

MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
January 18, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held remotely on Thursday, January 18, 2024, due to unsafe travel conditions. In accordance with the Board's Procedures for Trustee Videoconferencing, the in-person participation requirements of POL § 103-a(2)(c) shall not apply during a state disaster emergency declared by the Governor pursuant to Executive Law § 28 or a local state of emergency proclaimed by the Chief Executive of Erie County or City of Buffalo pursuant to § 24 of the Executive 3 Law if the B&ECPL Board of Trustees determines that the circumstances necessitating the emergency declaration would affect or impair the ability of the B&ECPL Board of Trustees to hold an in-person meeting. The following members were present remotely:

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 A. Candelario  
John D. Craik, Esq.  
Christopher Sasiadek, Esq.

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. The meeting began with Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich reading a statement regarding the weather related state of emergency. A call of the roll was taken. A quorum was present.

Trustee Moore arrived remotely at 4:02 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 December 21, 2023. Trustee Craik made a motion for approval, Trustee Amodeo seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Nominating Committee. A copy of the written report was included in the Board packet.

Agenda Item D.1 – Election of Officers and Executive Committee. Nominating Committee Member Alan Bedenko reported that the committee met on January 9. The following slate was nominated for 2024:

**Chair:** Kimberly Johnson

**Vice Chair:** Carima El-Behairy

**Secretary:** Joel Moore

**Treasurer:** Alan Bedenko

**Executive Committee Members:** Lucy Candelario, Elaine Panty, and Christopher Sasiadek

There were no new nominations from the floor. On a motion by Trustee Sasiadek, seconded by Trustee Craik, nominations were closed and the slate was unanimously approved as presented.

Agenda Item E – Meeting Schedule for 2024. The 2024 meeting schedule was included in the Board packet as an information item. Meetings will continue to be held on the third Thursday of the month at 4:00 p.m.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Chair. Chair Johnson began her report by informing the Board that the Performance Evaluation Committee for Director John Spears met on Thursday, December 28, 2023. She reported that during the meeting the committee reviewed the questions of the survey and restructured the formatting. The survey was distributed on January 8, and the deadline for submission was January 15. The Performance Evaluation Committee will be meeting again on Thursday, January 25, to review the results. Next, Chair Johnson reminded Trustees to complete their Trustee Training requirement.

Subsequently, Chair Johnson informed the Board of a potential collaboration between Second Generation Theatre and the Library regarding their educational seminars for teenagers. Second Generation Theatre has reached out to Assistant Deputy Director Joy Testa Cinquino to begin the process. Chair Johnson also mentioned a screening of the film “Origin” directed by Ava DuVernay that was postponed but was then rescheduled for the evening of Thursday, January 18.

Chair Johnson advised the Board that for 2024 she wants to promote increased activity from Trustees when it comes to visiting their assigned member libraries or attending Library programs in general. Following that, Chair Johnson mentioned Advocacy Day, which is happening February 6 and February 7. She asked Director Spears if there was any room left to attend. Director Spears stated that there could be additional spaces, but hotel rooms would be tricky to navigate. He followed up by saying those who are still

interested are more than welcome to reach out and they will find a way to accommodate them.

Chair Johnson continued her report by announcing that Black History Month programming begins on February 1 with the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Black Doll Exhibit Opening Event at the downtown Central Library.

She also mentioned a grant writing workshop she attended at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library that was notably informative. Chair Johnson acknowledged the Foundation databases that are only accessible at the Central Library and suggested having a workshop downtown so that they can be utilized. Chair Johnson also noted that when she used the Foundation databases downtown, Librarian III Carol Kowalik-Happy was helpful and had a wealth of knowledge pertaining to the databases.

Agenda Item G - Committee Reports.

Agenda Item G.1 - Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on January 11, 2024. A copy of the written report was included in the Board packet. Trustee El-Beairy briefly summarized the meeting. Trustee Bedenko moved to have the written report entered into the Minutes, Trustee Bartholomew seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

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

The meeting of the Executive Committee began at 4:01 p.m. After a call of the roll, it was noted that a quorum was present.

Trustee Candelario arrived at 4:03 p.m.

