

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
February 15, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, February 15, 2024, at the Central Library and remotely pursuant to due notice to trustees. The following members were present:

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

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. A call of the roll was taken. A quorum was present.

Trustee Moore arrived at 4:04 p.m.

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 18, 2024. Trustee Panty made a motion for approval, Trustee Sasiadek seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair. Chair Johnson began her report by informing the Board of the Conflict of Interest disclosure statements provided to them for 2024. They were instructed to read the policy, review the vendor list, and then complete the statements. Chair Johnson went on to reflect on Advocacy Day. She said attendees were received well. They focused on asking for an increase in Operational Aid. Chair Johnson also stated that in the New York State Executive Budget, school districts are currently reimbursed for approved library material expenses up to \$6.25 per pupil, an amount which has not changed since 2007. During Library Advocacy Day, a component of the advocates request was to increase the \$6.25 to \$11.00.

Next, Chair Johnson alerted the Board that the Performance Evaluation Committee for Director John Spears met on Wednesday, February 14, and the entire Board will vote to enter into Executive Session later in the meeting in order to discuss the results.

Finally, Chair Johnson acknowledged all the events happening throughout the library system for Black History Month, including the Black Doll Exhibit at Central. She encouraged everyone to view it while they are downtown. She also mentioned the opening of the exhibit and the special guest, Zandra Cunningham. Trustee Bucki mentioned she took her children to the Black Doll Exhibit and that they enjoyed it very much.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on February 8, 2024. A copy of the written report was included in the Board packet. Trustee El-Behairy briefly summarized the meeting. Trustee Bedenko moved to have the written report entered into the Minutes, Trustee Bucki seconded, 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 Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Purtell, and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich.

*Trustee Candelario attended the meeting remotely.

The meeting of the Executive Committee began at 4:03 p.m. After a call of the roll, it was noted that a quorum was present.

Chair Johnson commenced the meeting by reviewing the proposed agenda for the B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 15. Assistant to the Director Goodrich stated that the Monthly Financial Report will be removed from the agenda since the December financials still need to be finalized.

For the Report of the Chair, Chair Johnson stated that she will be talking about Library Advocacy Day. She noted that the group that attended were knowledgeable and knew specifics about what they were advocating for. Chair Johnson noted that in the New York State Executive Budget, school districts are currently reimbursed for approved expenses up to \$6.25 per pupil which has not changed since 2007. During Library Advocacy Day, a component of the advocates request was to increase the \$6.25 to \$11.00 due to the increase in the cost of living.

Next, Chair Johnson highlighted the opening of the annual Black Doll Exhibit. She stated it was well attended and included young girls from a mentoring program, as well as, entrepreneur Zandra Cunningham.

Chair Johnson noted that the Performance Evaluation Committee will reschedule their meeting originally scheduled for Thursday, February 8 at 4:30 p.m. to Tuesday,

February 13 or Wednesday, February 14. This is still being decided. She went on to discuss a visionary retreat to review the current committees and determine which ones are necessary to keep other than the committees mandated in the Bylaws.

Following that, Chair Johnson continued reviewing the proposed agenda. COO Purtell explained proposed resolution 2024-1 - WAN Contract - Exercise 2nd Voluntary Extension. She stated that the proposed resolution is to extend the contract that already exists. It has already been extended once, and this resolution would extend it one more and final time before the contract expires and a RFP needs to be issued.

Chair Johnson continued through the proposed agenda. She asked about proposed resolution 2024-2 - Appointment of Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) Records Access Officer. COO Purtell explained that Process Improvement Manager Erin Vest will be the new FOIL Records Access Officer moving forward.

COO Purtell went on to remind the Executive Committee that there will be an ACT workshop at the Central Library on Saturday, March 9. Chair Johnson asked what time it begins, COO Purtell stated that it should start at 9:00 a.m., library staff arrives early to let trustees in at around 8:30 a.m. for coffee in Central's Staff Lounge. COO Purtell also informed the Executive Committee that on Friday, February 9 at the Central Library, Senator Gillibrand will be hosting a press conference. The press conference will be related to the extension of the Affordable Connectivity Program.

Trustee Sasiadek wanted to share that he sought out advice regarding how the Board can better regulate themselves given past issues. He received an idea from Assistant Deputy Director Judy Fachko. She suggested that the Board attends the sexual harassment training that the Library requires every year. Chair Johnson stated that that training, as well as, the bullying and hostile work environment training would be beneficial. COO Purtell stated that it was a great suggestion. She went on to say that more recent revisions of New York State laws, even if you received the training from an employer through a different organization, board member may have to receive it again through the Library because the law requires training to review the Library's internal policy. She mentioned Kantola and the various trainings the Library offers through them annually. Chair Johnson asked if the Library has active shooter trainings. COO Purtell stated that the Library does not offer that online, however, previous trainings are on the Library's Intranet.

