

MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
June 20, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, June 20, 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  
Michael Amodeo, Esq.  
Kathleen Berens Bucki, MLS  
John D. Craik, Esq.  
Theodore K. Johnson  
Sharon M. Kelly, Esq.  
Elaine M. Panty  
Christopher Sasiadek, Esq.

Chair Johnson 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. Director John Spears stated that Robert Patterson from Bond, Schoeneck, & King Attorneys is unable to attend the Board meeting. Therefore, there will be no Agenda Item K.1. Director Spears also stated that Robert Patterson should be able to attend the July meeting.

Agenda Item C – Minutes of the Meeting of May 16, 2024. Trustee Bucki proposed several grammatical changes to the Minutes of the Meeting of May 16, 2024. Trustee Amodeo made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, Trustee Kelly seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair. Chair Johnson began her report by recognizing the annual Juneteenth Parade held at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. She was in attendance for the festivities and walked with Councilwoman Zeneta Everhart. Chair Johnson went on to inform the Board that Councilwoman Everhart will be kicking off her *Zeneta and Zaire Book Club* Essay Contest in July.

Next, Chair Johnson shared that she was at the opening of the Central Library's Teen Space and that it is a beautiful area for teens to hang out and enjoy games, seating, and crafting.

Finally, Chair Johnson shared that on Thursday, June 27, the *5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition* will be holding an event at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library. The event will include a presentation on the community collection initiatives which include an oral history project.

#### Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on June 13, 2024. A copy of the written report was included in the Board packet. Trustee El-Behairy briefly summarized the meeting. Trustee Kelly 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 member Elaine Panty. Also present were Director John Spears, Deputy Director-Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Purtell, Assistant Deputy Director-Controller Emily Patronik, and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich

Excused: Members Lucy Candelario and Christopher Sasiadek

The meeting of the Executive Committee began at 4:06 p.m. After a call of the roll, it was noted that a quorum was present.

Director Spears requested that Agenda Item C – Resolution – 2024-13 Authorization to Negotiate Settlement – Personnel Matter move to before Agenda Item B. Chair Johnson indicated that would be acceptable. Given the nature of the proposed resolution, Chair Johnson proposed to move into Executive Session to discuss a legal and personnel matter. Trustee Panty made the motion to enter into Executive Session, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and the Executive Committee entered into Executive Session at 4:07 p.m.

On a motion made by Trustee Panty and seconded by Trustee El-Behairy, the Executive Committee exited Executive Session at 4:16 p.m.

#### RESOLUTION 2024-13

WHEREAS, in February 2024, the Amherst Public Libraries terminated an employee who was a member of the Clerical and Maintenance Union (CMU), and

WHEREAS, the case has now moved to arbitration with outside counsel being retained to represent the Amherst Public Libraries, and

WHEREAS, outside counsel has indicated the employee is interested in settlement, and

WHEREAS, the Chief Operating Officer and outside counsel recommend settlement, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library authorizes the Library Director, or his designee, to enter into a settlement agreement in this matter, and

RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library authorizes the Library Director, or his designee, to transfer budget funds as necessary to accomplish payment of settlement.

Trustee El-Behairy motioned for an approval of Resolution 2024-13, Trustee Panty seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Next, Chair Johnson reviewed the proposed draft agenda for the Board of Trustees meeting.

For the Report of the Chair, Chair Johnson mentioned the grand opening of the Teen Space at the Central Library. She said it went well and the teens appear to be enjoying it. Discussion ensued about the Teen Space. Chair Johnson went on to notify the Executive Committee that the author talk of Natasha S. Alford's memoir *American Negra* scheduled at the Leroy R. Coles, Jr. Branch Library, has been canceled. They are looking to reschedule for September.

Finally, discussion ensued regarding *The Color Purple* and the awards it received at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Artie Awards. Chair Johnson also notified the Executive Committee of a future Zeneta and Zaire Book Club event and that she will be walking with Council Woman Zeneta Everhart in the Juneteenth Parade.

ADD-Controller Patronik discussed the proposed Resolution 2024-14 – Authorize Chair to Execute 2024 Contracts with Contracting Libraries. She stated that this proposed resolution happens annually. Discussion ensued regarding the purpose of the resolution. Next, ADD-Controller Patronik discussed proposed Resolution 2024-15 – RFP Award-Network & Computer Hardware Support Services. She stated that a committee was formed to review submitted RFPs and a winner was chosen. Finally, ADD-Patronik said that the Library is operating slightly under budget and the interest rate is still high.

For the Report of the Director, Director Spears announced that there was a Request for Reconsideration submitted. The movie that was suggested for reconsideration is *The Sound of Freedom*. Director Spears reviewed the material, followed the Request for Reconsideration process, and decided that the movie should remain in the Library's collection. The patron is appealing this decision to the Board of Trustees. Discussion ensued regarding next steps in the process.

Moving through the proposed agenda, Trustee El-Behairy stated there will be a Report of the Foundation. The strategic planning committee will be meeting to discuss next steps. Discussion ensued regarding fundraising, the Library, and the Foundation.

Further discussion ensued regarding contracting library visits and Angola Public Library's Annual Hotdog Fundraiser.