Chair Johnson commenced the meeting by reviewing the proposed agenda for the B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 18. Trustee Panty stated that she will have a report from the Nominating Committee and that the meeting went well. Chair Johnson noted that she will discuss the Performance Evaluation Committee in the Report of the Chair. ADD-Controller Patronik indicated that she will be discussing November 2023 financials for the Monthly Financial Report and that they are in the process of wrapping up Year-End. For the Budget and Finance Committee, ADD-Controller Patronik plans to send out information regarding a meeting as soon as the committee members are assigned for 2024. Discussion ensued regarding the committees. Trustee Sasiadek asked if there is a list of when committees were formed and what purpose they serve. Chair Johnson suggested having a review of all the committees, such as when they last met, their charges, and who is assigned to each committee. Director Spears stated that as part of the Report of the Director he will review the committees with the Board. Further discussion ensued. Director Spears

stated that we will gather what information we have before next Board meeting. At this time, a member of the public spoke regarding committees, and the rules of public comment were explained to them. Trustee El-Behairy asked if they will be deciding the committee members at the next Board meeting. Chair Johnson stated that they will decide committees and members once the Officers and the Executive Committee for 2024 are selected. Further discussion ensued regarding committees.

For the Report of the Chair, Chair Johnson communicated the timeline for the Performance Evaluation of Director Spears. The survey was distributed on January 8, 2024, and is due back on January 15, 2024. The results will be reviewed on January 25, 2024, and there will be a meeting of the Performance Evaluation Committee on February 8, 2024, after the Executive Committee meeting. Chair Johnson asked if the Board completed their Trustee Training, and Assistant to the Director Goodrich stated that she will look into it.

Next, Chair Johnson announced that she and Assistant Deputy Director Joy Testa Cinquino were contacted by Second Generation Theatre regarding classes for teens. ADD Testa Cinquino is working with them on logistics. Chair Johnson also added that, in collaboration with Councilmember Zeneta Everhart, the library will be hosting a pre-screening of the film "Origin," which is an adaptation of the book *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson. Discussion ensued.

Chair Johnson went on to emphasize the importance of Board members attending Library events and noted that Library Advocacy Day is coming up. Discussion ensued regarding upcoming events at the Library.

Finally, Chair Johnson mentioned that she attended a grant writing workshop at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library and that it was very effective and informative. She noted that she would like to have more workshops similar to that at Central Library. She also noted that when she did utilize the Book a Librarian resource, Librarian III Carol Kowalik-Happy was extremely helpful.

They moved onto the Meeting Schedule for 2024, and Chair Johnson asked the Executive Committee if they had any conflicts as of now with the meeting time at 4:00 p.m. They stated that there were no conflicts.

Director Spears began his report by announcing the timeline for the Phase II construction at the Isaías González-Soto Branch Library. The branch will be closed in the spring for a short time. The construction will include the remediation of asbestos and necessary construction on the lower level. He also stated that Councilmember David A. Rivera is interested in having a mural painted inside the Isaías González-Soto Branch Library. With the required public art portion of the project, two art pieces may be installed.

He went on to announce the new Teen Librarian, Taylor Harding, and briefly discussed their past work experience. Discussion regarding the teen area and staffing throughout the Library System ensued. Trustee El-Behairy asked if staffing levels at the City Branches have been an issue since both Crane Branch Library and Isaías González-Soto Branch Library are open now. Director Spears stated that this has not

been an issue, especially since the only library open seven days a week is the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library, which allows flexibility. Discussion ensued.

Finally, Director Spears spoke about Library Advocacy Day. He stated that there are 12 members signed up so far to attend. This would lead to 3 groups of 4 visiting each Legislator in Albany. He went on to explain that the participants represent the Library as a whole. He also explained that he is meeting with the NYLA Legislative Committee to discuss the Moms for Liberty group that will be in Albany on February 6, 2024, during Advocacy Day. He explained the Moms for Liberty group and talked briefly about book challenges locally and nationally.

Again, Chair Johnson explained the rules of public comment. For a final question, Trustee Sasiadek asked if the committees have to be filled by a certain date, and it was a general consensus that there is no deadline.

There being no further business, Trustee Panty motioned to adjourn, and Trustee Sasiadek seconded. The meeting ended at 4:40 p.m.

#### Agenda Item G.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item G.2.a – Monthly Financial Report. The monthly financial report for the year as of November 30, 2023, month-end close was included in the Board packet as an information item. Assistant Deputy Director – Controller Emily Patronik began by informing the Board that on Tuesday, January 16, Governor Hochul’s Executive Budget was released and that it included support for libraries in the amount of \$102.1 million of operating aid for library systems. This is a \$2.5 million increase from last year. The Executive Budget also appropriates \$3 million to ensure continued access to NOVELny. Following that, ADD-Controller Patronik stated that they are in the process of finalizing December’s financials and as of November 30, 2023, the Library continues to operate in good standing.