Chair Johnson went on to ask about fire drills. COO Purtell stated that she has been working with Facility Operations Manager Andrew Wiede and the Central Library has a fully updated emergency evacuation procedure. She went through the details of the procedure, including maps, zones, etc. COO Purtell stated that the Central Library had a fire drill last year and this was a helpful time to find items that needed to be updated.

In regards to the city branches, the Central Library's emergency plan was extended to fit each branch. Each branch has their own operating procedures, a community contact, and ensure that they had an alternative evacuation site in inclement weather.

COO Purtell went on to explain that the Library's Staff Development Coordinator Tara Kaye has scheduled WNYCOSH to attend a Managers/Directors meeting in May to go over fire extinguisher operation and safety. Discussion ensued. Trustee El-Behairy asked where the evacuation maps can be located. COO Purtell stated they are located

outside of all the meeting rooms and folders in each department, and there is information on the maps on the Intranet, and internal documents. Further discussion ensued.

COO asked Trustee Sasiadek if he wanted her to follow-up with ADD Fachko regarding training. Trustee Sasiadek stated that as a Board they can discuss and follow-up with ADD Fachko. Discussion ensued. Trustee El-Behairy asked if it would qualify as trustee training. It was decided that it would not. Discussion ensued about trustee training and encouraging board members to attend the ACT workshop.

Trustee Panty started a discussion about Board reappointments. Discussion ensued.

There being no further business, Trustee Sasiadek motioned to adjourn and Trustee Panty seconded. The meeting ended at 4:32 p.m.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Resolution 2024-1 - WAN Contract – Exercise 2nd Voluntary Extension. Assistant Deputy Director – Controller Emily Patronik informed the Board that they are still finishing financials for December 2023. ADD-Controller Patronik went on to explain Resolution 2024-1 as presented.

RESOLUTION 2024-1

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 16, 2023, the Board of Trustees adopted Resolution 2023-7, approves exercising the 1st voluntary extension with Spectrum Enterprise, to provide service from 7/1/2023 through 6/30/2024, and

WHEREAS, we are now approaching the end of the 1st voluntary extension 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 2nd voluntary extension, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL System approves exercising the 2nd voluntary extension with Spectrum Enterprise, to provide service from 7/1/2024 through 6/30/2025, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Library Director or designee(s) is authorized to execute the necessary documents to implement the 2nd voluntary extension, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Library Director or 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.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval of Resolution 2024-1, Trustee Bartholomew seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item E.3 – Performance Evaluation Committee.

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
Board of Trustees – Performance Evaluation Committee

December 28, 2023

Present: Chair Kimberly Johnson, members Lucy Candelario, John Craik, Carima El-Behairy, Elaine Panty, and Christopher Sasiadek*. Also present were Assistant Deputy Director – Human Resources Judy Fachko, and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich. Those designated with an asterisk (*) attended the meeting remotely.

The meeting of the Performance Evaluation Committee began at 4:33 p.m. All members were present.

Chair Johnson entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session at 4:33 p.m. for the purpose of reviewing the timeline for the performance evaluation of Director John Spears. Trustee Panty moved, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and approval was unanimous. ADD Fachko and Assistant to the Director Goodrich remained in the meeting, as well.

At 5:25 p.m., on a motion by Trustee Craik seconded by Trustee Candelario, the Performance Evaluation concluded Executive Session and reconvened in public session. No action was taken in Executive Session.

With no further business, on a motion by Trustee Craik seconded by Trustee Candelario, the Performance Evaluation Committee adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

January 25, 2024

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

Page 6

Present: Chair Kimberly Johnson and members John Craik, Carima El-Behairy, Elaine Panty, and Christopher Sasiadek. Also present were Process Improvement Manager Erin Vest and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich.

The meeting of the Performance Evaluation Committee began at 4:32 p.m. Trustee Lucy Candelario was unable to attend.

Chair Johnson entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session at 4:33 p.m. for the purpose of reviewing the survey results of Director John Spears performance evaluation. Trustee El-Behairy moved, Trustee Panty seconded, and approval was unanimous. Process Improvement Manager Vest, and Assistant to the Director Goodrich remained in the meeting, as well.

At 5:20 p.m., on a motion by Trustee Craik seconded by Trustee Sasiadek, the Performance Evaluation Committee concluded Executive Session and reconvened in public session. No action was taken in Executive Session.