Chair Johnson continued through the proposed agenda for the Board meeting scheduled on June 20. Director Spears stated that Robert Patterson of Bond, Schoeneck, & King Attorneys will be present to discuss his role as legal counsel.

There being no further business, Trustee Panty motioned to adjourn and Trustee El-Beahry seconded. The meeting ended at 4:39 p.m.

Agenda Item E.1.a – Resolution 2024-13 Authorization to Negotiate Personnel Settlement. A copy of the approved resolution was included in the Board packet for informational purposes.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Resolution 2024-14 – Authorize Chair to Execute 2024 Contracts With Contracting Libraries. Assistant Deputy Director – Controller Emily Patronik explained proposed Resolution 2024-14 as presented below. She stated that this is a recurring resolution that is brought before the Board every year. In the current contract, there is an automatic extension that is not to exceed July 31, 2024. The resolution would replace the extension and execute the 2024 contracts with the contracting libraries.

#### RESOLUTION 2024-14

WHEREAS, budgetary allocations from Erie County and New York State to the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) constitute the vast majority of the financial resources supporting the contract with the "Public Library," and

WHEREAS, Erie County's 2024 allocation was not known until early December, and New York State's overall allocation was adopted in early May, and

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

WHEREAS, to meet 2024 operating expenditure needs of the contracting libraries, the B&ECPL Board of Trustees on December 15, 2023 adopted Resolution 2023-41 implementing the extension provision contained in the 2023 contract until such time as a final 2024 contract is adopted, not to exceed July 31, 2024, whichever was earlier, with budgetary amounts based upon the 2024 Board adopted budget and any subsequent modifications thereof, and

WHEREAS, Erie County's 2024 budget is now in place and the New York State budget has been adopted, and

WHEREAS, the impact of these changes is now known, allowing necessary budget

adjustments to be made, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL authorizes the Chair of the Board of Trustees to execute 2024 contracts subject to the terms and conditions noted above and with budget figures reflecting the 2024 Board-adopted budget as amended.

Trustee Amodeo motioned for approval of Resolution 2024-14, Trustee Kelly seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item E.2.b – Resolution 2024-15 - RFP Award-Network & Computer Hardware Support Services. ADD-Controller Patronik stated that the current contract for computer systems maintenance and related network support will expire at the end of June 2024. A committee was formed to review RFPs submitted to replace the current contract. The committee chose VITEC Solutions, LLC. ADD-Controller requested the Board's approval to award the contract to VITEC Solutions, LLC.

#### RESOLUTION 2024-15

WHEREAS, since 1995, the Library has contracted for computer systems maintenance and related network support, and

WHEREAS, the current contract expires at the end of June 2024, and

WHEREAS, on May 10th, the Library issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking a qualified information technology services vendor to partner with the Library, and

WHEREAS, the Library's current service provider VITEC Solutions LLC (VITEC), submitted the most reasonable response, and

WHEREAS, the Library's RFP evaluation committee was impressed by the high caliber of the response submitted by VITEC, and

WHEREAS, the proposed base cost, at \$106,650.00 is reasonable, and

WHEREAS, upon completing its review, the committee unanimously agreed that the proposal submitted by VITEC Solutions, LLC be recommended to the Board of Trustees for selection to provide these services, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library selects VITEC Solutions, LLC to provide network, server and workstation support and maintenance/repair; replacement parts; project management; and consulting services, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Library Director or designee is authorized to negotiate

and execute the necessary contract based upon this resolution, the terms listed in the RFP and the response submitted by VITEC Solutions, LLC.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval of Resolution 2024-15, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item E.2.c – Monthly Financial Report. ADD-Controller Patronik informed the Board of the monthly financial report ending on April 30, 2024. She informed the Board that the Library is operating slightly under budget and is stable. Starting next month ADD-Controller Patronik plans on focusing on certain sections of the financials each month and providing a more in-depth explanation so the Board can have a better understanding of the report as a whole.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Spears informed the Board that he has been invited to be a part of a panel at the *Facing Pages Statewide Literary Arts Convening* in New York City in September. The panel is focused on censorship in the United States. Director Spears will be representing public libraries.

Next, Director Spears mentioned that with elections coming up, it has been decided to focus on civics literacy within libraries. Director Spears has tasked Community Engagement Manager Anne Conable on developing programs and initiatives with other programming staff. This will tie into initiatives the American Library Association are also offering surrounding civics literacy.

Following that, Director Spears spoke more about the *5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition* and the event being held at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library. He stated that equipment has been purchased to record oral histories, and there have been kits purchased that library patrons will be able to check out to record oral histories, as well. Trustee Kelly asked how the recordings will be stored. Director Spears explained that they will be stored in different ways. The ownership will always belong to the person telling the story. Discussion ensued about recordings. Trustee Amodeo asked if the recordings will be audio and visual. Assistant Deputy Director Dorinda Darden stated that they will just be audio. Further discussion ensued regarding oral histories and the 5/14 Buffalo Massacre.