Agenda Item H – Report of the Director. Director John Spears began his report by informing the Board of the weather related closures that occurred several days prior and the current closure. He wanted to acknowledge and praise the Security and Maintenance Departments for their around the clock care of the facilities. Director Spears also acknowledged Human Resources, the Business Office, and IT for how they operate during emergency closures and that their efforts are imperative in keeping the Library running.

Next, Director Spears stated that the Advocacy Day preschedule was released. WNYLRC scheduled all of the meetings in Albany, and he credited Outreach and Digital Equity Coordinator Heidi Ziemer for coordinating the meetings. There will be three groups of five to attend the scheduled meetings with Legislators and/or Legislative Aides. Director Spears also mentioned that if another Board member is interested in attending that they will most likely have to stay at a different hotel and there are no guarantees that a spot is available.

Following that, Director Spears moved on to discuss current Board committees. He stated that Process Improvement Manager Erin Vest and Assistant to the Director Goodrich worked on a list of the current Board committees which was e-mailed to the Board of Trustees for review. Director Spears then summarized each committee and which ones are mandated by the Bylaws and which ones are not. He also stated the last meeting dates of each committee. ADD-Controller Patronik plans on having in-person or virtual meetings again with the Budget and Finance Committee to keep them involved with financial decisions.

Director Spears briefly explained the committees that are not mandated by the Bylaws: which are the Buffalo Library Services Committee, Development and Advocacy Committee, Planning Committee, and Special Collections Committee. These committees were created through Article V Section 10 of the B&ECPL Board of Trustees Bylaws. He stated that it has been some time since these committees have met. For example, the Planning Committee last met in December 2021, Development and Advocacy in June 2021, Buffalo Library Services Committee in October 2017, and the Special Collections Committee in September 2014. He also mentioned the ad-hoc committees that were formed for specific purposes, such as the Administrative Salary Review Committee, Director Search Committee, and the Director Performance Evaluation Committee.

Following the summary of current committees, Trustee El-Behairy asked if advocacy visits count as committee work, particularly for the Development and Advocacy Committee. Director Spears stated that advocacy visits would be separate from the committee since it is done through NYLA. Trustee El-Behairy followed up by stating she was curious because she knows Trustee Panty advocates locally. Trustee Craik suggested that Director Spears and Chair Johnson figure out how to structure the committees, evaluate their charges, and re-address their status. Director Spears explained the topic of committees came up at an Executive Committee meeting and it became apparent that the information on committees needed to be compiled since it is not readily known. Chair Johnson stated that she wants to re-evaluate the committees. Director Spears suggested creating an ad-hoc committee to review the non-mandated committees and see if they are necessary.

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

### **B&ECPL Monthly Report December 2023**

**Vintage Letterpress Machine** - On December 16, Launch Pad **Manager Jordan Smith** hosted a Letterpress Holiday Card Making program as a way to highlight older printing technologies (pulling from the synergy of the Jordan Collection Book Binding

exhibit currently on display in the Rare Book Room) while offering something quick and fun for people of all ages to make as gifts for the holidays. Eleven library patrons tried their hand at making cards with our vintage letterpress machine.



**New Children's Space - Central Library** - It has been an extraordinary team effort with the Maintenance Department led by **Mark Kross** and Central Children's staff led by Central Children's Department Manager **Dan Lewandowski** to create a new welcoming children's space. The space includes new family friendly furniture, carpet, and paint. The Children's staff also gained a new workroom located conveniently in the space as well. Although the space is currently open, a grand opening is planned for early February.

**George Scott Big Band** - System Adult Outreach Services Librarian **Jacob Rachwal**, in partnership with Erie County Department of Senior Services' University Express program, arranged for a concert to be held in the Central Library's Mason O. Damon Auditorium featuring the *George Scott Big Band* on December 9.

**Job Fair** - In partnership with the New York State Department of Labor, **Jacob Rachwal** coordinated a *Job Fair* at the Central Library on December 6. There were 82 participating businesses who shared the job opportunities that are available to job seekers. Over 550 people attended the event. Many of the businesses used library space and held "on the spot" interviews resulting in several people being hired on the same day.