With no further business, on a motion by Trustee Sasiadek, seconded by Trustee Panty, the Performance Evaluation Committee adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

February 14, 2024

Present: Chair Kimberly Johnson and members Carima El-Behairy, Elaine Panty, and Christopher Sasiadek. Also present were Director John Spears and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich.

The meeting of the Performance Evaluation Committee began at 4:35 p.m. Trustee Lucy Candelario and Trustee John Craik were unable to attend.

Chair Johnson entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session at 4:36 p.m. for the purpose of reviewing the survey results with Director Spears. Trustee Sasiadek moved, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and approval was unanimous. Director Spears, and Assistant to the Director Goodrich remained in the meeting, as well.

At 5:28 p.m., on a motion by Trustee Sasiadek seconded by Trustee El-Behairy, the Performance Evaluation Committee concluded Executive Session and reconvened in public session. No action was taken in Executive Session.

With no further business, on a motion by Trustee Sasiadek, seconded by Trustee Panty, the Performance Evaluation Committee adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Agenda Item E.3.a – Executive Session. Trustee Sasiadek motioned to enter into Executive Session, Trustee Bedenko seconded, and this was approved unanimously. The Board entered into Executive Session at 4:12 p.m. On a motion by Trustee Amodeo and a second by Trustee Bartholomew, Executive Session ended at 4:30 p.m. At this time members of the public, Director Spears, and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich were called back into the meeting. Upon conclusion of the

Executive Session, Resolution 2024-3 Library Director Evaluation and Salary Recommendation was voted on. On a motion by Trustee Amodeo and a second by Trustee Craik, Resolution 2024-3 was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2024-3

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library has exclusive authority to hire a Director of the Library and set the salary of the Director pursuant to Section 6224 of the New York State Unconsolidated Laws, and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL Board of Trustees appointed John Spears as Director of the B&ECPL effective April 11, 2022 at an annual salary of \$185,000, and

WHEREAS, Resolution 2022-7 stated that this salary would be subject to future increases based upon funding availability and satisfactory performance as measured against annually determined goals and objectives, and

WHEREAS, the Board appointed a Performance Evaluation Committee in December 2023 to assess the performance of Director Spears since his appointment and to set goals for the next evaluation period, and

WHEREAS, after a thorough performance evaluation process, the Performance Evaluation Committee has found Director Spears' performance to be strong, and

WHEREAS, the Performance Evaluation Committee recommends adjustment to Director Spears' salary based on this performance, and

WHEREAS, adequate funds are available in the Contractual Salary Reserves budget line, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that John Spears' annual salary be increased to \$194,250 effective April 11, 2024, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Board of Trustees sets the following goals for Director Spears for the next performance period, through March 2025:

- 1.) Articulate and share a clear vision of the Library's future.
- 2.) Improve communication with staff and contracting libraries.
- 3.) Continue to improve transparency and involvement in the budget process.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Spears began his report by noting that Zandra Cunningham, who was the special guest during the opening of the Black Doll Exhibit, was the youngest graduate of the University at Buffalo Entrepreneur Program at the age of thirteen. He also wanted to announce that for Black History Month the Library is holding an extraordinary amount of programs. He wanted to commend Assistant Deputy Director Dorinda Darden and System Services and noted that there

was an overwhelming demand for programs. The Library, under ADD Darden, had to seek out additional performance groups to meet the above stated demand.

Next, Director Spears went on to note the progress made on the Teen and Children's Areas at the Central Library and offered a tour to the Board after the meeting. He wanted to thank Erie County for their supplemental funding for some of the construction of these areas. He then mentioned Advocacy Day and the legislation that the New York Library Association advocates for. Director Spears went on to list and explain various legislation that is being supported, such as the Freedom to Read Act, elimination of a construction cap, book fair tax exemption, allowing association libraries to opt into the New York State Retirement System, requirement for public access to publicly funded research (pertains mainly to academic libraries), circulation of a pass to all New York State Parks from every library, e-books terms legislation, and civil services modernization. Discussion ensued pertaining to the book fair tax exemption and civil service modernization. Chief Operation Officer Jeannine Purtell briefly explained the proposed legislation on changing the Rule of Three to the Rule of Five pertaining to civil service.

Finally, Director Spears reviewed the American Library Association's update to their core values, which are now: access, equity, intellectual freedom and privacy, public good, and sustainability. He also stated that groups are forming within the ALA to propose interpretations of these core values and forms to join particular groups are due February 29, if there is any interest. He also wanted to add that the County and the Library have been awarded \$3,000,000 for Central's roofing project from the New York Department of Environmental Conservation. There was a press conference held at the Central Library on Thursday, February 20, to announce the entire program for all of New York State.

