorial	In Support of the Library System's campaign to educate the community about banned books	September 27, The Buffalo News
Media event at the Isaías González- Soto Branch Library with Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz and Library Director John Spears	Emergency homecare kit availability in Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries	September 8, covered by several TV news stations
Recorded interview with Library Director John Spears	Library construction grants and the processes for proposing and building a new library	September 9, 12, Investigative Post and WGRZ TV- Channel 2
Interview with Central Children's Librarian Dan Lewandowski	Lego clubs	Upcoming issue of Buffalo Magazine
Media event & announcement with partners from Buffalo Genealogical Society of the African Diaspora (BGSAD) and WNY Library Resources Council	Newly digitized African- American funeral program collection unveiled.	September 13, covered in The Buffalo News, Buffalo Criterion
Taped TV interview with Library Director John Spears	Banned books	September 20, WGRZ TV - Channel 2
Live TV interview with Library Director John Spears	Crane Library reopening	September 22, WGRZ TV - Channel 2
Media event & announcement with John Spears and elected officials	Crane Branch Library reopening	September 22, all TV stations
Taped TV interview with Librarian Maria Lowe	Announced Library System's stance on book censorship and launch of Banned Book Week displays, contests and programs https://tinyurl.com/BannedBooksPR23	September 26, covered by all TV stations
Recorded interview with Library Director John Spears	Library System's freedom to read education campaign and update on security situation at Central	September 26, WBFO radio
Live TV segments with Library Director John Spears	Library card sign-up month, banned books, and upcoming programs	September 26, Spectrum News

Recorded interview with Joy Testa Cinquino	Youth sports kit borrowing and the Play Down Your Fines program	Upcoming issue of Bee Publications
Media announcement	Announcing Books, Bites & Banter fundraiser	September 20, sent to all media

Social Media:

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
Facebook	84	891	2,108	34,024	35	12,846
Flickr	-	266	1,822	35,863	-	60
Google Ads ¹	N/A	N/A	2,217	15,769	N/A	N/A
Instagram	13	112	4,313	15,121	-	4,786
Pinterest	49	377	65	764	1	2,112
Podcast ²	-	11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Twitter	49	527	349	4,361	-21	10,925
YouTube	10	65	1,242	10,144	12	541
TikTok	-	1	69	1,360	-	514
Total	205	2,250	12,185	117,406	27	31,784

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

Buffalo Museum of Science - Carol Kowalik-Happy and Jacob Rachwal attended a virtual meeting on September 15 with Holly Cohen, Astronomy Program Coordinator for the Buffalo Museum of Science. They discussed the upcoming *Partial Solar Eclipse* on October 14, 2023 and the *Total Solar Eclipse* on April 8, 2024. The Buffalo Museum of Science will be providing the B&ECPL System with 100,000 eclipse glasses to be distributed to patrons, and they are also offering libraries programming on eclipse related topics.

8. Planning for the Future

Susan Buttaccio met with journalist Kate Kaye about planning future programming around the recently acquired *Spilling Grains* oral history project recently donated by Ms. Kaye and is now located on B&ECPL's Digital Collections page. Plans include a program featuring the collection sometime in May 2024.

Indie Author Day will be presented on Saturday, November 4 at the downtown Central Library from 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Local authors and those interested in publishing should plan to attend. Details here: <https://tinyurl.com/IndieBflo>. The program is organized by the Development & Communications Department.

9. Director Activities

Meetings/Events Attended by Director September 2023

Date	Meeting/Event
September 1, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
September 1, 2023	Event - Polish Ambassador to the United Nations at Central Library
September 5, 2023	Media Interview - WBEN
September 5, 2023	Meeting - Emily Patronik
September 6, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Marketing Plan for Mission Ignite/ Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant
September 6, 2023	Meeting - Mickey Smith/TBS
September 7, 2023	Media Interview - Buffalo News
September 7, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Cultural Collaborative
September 7, 2023	Meeting - Diane Chrisman, Michael Mahaney, Ruth Collins, Lee Ainsworth-Mahaney
September 7, 2023	Event - Buffalo Presidential Center - Kemp Exhibit
September 8, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Central Library Teen Space
September 8, 2023	Media Event - Disaster Preparation with Erie County Executive
September 8, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
September 9, 2023	Event - Crane Open House for Elmwood Village Association Board and System Board of Trustees
September 11, 2023	Media Interview - Garrett Looker (Investigative Post)
September 11, 2023	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
September 12, 2023	Meeting - Susan Buttaccio
September 12, 2023	Meeting - Central Library Space Planning
September 12, 2023	Virtual Presentation - IMAGINE Buffalo
September 12, 2023	Meeting - Foundation Board Strategic Planning
September 12, 2023	Virtual Meeting - PULISDO
September 12, 2023	Virtual Meeting - WNYLRC Personnel Committee
September 12, 2023	Meeting - Emily Patronik
September 13, 2023	Meeting - Managers/Directors Meeting
September 13, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
September 13, 2023	Press Event - Merriweather Branch Library Funeral Programs Collection
September 13, 2023	Meeting - Senator Sean Ryan
September 14, 2023	Virtual Meeting - May 14 Collecting Initiative
September 14, 2023	Presentation - Garrett Club with Susan Buttaccio
September 14, 2023	Meeting - B&ECPL Executive Committee
September 14, 2023	Event - The Color Purple at Shea's 710
September 15, 2023	Event - Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
September 15, 2023	Virtual Meeting - IF Manual
September 18, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Mac Zukoff - E-Rate for Erie County Libraries
September 18, 2023	Meeting - Administrative Team
September 19, 2023	Meeting - NYALS Advocacy Launch
September 20, 2023	Virtual Meeting - WNY Digital Equity Coalition
September 20, 2023	Meeting - Emily Patronik
September 20, 2023	Meeting - Joey and Danny from Charlie and Checkers
September 20, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
September 20, 2023	Media Interview - WGRZ
September 20, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Christine Carr-Barmasse - Mission Ignite
September 21, 2023	Meeting - Assemblyman Jon Rivera
September 21, 2023	Virtual Meeting - PLS Directors
September 21, 2023	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees
September 22, 2023	Media Interview - WGRZ
September 22, 2023	Event - Crane Branch Library Celebration
September 22, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
September 25, 2023	Meeting - TripleTrak Hr Partners
September 25, 2023	Meeting - Listening Session for 5/14 Memorial Commission
September 26, 2023	Media Interview - Spectrum News
September 26, 2023	Media Event - Banned Books Announcement
September 26, 2023	Media Interview - WBFO "What's Next?"
September 26, 2023	Meeting - WNYLRC Board
September 26, 2023	Event - WNYLRC Annual Meeting
September 27, 2023	Meeting - Central Library Roof Project
September 27, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
September 28, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden & Samantha Purpora