**Starting and Managing Your Own Business Workshop** - System Adult Outreach Services Manager **Carol Kowalik-Happy** presented *Library Resources for Entrepreneurs* at SCORE's *Starting and Managing Your Own Business* day-long workshop held at the Central Library on December 2. As a result of the presentation, the library received quite a few *Book a Librarian* and *Book a Technology Trainer* requests as well as some library card applications.

## 1. Public Services

### Central Library:

December 6, 13, 20, & 27 - Adult Services Librarian **Kuniko Simon** coordinated Wednesday's "Movie Matinee." The movies featured this month were *Elf* (2003), *Miracle on 34th Street* (1994), *Last Holiday* (2006), and *Super Mario Bros* (2023).

December 15 - Adult Services Manager **Maria Lowe**, **Jordan Smith**, Children's Outreach Programming Librarian **Kelly Woods**, and Adult Services Librarian **Leslie Carr**, provided a tour and overview of Library and Launch Pad services for Research Lab High School 9th graders. Librarian Trainees **Faith Miller & Christina Lee** assisted with the tour by putting together a STEM related craft, Slime Making. The slime making was well received by all students participating in the craft. The teachers reported that they were pleased with the visit and will start bringing freshman to the library each year.

### Buffalo Branches:

**Dan Lewandowski** hosted a Build Your Own Graham Cracker House Making program at all eight Buffalo Branch libraries. The events were well attended, as everyone always looks forward to this special craft during the holiday season.

### System Services:

**Book Art** - Rare Book and Map Librarian **Charles Alaimo** facilitated a *Book Binding* class in partnership with the Western New York Book Arts Center in the Grosvenor Room at the Central Library on December 2. Participants learned to make bound leather journals and took a tour of the Rare Book Room's *Four Centuries of Book Binding: The Jordan Collection* exhibit. Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio** welcomed Ruby Merritt and others from the Western New York Book Arts Center for a bookmaking session on December 9. Participants learned the art of creating hardcover journals using a pamphlet stitch. **Susan** also provided a tour of the *Four Centuries of Book Binding: The Jordan Collection* exhibit to some of the participants.

**Technology Training** - TechKnow Lab Librarian **Brendan Chella** presented *Google Photos* and *The Cloud* technology training classes virtually on December 5 and December 12, respectively, as part of the B&ECPL's continuing partnership with Erie County Senior Services' University Express program.

**Tours and Visits** - Librarian Trainee **Isaac Johnson** provided a tour of the Grosvenor Room, Rare Book Room, the Mark Twain Room, and the *B is for Book* exhibit to a group of patrons on December 23. On December 28, **Charles Alaimo** and **Susan Buttaccio** welcomed New York State Senator Sean Ryan for a tour of the Mark Twain Room and a visit to the Rare Book room vault to examine the *Huckleberry Finn* manuscript. The visit was filmed and will be featured on Senator Ryan's social media accounts.



**Outreach:**

Mobile Services Manager **Andrew Maines** and Mobile Services Librarian Trainee **Susan Blake** participated in *Literacy Night* at Westminster Community Charter School on December 7. The Library on Wheels Bookmobile staffed by **Andrew** and Mobile Services Senior Page **Olivia Adams** participated in the *Saturday Academy* at Buffalo Public School #3 D'Youville Porter Campus School on December 9. Saturday Academies are free, family focused, educational, recreational, cultural, and social programs for school aged children throughout the city. The Bookmobile will be attending the Saturday Academies monthly throughout the remainder of the school year. **Andrew** and **Olivia** also staffed the Bookmobile at Buffalo Public School #45 The International School for participation in their *Reading with your Child Pajama Party* on December 13. The event included music, food, cultural celebrations, and a clothing giveaway. Students and parents explored the Bookmobile, registered for library cards, and checked out materials. The Library on Wheel Bookmobile, staffed by **Susan** and **Olivia**, participated in the free *Quote-Along Holiday Movie Day* featuring the movie *Elf* at the Hamburg Palace Theatre on December 16. This event, presented by New York State Assembly Member Jonathan Rivera, also included family crafts and activities.