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

B&ECPL Monthly Report January 2024

Job Fair - In partnership with the New York State Department of Labor, System Adult Outreach Services Librarian **Jacob Rachwal** coordinated a *Job Fair* held on January 24 at the Central Library. There were 73 businesses and organizations on hand to share the many job opportunities and services that are available to job seekers and conduct interviews. Over 450 people attended the event.

Let's Go! WNED PBS series - Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio** participated on January 10 at the Central Library in the filming of an episode of the *Let's Go!* WNED PBS series. The series is intended to help children learn about some of the cultural institutions in Western New York. **Susan** demonstrated how children and

families might engage with the Grosvenor Room collection by utilizing the local history file to locate items in the scrapbook collection and how to utilize the microfilm machines to look at historic local newspapers.

The 44th Annual Community Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. – The event was held at the Merriweather Library and featured poetry by Buffalo’s first Poet Laureate Jillian Hanesworth, an original spoken word/ dance performance by students of the Buffalo Academy for Visual and Performing Arts, and the lively drummers of the African American Cultural Center. The Honorable Clifford Bell served as Master of Ceremonies as he has done for many years.

“Together as One” – Together as One is a community-wide collaboration for Black History Month in February will include special programming in more than 20 of our libraries; an annual exhibit on local sites important to Black history and coordinated by the Buffalo African American Museum on view at Central until March 1; and the Black History Month Speaker Series highlighting local heritage organizations every Friday in February (12 noon-1 p.m.). The “Together as One” collaboration announced the February activities, particularly the new, free bus tour each Saturday, at a well-attended press event at Central on January 27. Bus tour registration and February activities are available at www.Bfloafricanamericanmuseum.org.

Straight Talk Evening Seminar Series - The **Straight Talk Evening Seminar Series** for small businesses and entrepreneurs began at the Central Library on January 30. System Adult Outreach Services Manager **Carol Kowalik-Happy** and Cheektowaga Library Director **Daniel Caufield** represented the library. **Daniel** presented on library resources.

1. Public Services

Genealogy Training – Genealogy Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman** presented an online class titled, *Death Record Substitutes* on January 10. Attendees learned about genealogy records that list death information before vital records laws were fully standardized. **Rhonda** hosted *Creating Timelines to Aid Genealogy Research* which was presented virtually on January 27 by former B&ECPL Librarian Sandra Williams Bush. In addition, **Rhonda** created a series of *Genealogy Short-Takes* which will be recorded for viewing during the winter and spring. January’s classes included *Getting Started with African American Genealogy in the Grosvenor Room*, *African American Newspapers*, and *U.S. Census Population Schedules and Schedules of the Enslaved*.

Special Collections Displays - Rare Book and Map Librarian **Charles Alaimo** set up new displays for the Gluck Manuscript Collection and the Mark Twain Room. In the Gluck display are books and a manuscript by local author Anna Katharine Green. The Twain Room display highlights Twain’s return to Buffalo in 1884 on a joint lecture tour, with reviews and programs from local newspapers and books by his fellow lecturer, George W. Cable.

TechKnow Lab - The TechKnow Lab at the Central Library hosted Erie County Senior Services Energy Crisis Assistance workers on January 31. The workers assisted individuals and families with applying for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) to help pay utility bills.

Buffalo Branches:

Merriweather Branch Library Programming Highlights:

- The BQ Book Club met on January 3 to discuss *The Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead.
- Coach McDuffie of Archangel 8 Chess Academy hosted weekly *Chess for Kids* enrichment programs on Thursdays.
- The Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge provided craft activities during the week of January 18 as part of a new collaboration.
- The Buffalo East Homeowners Assistance Fund – commonly known as BEHAF – continued to be supported through the use of the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library’s facilities by the Western New York Law Center. The program assists homeowners in zip codes surrounding the East Side of Buffalo to pay county tax, city tax, water, and user fees that are in arrears.
- Technology Clerk **Hailey Oldham** continued to provide one-on-one technology training classes to library patrons.

Crane Branch Library Programming Highlights:

- Staff hosts story times on alternating Tuesday mornings.
- There is Lego Club on Wednesday afternoons and Family Game Night on Wednesday evenings.
- Author Timm Otterson gave a talk this past month.
- A Stitch Circle is held on alternating Monday evenings.
- There is an Old Time Music Jam monthly.