Appendices

A. Monthly Statistics

System Programming Statistics:

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Regular*				
Adults	805	6511	4716	22910
Children 5 and under	1195	10806	3842	37014
Children 6-11	934	14107	2409	31928
Intergenerational/Combined	3587	40994	11703	94910
Teens	191	3247	600	8898
Regular Total	6712	75665	23270	195660
Regular Total	6712	75665	23270	195660
Virtual				
Live Virtual				

Adults	12	159	128	1748
Children 5 and under	0	9	0	33
Children 6-11	0	6	0	167
Intergenerational/Combined	5	53	262	2017
Teens	3	80	18	346
Live Virtual Total	20	307	408	4311
Recorded Virtual				
Adults	5	52	82	1116
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	2	17	369	3231
Intergenerational/Combined	8	78	264	2373
Teens	0	1	0	20
Recorded Virtual Total	15	148	715	6740
Virtual Total	35	455	1123	11051
Grand Total	6747	76120	24393	206711

*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

Town of Tonawanda Public Libraries – submitted by Mary Muscarella, Director

- The Town of Tonawanda libraries hosted their annual ‘Patron Appreciation Picnic’ on Friday, September 15 at the Kenilworth Branch Library. Live music by Kody & Herren, lawn games, face painting, and free food. Approximately 125 people were served.
- Fall Storytimes begin in October at both branches, offering both daytime and evening options, including Pre-School, Toddlers, Babies & Families.
- The Kenilworth Branch Library has applied for a 2024 New York State Library Construction Grant to reconstruct the public restroom to meet ADA standards.
- Sunday Hours at the Kenmore Branch Library (12-5pm) resumed on September 10.
- Explore Buffalo will be presenting: *Buffalo Sporting Life* on Tuesday, October 10 at the Kenmore Branch Library.
- Local author Kate Berberich will be speaking on Wednesday, October 18 at the Kenmore Branch Library about her books, *Picture Imperfect* and *A Perfectly Imperfect Holiday*.
- A Halloween Party will be held at the Kenmore Branch Library on Tuesday, October 24, and will include a costume parade, balloon artist, crafts, and a visit from a fire truck.

Agenda Item G - ACT Report. None.

Agenda Item G.1. - Contracting Library Liaison Report. Trustee Kelly reported that she visited her assigned libraries: Alden, East Aurora, Elma, and Marilla. She also attended their Board meetings. Trustee Kelly highlighted East Aurora Library Director Paula Klocek and her monthly reports that are distributed at their Board meetings. Discussion ensued.

Agenda Item H - Public Comment. Trustee Bedenko read and clarified the rules for public comment. Odessa Hunter expressed her concerns regarding an incident that occurred at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library in late September. She detailed the incident and the severity of it. Ms. Hunter went on to share that security was not present at the library on that particular day. Deputy Director-Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Purtell expressed her deepest sympathy for the incident and said there was a mistake with staffing that day. One of the security guards reported to the wrong library location. The miscommunication was addressed and will hopefully not happen again. COO Purtell went on to explain that Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library is regularly staffed now with a security guard and is a priority location when it comes to security. She did want to note that since developing partnerships with the Buffalo Police and the Library's alarm company, Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library had their panic button updated to be a higher priority level. Therefore, the police respond faster than previously when there are incidents of this magnitude.

Director Spears wanted to commend Library Assistant Miranda Pawlak for her swift and brave response to the incident at Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library. Discussion ensued about security.

Agenda Item I - Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item J - New Business. None.

Agenda Item K - Adjournment. There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee Panty with a second by Trustee Candelario, the meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Moore
Secretary