**B is for Book Exhibit:**

	Number of Visitors		
	Month	YTD	From Opening (9/2020 to Present)
Non Tour-Related	1,338	23,773	72,356
Tour/Program	9	761	3,287
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,347</b>	<b>24,534</b>	<b>75,643</b>

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	1,808	33,403	212	3,325	526,252
Young Adult Print	277	6,461	53	1,082	77,900
Adult Print	2,849	42,588	587	8,961	1,784,429
Media	2,549	31,789	339	3,262	541,968
Other*	1,498	21,889	13	693	171,668
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8,981</b>	<b>136,130</b>	<b>1,204</b>	<b>17,323</b>	<b>3,101,985</b>

\*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other.

**Electronic Collections\*:**

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	6,651	51,067	1,733	16,604	122,535
eAudiobooks	15,691	81,916	671	4,438	76,536
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5,383
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>22,342</b>	<b>132,983</b>	<b>2,404</b>	<b>21,042</b>	<b>204,454</b>

\*The B&ECPL also provides access to all *hoopla* eBooks, eAudiobooks, videos, and music albums. These titles are not included in the collection size total, as they are not owned by the B&ECPL.

**All Collections:**

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,323</b>	<b>269,113</b>	<b>3,608</b>	<b>38,365</b>	<b>3,306,439</b>

**Dewey Collection - Charles Alaimo** completed the processing of the regular-size Grosvenor Library Dewey Collection stored in the closed stacks (Tier B). This collection has remained underutilized since being transferred to the Central Library in 1963. Over 13,000 volumes have been evaluated, with hundreds added to the library’s catalog and hundreds more discarded. A few remaining ranges of folio and oversize books continue to be processed.

**STEM Kits** - The Central Library has *STEM* (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) *Kits* that can be borrowed by libraries throughout the B&ECPL System. The kits have not been used since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020. During the month of December, System Youth Outreach Services Librarian Trainee **Amealia Brousseau** updated the *STEM Kits*.

### 3. Fundraising

**Fundraising:**

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1-December 31, 2023	\$574,536.87
Bucks for Books		\$66,410.72
2023 Year End Appeal		\$93,503.62

**Highlights:**

**Bequests** – The Library received a \$250,000 bequest in December 2023. It has not been determined where the funds will go. This was a banner year for fundraising.

**2023 Year End Appeal** - Brought in 1,213 donations in November and December 2023, raising \$93,503.62.

**Bucks for Books** – 483 donations were received in 2023, raising \$66,410.72.

**Online Store** – 251 orders were taken in 2023, totaling \$5,035.36 in sales.

**Giving Tuesday** – 32 donors supported the Library on November 28, raising \$1,761.00.

**Amazon Wish List** – 39 titles were bought by donors that will be added into the Library's collection, totaling almost \$1,000 in materials.

#### 4. Facilities

On December 12, library staff met with City of Buffalo personnel at Crane Branch Library to discuss options for the design of the public access rooftop. It was determined that there is a concern with the height of the railing around the perimeter of the roof, and solutions are currently being explored to raise the height of the railing.

On December 13, Erie County DPW staff, Trautman Associates, and library staff reviewed the design documents for the Central Library's upcoming emergency egress project. This was an opportunity for specific concerns with the drawings, such as smoke detector locations, electrical needs, etc., to be addressed with the architects. These documents should be complete and ready to prepare for a bid by mid-January.

On December 14, Senator Sean Ryan met with Lackawanna Library and Central Library staff to discuss the upcoming Lackawanna facility condition assessment. The assessment will evaluate the current state of the facility's infrastructure (roof/building envelope, HVAC systems, plumbing, electrical, etc.). Performing a space utilization study, similar to the one proposed at the Central Library, was also discussed. A space utilization study examines the usable space in the library and explores opportunities for reconfiguration, improvement, or possible expansion.

On December 18, Trautman Associates conducted a kickoff meeting for Phase 2 at the Isaias Gonzalez-Soto Branch Library. There are no concerns with scheduling at this point, and the project is still tentatively scheduled for April 1.

#### 5. Staff Development

**Staff Development Coordinator** – The B&ECPL has hired Staff Development Coordinator **Tara Kaye** to lead the Library's training efforts in 2024. Her focused effort in this area will benefit all B&ECPL staff.

**Technology Training** – Each year, all library staff are required to complete technology training appropriate to their position. Throughout 2023, B&ECPL staff completed a variety of trainings to meet this standard, the most popular of which included *Getting Started with Libby*, *Hoopla Introduction Training*, and *Phishing Training*. 99.1% of staff System-wide completed the training by the deadline of December 31.