Outreach:

The Library on Wheels Bookmobile, staffed by Mobile Services Librarian Trainee **Susan Blake** and Mobile Services Senior Page **Olivia Adams**, participated in the *Saturday Academy* at Buffalo Public School #3 D’Youville Porter Campus School on January 6.

Daniel Caufield, Carol Kowalik-Happy, and Jacob Rachwal attended the annual *Straight Talk Conference* held at the Buffalo Convention Center on January 20. This event was sponsored by the U. S. Small Business Administration Buffalo District Office and Buffalo Niagara Chapter of SCORE. **Daniel** presented on developing business plans, and **Carol** and **Jacob**. Subsequently, *Book a Librarian* appointments were scheduled for some participants.

Carol Kowalik-Happy participated in *Career Day* at Immaculate Conception School in East Aurora on January 29. She presented to students in grades K-8.

B is for Book Exhibit:

The *B is for Book: Children’s Stories Through the Centuries Exhibit* has been disassembled and will no longer be on display at the Central Library. It can be viewed virtually on the B&ECPL website.

2. Collection Development

Physical Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	2,360	2,360	217	217	523,764
Young Adult Print	480	480	66	66	76,159
Adult Print	3,436	3,436	714	714	1,783,313
Media	3,247	3,247	352	352	541,448
Other*	1,605	1,605	3	3	171,405
Subtotal	11,128	11,128	1,352	1,352	3,096,089

*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other.

Electronic Collections*:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	7,304	7,304	1,635	1,635	125,256
eAudiobooks	10,828	10,828	418	418	75,863
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5,091
Subtotal	18,132	18,132	2,053	2,053	206,210

*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	29,260	29,260	3,405	3,405	3,302,299

3. Funding/Fundraising

Funding:

New York State Proposed Budget – On February 1, Governor Hochul released her Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget (the State fiscal year runs from April 1, 2024 – March 30, 2025). Highlights may be found at <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-highlights-fy-2025-budget>. More information about the State Budget may be found at: <https://www.budget.ny.gov/pubs/archive/fy25/ex/index.html>.

The State FY 2025 Budget provides library operating and construction aid for our calendar year 2024 Budget. The Proposed Budget increases library operating aid from what was provided in the FY 2024 Enacted Budget by \$2.5 million to \$102.1 million statewide. The Proposed Budget also includes \$34 million for Library Construction to fund various capital project and \$3 million to ensure continued access to NOVELny, a free online library of magazines, newspapers, maps, charts, research, and reference books available to all New Yorkers.

The Library community will advocate for improved support.

Fundraising:

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1 – January 31, 2024	\$7,986.77

Highlights:

A mass email was sent in January detailing the Central Library’s Winter Programs. It went to over 30,000 patrons that selected the Central Library as their materials’ pickup location.

4. Facilities

On January 5, Library and Erie County DPW staff conducted interviews with two final architecture firms for the Central roof replacement design. Watts Architecture and Engineering was awarded the contract for that element of the project. Barring any delays in legislation, the design phase should begin in March.

On January 12, library maintenance staff and Siemens conducted a final walk through and review of the Central mixing box replacement project. Siemens should receive the PO for the equipment in 1-2 weeks, at which point the replacement equipment will be ordered. The physical replacement of the current equipment will be done in phases to confirm correct calibration and programming.

On January 24, staff met with a local contractor to discuss the Crane Branch rooftop public access project. Due to the grade of the roof, the current railing around the perimeter of the roof would not be ADA compliant with the addition of the roof pedestals. The proposed solution recommended adding new, horizontal piping extensions to the top of the existing roof top railings, increasing the total height of the railing. These extensions would match the existing railing material and bring the railing into compliance.

On January 25, Danforth Company, which specializes in providing engineered mechanical solutions in commercial markets, was invited to the Central Library to examine the HVAC system that supports the Rare Book Room. The current system has been experiencing complications with maintaining appropriate humidity levels. Danforth will return to the library to conduct a walk-through of the Rare Book Room to obtain more information on square footage and compatibility of replacement equipment and to provide possible solutions for the system.

On January 30, Zaxis Architectural held a meeting with Library staff to discuss two upcoming projects. Zaxis will be providing the design and construction administration for the roof replacement, HVAC replacement, parking lot replacement, and façade replacement at the Leroy R. Coles, Jr. Branch. They will also be providing design and construction administration for the roof replacement and skylight repair at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch. As the Coles Branch project has been determined a priority due to the current condition of the roof, an on-site field visit has been planned for early February.