**Webinars** – Staff attended many pertinent webinars in December, including *Going the Extra Mile: Making Your Library ADA-Friendly Instead of ADA-Compliant* (presented by CLRC), *Library Services to Recently Arrived Latino Immigrants* (presented by REFORMA), *Pop-Up Storytimes* (presented by WNYLRC), and *Web Tools that Are Now Using Artificial Intelligence* (presented by Tech-Talk).

**6. Communications**

**Advocacy:**

Advocacy meetings were held locally throughout the month with members of the Western New York State delegation and Library Administration, trustees, and directors from the contract libraries. The sessions were planned by the Western New York Library Resources Council.

**Media:**

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
Media interview with Assistant Deputy Director Dorinda Darden	Eclipse glasses	WIVB TV Channel 4, December 22 & 23
Media Release	2023 most popular books borrowed by Buffalo & Erie County Public Library patrons	WIVB TV Channel 4, WGRZ TV Channel 2, WBFO, WBLK, WYRK radio stations, Buffalo Rising, December 28, 29, 30.

**Social Media:  
December 2023**

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
<b>Facebook</b>	127	1,210	4,496	45,313	61	13,078
<b>Flickr</b>	-	327	3,295	52,541	-	60
<b>Google Ads <sup>1</sup></b>	N/A	N/A	2,182	22,476	N/A	N/A
<b>Instagram <sup>2</sup></b>	14	156	5,440	24,919	94	5,020
<b>Pinterest</b>	56	486	119	1,076	-57	2,053
<b>Twitter</b>	54	697	200	5,329	4	10,934
<b>YouTube</b>	6	96	1,083	13,893	4	562
<b>TikTok</b>	-	2	186	1,955	14	565
<b>Total</b>	257	2,974	17,001	167,502	120	32,272

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

<sup>2</sup> Effective September 2023, Instagram stats are for @buffalolibrary only. (Mobile Services account deleted.)

**7. Partnerships**

**Buffalo Public Schools (BPS) - Susan Buttaccio** and Community Engagement Manager **Anne Conable** met with Richard Pyszczek, Coordinator for the Buffalo Public School’s Social Studies Department, to plan an upcoming professional development series that will be held at the Central Library for BPS teachers.

**8. Planning for the Future**

**Youth Services Consultants in New York’s Public Library Systems** – System Youth Outreach Services Manager **Chelsey Lonberger** attended the *Youth Services Consultants in New York’s Public Library Systems Meeting* held virtually on December 13. They discussed the upcoming requirements, opportunities, and incentives from New York State.

**9. Director Activities**

**Meetings/Events Attended by Director**

**December 2023**

Date	Meeting/Event
December 4, 2023	Meeting - Maureen Germaine
December 5, 2023	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
December 5, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Masiello and Martucci (WNYLRC)
December 5, 2023	Meeting - Emily Patronik
December 6, 2023	Meeting - Jim Heaney, Investigative Post
December 6, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
December 6, 2023	Virtual Meeting - American Library Association (ALA)
December 7, 2023	Legislative Visit - Senator Tim Kennedy
December 7, 2023	Meeting - Dr. Bard & Dr. Cappella, Project Flight
December 7, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Melissa Brown, Buffalo History Museum
December 7, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
December 8, 2023	Legislative Visit - Senator Sean Ryan
December 8, 2023	Event - Continuum of Care Collaboration Award presented by the Homeless Alliance of WNY
December 11, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Steering Committee Meeting - May 14th Community Collecting Initiative
December 11, 2023	Virtual Meeting - ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee
December 11, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual Document Review Committee
December 12, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
December 12, 2023	Meeting - Emily Patronik
December 12, 2023	Virtual Meeting - PULISDO
December 12, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Masiello and Martucci (WNYLRC)