Specific dates were set for elements of both the Emergency Egress System project and the Loading Dock Rehabilitation project at Central. With regard to the Emergency Egress timeline, the advertisement for the bid will be published on February 5, a contractor site visit will occur on February 15, and bid opening is slated for February 29. With regard to the Loading Dock Rehabilitation, the advertisement for the bid will be published on February 5, a contractor site visit will occur on February 15, and bid opening is scheduled on February 27.

Four additional AED's were purchased with funding provided through Highmark. One AED was sent to the Merriweather Branch and the remaining three will be placed throughout Central.

5. Staff Development

Staff Development Outreach Consultations - The new Staff Development Coordinator **Tara Kaye** (who started in December) has met with almost 20 members of leadership from a range of library departments and branches to begin gaining insights into the current state of staff development within the organization and compile feedback on learning needs. Tara will continue this initial outreach into the spring.

Youth Services Group (YSG) Staff Development – The January YSG meeting, organized by Youth Outreach Services Manager **Chelsey Lonberger**, included a staff development opportunity for all those in attendance on *Rethinking Summer Reading*.

All-Staff Learning Opportunity – Human Resources promoted *Building Good Working Relationships*, a live webinar held on January 18 presented by Library 2.0. More than 60 staffers signed up to either attend the live event or watch the recording.

Webinars – Staff attended many pertinent webinars in January, including several courses on design topics that were attended by multiple staffers: *Canva 2.0 for Libraries* (from Niche Academy), *How Nonprofits Can Make Change with Storytelling Techniques* (from Canva), and *Advance Your Skills in Graphic Design* (from LinkedIn Learning).

6. Communications

Media:

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
TV taping for the WNED PBS program Let's Go! with Special Collections Manager Susan Buttaccio and Central Youth Services Librarian Dan Lewandowski	Behind-the-scenes look at the library for second graders.	Program will air in the spring/summer
Q & A for Buffalo Spree magazine	Eclipse programming for libraries and library literacy programs for children.	Buffalo Spree March issue
Cameras Invited	Job Fair @ Central	January 24, WKBW TV Channel 7 News
Cameras Invited	Dr. King Annual Celebration at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library	January 18, WGRZ TV Channel 2 News
Media Event - Library Director John Spears welcomed the audience	The Buffalo African American Museum (BAAM) held a media event to announce Black History Month programs.	January 27, covered by Channel 2, 4, 7 and Spectrum News.
Taped radio interview	Black Doll exhibit	January 31, WBLK radio
Recorded TV interview	Black Doll exhibit	WGRZ TV 2, aired on Feb. 1
Media Release	Black Doll exhibit	Sent on January 28 - 30
Media Release	Winter Reading Challenge	Sent January 18
Library advertising	Ads ran for the Black Doll exhibit, and snowshoe kits for youth.	Bee Publications, WBLK radio, Neighbor to Neighbor - Springville, Elma and Aurora publication, ads ran throughout the month

Social Media:

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
Facebook	128	128	2,109	2,109	104	13,182
Flickr	-	-	9,424	9,424	-	60
Google Ads ¹	N/A	N/A	2,807	2,807	N/A	N/A
Instagram	10	10	2,039	2,039	156	5,176
Pinterest	40	40	89	89	3	2,056
Twitter	52	52	433	433	18	10,952
YouTube	16	16	1,995	1,995	15	577
TikTok	-	-	197	197	9	574
Total	246	246	19,093	19,093	305	32,577

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

7. Partnerships

Buffalo African American Museum – Carol Kowalik-Happy participated in the press event for the *Together as One* Black History Month program held at the Central Library on January 27. *Together as One* was started by the Buffalo African American History Museum in an effort to centralize information about Black History Month programs and events being offered by Western New York cultural organizations. Several media outlets attended. **Anne Conable**, Development & Communications Community Engagement Manager, assisted with this year’s BAAM public programming planning. The members of the *Together as One* committee were impressed with the programs that will be offered at libraries throughout the B&ECPL System.

Buffalo Public Schools (BPS) – The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library has partnered with the Buffalo Public Schools (BPS) to provide the *BPS Teacher Professional Development Course* at the Central Library. On January 25, **Susan Buttaccio** provided a presentation at the first of five professional development sessions offered to BPS teachers. Susan presented on the history of the library system and assisted **Anne Conable** with a tour of the Central Library. TechKnow Lab Librarian **Jacqueline Hovey** presented on the B&ECPL’s website and digital resources.