December 12, 2023	Virtual Meeting - New York Library Association Legislative Committee
December 13, 2023	Meeting - Managers/Directors
December 13, 2023	Legislative Visit - Senator Patrick Gallivan and Assemblymembers Jonathan Rivera and Patrick Burke
December 13, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
December 13, 2023	Tour - Erie County Cultural Plan AEA Site Visit
December 14, 2023	Virtual Meeting - May 14th Collecting Initiative
December 14, 2023	Virtual Meeting - MetLib Standing Committee
December 14, 2023	Meeting - Senator Sean Ryan, Lackawanna Library
December 14, 2023	Meeting - B&ECPL Executive Committee
December 15, 2023	Meeting - Administrative Team
December 15, 2023	Meeting - Erin Vest, Payroll Discussion
December 15, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual
December 18, 2023	Legislative Visit - Assemblymember Monica Wallace
December 18, 2023	Greeting - Senator Sean Ryan
December 18, 2023	Legislative Visit - Assemblymember William Conrad
December 19, 2023	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
December 19, 2023	Meeting - ErieNet Audit & Finance Committee Meeting
December 19, 2023	Meeting - ErieNet Board of Directors
December 20, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
December 21, 2023	Legislative Visit - Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes
December 21, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Public Library System Directors
December 21, 2023	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees
December 22, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
December 22, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual
December 28, 2023	Meeting - Dorinda Darden and Samantha Purpora
December 29, 2023	Event - County Executive Swearing-In Ceremony
December 29, 2023	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
December 29, 2023	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual

**Appendices**

**A. Monthly Statistics**

**System Programming Statistics:**

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
<b>Regular*</b>				
Adults	1275	9582	3133	32134
Children 5 and under	1240	14197	3130	49735
Children 6-11	1421	18436	3128	43084
Intergenerational/Combined	3702	54021	9092	127858
Teens	363	4331	1149	12448
<b>Regular Total</b>	<b>8001</b>	<b>100567</b>	<b>19632</b>	<b>265259</b>
<b>Regular Total</b>	<b>8001</b>	<b>100567</b>	<b>19632</b>	<b>265259</b>

<b>Virtual</b>				
<b>Live Virtual</b>				
Adults	8	201	70	2085
Children 5 and under	0	9	0	33
Children 6-11	0	6	0	167
Intergenerational/Combined	5	67	85	2401
Teens	15	98	18	373
<b>Live Virtual Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>5059</b>
<b>Recorded Virtual</b>				
Adults	7	68	132	1324
Children 5 and under	0	1	0	4
Children 6-11	2	23	251	4100
Intergenerational/Combined	5	101	133	3078
Teens	0	1	0	20
<b>Recorded Virtual Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>8526</b>
<b>Virtual Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>13585</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8043</b>	<b>101142</b>	<b>20321</b>	<b>278844</b>

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

**Other Statistics:**

Consolidated statistics on library visits, website visits, circulation, computer sessions, wifi usage, and program attendance and a summary of open hours can be found at [www.buffalolib.org/about-becpl/monthly-statistics](http://www.buffalolib.org/about-becpl/monthly-statistics).

Detailed reports on circulation, computer sessions, wifi usage, and library visits can be found at [www.buffalolib.org/monthly-statistics/2023-circulation-public-access-computer-wifi-and-library-visits-detail](http://www.buffalolib.org/monthly-statistics/2023-circulation-public-access-computer-wifi-and-library-visits-detail).

**B. Contracting Library Activity Reports**

**Town of Collins Public Library** – submitted by Abigail Barten-McGowan, Director

Collins Library's regular monthly events continued with Morning Book Club, Evening, Book Club, and Teen Book Club. Monthly Lego Clubs are always well attended by enthusiastic children and parents. Our Adult Craft events and our two monthly Crochet groups are loved by both beginners and experts as a time to learn new stitches and craft.

- December's children's events included a Gingerbread Story Time, Cookie Decorating family event, 2 Graham House building sessions, a Christmas story time, and Noon Year's Eve party that is the highlight of our year.
- Outreach to our local senior group at their holiday luncheon reminded the community what a great resource their library is.
- 3 Family Movies were shown throughout December for fun events.

- January children's events will include Snowman and Dragon Story Times, and the return of our Lap Sit program for kids 6 months to 2 years.
- January will also feature the pickup of Mini Art Show Kits for teens and adults. The finished pieces will be displayed and voted on throughout February.
- February children's events will feature a Valentine's Story Time, Hippo Story Time, and a special Leap Day party.
- February 3 we look forward to "Take Your Child to the Library Day", and are planning a special party and events for families.
- Mystery Date with a book returns in February, where patrons can check out surprise book and return a rating to enter for prizes.
- Our Library of Things continues to grow with new items funded by the Friends of the Collins Public Library. Our most recent additions include a Go Pro camera, additional snowshoes, a jewelry cleaner, external DVD and floppy disc drives, and a portable knitting loom.

**Grand Island Memorial Library** – submitted by Bridgette Heintz, Director

**Book Club** – Meets monthly on second Tuesdays at 6:00 pm. Our Adult Book Club expanded this year to 20 regular members who meet monthly at the library for discussion and refreshments. The group is always open to new members and the books can be picked up at the library. The January 9 discussion will focus on *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* by Lisa See.

**Trunk or Treat** – Held October 21, the annual Trunk or Treat consisted of 11 'trunkers' from the surrounding community who volunteered their Saturday to decorate their cars and pass out treats to the 436 attendees.

**Growing Readers** – The Growing Readers project is an innovative collaboration among Grand Island Pediatrics, the Grand Island Central School District and local community groups to increase a child's success with developing early literacy skills, through the promotion of parents reading aloud with their infants. Pediatricians can provide advice on the importance of developing early literacy skills through read-aloud activities, and influence a culture of reading within the family. This project focuses its efforts on having an island pediatrician distribute a book to an infant's caregiver at "well baby" visits in the 2nd, 6th, 12th, 18th and 24th months. The books will be kept by the families and the infant's library will grow with each visit. The GI Library and Friends of GIML have been partners since the project's inception in 2017. Over 100 books have been distributed. The committee is currently working to partner with a new pediatrician since the closing of Grand Island Pediatrics last year.

**Fall Class Visits** – In October and Mid-November, the library welcomed the Kindergarteners and First Graders from Charlotte Sidway Elementary and the third



graders from William Kaegebein Elementary. Overall, 181 students were issued their first library cards and got a tour of the library.

**Memorial Reading Garden** – In memory of our longtime trustee of 42 years, Richard Earne, who passed away in September 2022. Phase I will be installed by April 2024 and will include Adirondack chairs, an ADA accessible picnic table, notice board, and trash receptacle. Fundraising is ongoing for the Phase II components of the garden which will include expanding the existing garden and adding more seating and an arbor entrance off the main walkway.

**Thanksgiving Sides and Holiday Brunch programs** – Presented by Liz Bauld, The Story Book Cook, these programs were held on November 11 and December 7, respectively. Program attendance was 25 and 30 and the programs focused on cooking demos of holiday dishes with recipes and tastings.

**Pint-Sized Playgroup** – For the second year, beginning in January, our Youth Services Librarian Carly Spatar will run this program which allows open play in the library meeting room for children ages 0-5 with a caregiver for a few hours once a month. When the cold weather hits and the playgrounds are closed for the season, there is nowhere for families to meet in a public place where their children can play. This need was recognized and the library has responded. This drop-in program was very popular last winter and our Itty-Bitty and Preschool Story Time families are excited to have the offering again this year.

Agenda Item I – Report of the Foundation. The meeting was cancelled due to the weather.

Agenda Item J – The Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT)/Contracting Library Trustee Report. Martha Byers reported that the next Trustee Training will be on Saturday, March 9, and will be at the downtown Central Library. She stated that ACT is working to revise its Bylaws to make them more reflective of what the association does.

Martha ended her report by stating how helpful the staff at the downtown Central Library were when it came to finding a recipe she was looking for. Assistant Deputy Director Dorinda Darden, Librarian Leslie Carr, and Librarian Trainees Christina Lee and Faith Miller went above and beyond to help find what she was looking for. Discussion ensued.

Agenda Item J.1 – Contracting Library Liaison Report(s). None.

Agenda Item K – Public Comment. A library user asked via Zoom Chat if the library will be closed on Friday, January 19. Director Spears stated that they look at the expected weather forecast and if other organizations plan on closing. Previously, the library made the decision to close early because the County, the City, and/or major institutions announced their closures preemptively. A decision to close the library on

Friday, January 19, has not been made. Chair Johnson informed the library user to keep an eye on the Library's social media for closure updates. Chair Johnson took a moment to mention the article that was featured in the Buffalo News regarding Trustee Gist's departure from the B&ECPL Board of Trustees.

Trustee Craik also took a moment to acknowledge and give praise to Assistant Deputy Director Judy Fachko for her work with the Performance Evaluation Committee and how helpful she was regarding questions and the process in general.

Director Spears also wanted to take a moment to thank Erie County for how helpful they have been with determining closures during weather related emergencies and providing guidance.

Agenda Item L - Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item M - New Business. None.

Agenda Item N - Adjournment. There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee Sasiadek with a second by Trustee Craik, the meeting was adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Moore  
Secretary