Buffalo State University Art Conservation Department - Susan Buttaccio met with Rebecca Ploeger, an Associate Professor from the Buffalo State University Art Conservation Department. Students from the department will be utilizing the Grosvenor Room’s collections to practice their preservation assessment skills by analyzing the environmental conditions in various part of the Special Collections Department and suggesting ways to preserve materials for future use. B&ECPL’s new Rare Book Curator **Heather Gring** will be working with Rebecca to identify areas that will be useful to the exercise.

Operation Hope - Carol Kowalik-Happy and Mobile Services Manager **Andrew Maines** met with Blake Vetrone, Financial Wellbeing Coach for Operation Hope, on January 12 to discuss offering education classes throughout the B&ECPL System.

UB Heals - Jacob Rachwal met with representatives from UB Heals on January 5 to assist with planning for their *Women's Health Clinic* being held in the Meeting Room at the Central Library on February 12.

8. Planning for the Future

Carol Kowalik-Happy coordinated with Arthur Musarra, an attorney from the Western New York Law Center's Small Business Legal Clinic, to provide small business legal help at the Central Library. The first session is scheduled for March 15.

The 2024 Black Doll Exhibit - Recognizing Royalty was designed by Graphics Department Manager **Dawn Stanton**. The 30 + piece display runs through April 9 at the downtown Central Library.

9. Director Activities

Meetings/Events Attended by Director January 2024

Date	Meeting/Event
January 2, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
January 2, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
January 3, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
January 4, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Buffalo Cultural Leaders
January 4, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual Working Group
January 4, 2024	Interview - Director of Security and Safety Management
January 5, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual Editors
January 5, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
January 8, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
January 8, 2024	Virtual Meeting - American Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee
January 9, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
January 9, 2024	Virtual Meeting - PULISDO
January 9, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
January 10, 2024	Meeting - Managers/Directors
January 10, 2024	Meeting - Judy Fachko
January 10, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
January 11, 2024	Webinar - Developing Library Strategic Response to AI
January 11, 2024	Meeting - B&ECPL Executive Committee
January 11, 2024	Event - Martin Luther King, Jr. Program at Merriweather Branch Library
January 12, 2024	Virtual Meeting - NYLA Legislative Committee

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

Page 17

January 12, 2024	Interview - Director of Security and Safety Management
January 12, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
January 12, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual Editors
January 15, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
January 16, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
January 16, 2024	Meeting - Library Patron
January 17, 2024	Virtual Meeting - PITS (Patron Incident Tracking System) Demonstration
January 18, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Jeannine Purtell and Emily Patronik
January 18, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Public Library System Directors
January 18, 2024	Virtual Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees
January 19, 2024	Conference - LibLearnX
January 20, 2024	Conference - LibLearnX
January 21, 2024	Conference - LibLearnX
January 22, 2024	Conference - LibLearnX
January 23, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
January 23, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
January 23, 2024	Meeting - ErieNET Board of Directors
January 23, 2024	Virtual Meeting - WNYLRC Board
January 23, 2024	Meeting - 5/14 Commission Public Engagement/Survey Results
January 23, 2024	Event - "Origin" Movie Screening
January 24, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
January 24, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
January 24, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
January 24, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Library Foundation
January 25, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden and Samantha Purpora
January 25, 2024	Meeting - Monica Mooney and Members of Clarence Library Board
January 25, 2024	Meeting - Rick Ortmeier
January 25, 2024	Phone Meeting - Lauren Moore, New York State Librarian
January 25, 2024	Event - Elmwood Village Dry Happy Hour at Crane Branch Library
January 26, 2024	Meeting - Tara Kaye
January 26, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora, Steve Hovey, and Emily Patronik
January 26, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
January 27, 2024	Event - Together as One Press for Black History Month
January 29, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
January 30, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
January 30, 2024	Event - Re-appointment of Christine Bartholomew and John Craik
January 30, 2024	Meeting - WNYLRC Officers
January 30, 2024	Virtual Meeting - American Library Association Committee on Professional Ethics
January 30, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
January 31, 2024	Virtual Meeting - MetLib 2024 Conference Planning
January 31, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Advocacy Day Preparation w/ WNYLRC
January 31, 2024	Virtual Meeting - 2024 Library Advocacy Day w/ Max Prime

January 31, 2024	Meeting - Library Patron and Pastor Tim Newkirk
------------------	---

Appendices
A. Monthly Statistics

System Programming Statistics:

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Regular*				
Adults	910	910	2539	2539
Children 5 and under	740	740	3673	3673
Children 6-11	880	880	1934	1934
Intergenerational/Combined	3979	3979	6414	6414
Teens	341	341	509	509
Regular Total	6850	6850	15069	15069
Regular Total	6850	6850	15069	15069
Virtual				
Live Virtual				
Adults	14	14	113	113
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	0	0	0	0
Intergenerational/Combined	5	5	51	51
Teens	6	6	23	23
Live Virtual Total	25	25	187	187
Recorded Virtual				
Adults	6	6	58	58
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	2	2	241	241
Intergenerational/Combined	10	10	409	409
Teens	0	0	0	0
Recorded Virtual Total	18	18	708	708
Virtual Total	43	43	895	895
Grand Total	6893	6893	15964	15964

*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 <https://www.buffalolib.org/monthly-statistics/2024-circulation-public-access-computer-wifi-and-library-visits-detail>.

B. Contracting Library Activity Reports

Orchard Park Public Library – submitted by Peggy Errington, Director

- The Library welcomes Siberian husky ambassadors from the Siberian Husky Club of the Niagara Frontier for a meet and greet following the annual Alaskan Iditarod Race.
- The Library collaborates with the NY State Dept. Of Taxation for free e-file help weekly from February - April.
- The Master Gardeners from Cornell Cooperative Extension continue their Seed lenders Lecture Series in February with “Winter Seed Harvesting” and in March with “Magic of Compost”.
- The Dungeons and Dragons cohort has steadily increased in popularity, now requiring two campaign groups.
- January Teen Paint and Sip was so popular, some teens were waitlisted.
- Mr. K’s Mobile Dome will visit the library for a mini-planetarium experience to celebrate the solar eclipse.
- The February display case will feature an exhibit from the Orchard Park Historical Society highlighting Orchard Park’s contributions as a station on the Underground Railroad.
- The Library will spotlight African American artists Alma Thomas and Jerry Pinkney with art sessions in February.
- Children’s Librarian Kasey Mack will travel to the Orchard Park Historical Society Jolls’ House for a History Kids program with a Children’s Tea Party.
- Sundance Kids Farm will visit over Winter Break for Hedgehog Stories and bring real hedgehogs!
- The *In Good Health Series* continues to draw an avid, loyal following: February, Beekeeping, Benefits of Raw Honey and Beeswax products; March, Erie County Cancer Services.
- Orchard Park Library hosts book clubs for adults, teens and a comic book club for school age kids.
- *Creative Writing Club* is a new monthly initiative for a small, dedicated group of wordsmiths.

- The Orchard Park Library Teen Advisory Group (TAG) is very active. TAG members plan and execute our very popular Escape Room experiences for families. The escape room theme for February is “Escape from Cupid’s Castle”.
- Teens have shown a great deal of interest in a Taylor Swift themed “Un-Valentine’s Day” party, including karaoke, trivia, crafts & snacks.
- The bi-monthly Teen Book Box matching program continues to reach max capacity each session. NEW: a similar Book Boxes for seniors was launched with Fox Run.
- Many books from the Blind Date with a Book adult & teen displays found matches.
- The Friends of the OP Library host two Pop-Up Donated Book Sales in January and March.

Agenda Item G – Report of the Foundation. Trustee El-Behairy reported that the Foundation met on January 24. The Foundation was awarded \$10,000 to work on a new strategic plan. The Foundation will be using that money to determine a road map of priorities, tasks, and future capacity. They are also looking for a planning facilitator. Trustee Craik asked if the \$10,000 was for the Library or for the Foundation. Trustee El-Behairy stated it was for the Foundation.

Agenda Item H – ACT Report. Martha Buyer stated that ACT is revising their bylaws and they will have them to ADD Darden as soon as they can. She also summarized ACT’s last meeting. She announced that they have a new mission statement: “ACT will improve the knowledge of library trustees to create sustainable, responsive, forward looking libraries that serve the needs of their respective communities and the community at large.” She then invited the Board to the ACT meeting on Saturday, March 9. She briefly reviewed some of the content of the upcoming meeting.

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

Agenda Item I – Public Comment. None.

Agenda Item J – Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item K – New Business. Chair Johnson introduced the proposed Resolution 2024-2 to elect a new Freedom of Information Law Records Access Officer.

Agenda Item K.1 – Appointment of Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) Records Access Officer. Chair Johnson summarized the proposed resolution as provided below. Trustee Panty motioned for approval, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and the following was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2024-2

WHEREAS, New York State regulations require the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library appoint one or more persons as records access officer, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that effective February 15, 2024, Erin Vest is appointed to serve as the B&ECPL Records Access Officer, officially succeeding all others who have held that post.

Agenda Item L - Adjournment. There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee Kelly with a second by Trustee Panty, the meeting was adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Moore
Secretary