Next, Director Spears shared that a walkthrough of the library for the space utilization study was conducted and that there has been tremendous interest in the RFP. Discussion ensued about the space utilization study and interested parties, including firms from as far as Minneapolis and Ohio. Director Spears also shared that the Central Library's Mason O. Damon Auditorium and the Buffalo Presidential Center were exempt from this RFP and bids are due back in early July. Chair Johnson asked where the RFP was posted. Director Spears stated it was posted on Erie County's website according to their posting requirements, as this is their building and their process.

Discussion ensued regarding the RFP, Erie County, and the Rare Book Room. Further discussion ensued regarding the community input requirement in this RFP, the changing demographics of library users, etc.

Finally, Director Spears informed the Board of a Request for Reconsideration of Materials that was received. The title that was requested for reconsideration is “The Sound of Freedom.” Director Spears stated they will be keeping the material in the Library’s collection. Director Spears also stated that he is having a conversation with the individual who submitted the request on whether or not they want to appeal the decision made to the Board. Discussion ensued about how the appeal process will work and why the material was requested for reconsideration.

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

### **B&ECPL Monthly Report May 2024**

**International Institute Visit** – On May 28, Adult Services Librarian **Kuniko Simon** provided a library tour to a group from the International Institute of Buffalo. Over thirty-two participants—including Arabic, Dari, Kinyarwanda, Pashto, Rohingya, and Spanish interpreters--explored the library with an introduction to two of our new additions, the Children and Teen areas; learned how to use their library cards; and were introduced to library programs and events.



**Teen Crafternoons @ Central** - Crafternoons have returned to the Teen Space, with crafts being held every Monday-Thursday from 3:30 to 5:00 starting on May 9. Librarian I **Kelly Woods** and Library Assistant **Sarah Barry** host crafts for the Teens to create, such as bracelets, necklaces, shrinky dinks, and stickers. Many teens participate in crafting and enjoy working with library staff.

**Buffalo’s Neighborhoods: Exploring Our Migrant & Immigrant Heritage** - The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library’s digital project *Buffalo’s Neighborhoods: Exploring Our Migrant & Immigrant Heritage* was selected as a winner for the National

Genealogical Society's 2024 *Societies, Libraries, Archives, and Museums (SLAM)! Idea Showcase*. The showcase highlights outstanding projects or programs by societies, libraries, archives, museums, and other institutions (SLAM). The showcase is meant to share creative and innovative ideas for others to emulate and to promote collaboration among organizations. Genealogist Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman** created the video submission for the competition.

**Clean Slate Information Session** – Mobile Services Manager **Andrew Maines** coordinated with the Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo to provide a *Clean State Information Session* on May 7 at the Central Library. Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo attorney Paul Curtin presented on traditional record sealing, Certificates of Good Conduct, and Certificates of Relief, as well as New York State's 2023 *Clean Slate Act*. The act is an economic justice, anti-poverty, and racial justice bill that seeks to end post-release punishment and enable those with conviction records to access more equitable employment, housing, education, and other opportunities.

**Family History Day** - The Special Collections Department presented *Family History Day* on May 18 in the Ring of Knowledge at the Central Library. Activities included tabling with Genealogical and Local History organizations, guest speakers, a panel of genealogists, and an in-depth tour of the closed stacks. Genealogy and local history buffs attended the event.

**Income Tax Assistance** – The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was recognized during a virtual meeting held on May 21 for being a ten-year partner of the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance's free *Income Tax Assistance* program that is offered in the TechKnow Lab at the Central Library. System Adult Outreach Services Manager **Carol Kowalik-Happy** represented the B&ECPL at this meeting.

**Mental Health Awareness Flash Mob** - **Carol Kowalik-Happy**, System Adult Outreach Services Librarian **Jacob Rachwal**, and New York State Public Health Corps Graduate Fellow **Sophia Charles** helped coordinate the *11th Annual Mental Health Awareness Flash Mob* that was held at the Central Library on May 10. The event was presented in collaboration with Western New York Independent Living and Restoration Society. Erie County Legislator Chairwoman April Baskin was the guest speaker to kick off the event. The event included music provided by DJ Paul Setlock, a hotdog roast, entertainment by Dennis "The Quizmaster" George, and a *Resource Fair* with participation from mental health agencies. There were over 300 in attendance.

## 1. Public Services

### Central Library:

May 23 - The Opening Reception for the Buffalo Public Schools (BPS) Annual *Celebrate Art!* Student Art Show enjoyed 68 attendees, including student artists, their families, and BPS art teachers. The Art Show, which includes wonderful artwork in several mediums and representing all BPS schools and grade levels, is on view in the second floor Collections Gallery through June 20.



**National Wildlife Refuge** - On May 4, Librarian **Leslie Carr** hosted a presentation by the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge as the third in the Blue Buffalo Series. Biology Intern Stephanie Ibarra discussed the work the popular destination refuge does to preserve wildlife and fauna at their location in Basom, NY.

**Blue Buffalo Series** - On May 15, Librarian **Leslie Carr** presented the last in the Blue Buffalo Series presentations on Western New York waterways, lands, and restoration projects. Biologist Michael Boutsko from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers discussed wetlands preservation efforts and regulatory goals to enhance our natural landscape.

**Launch Pad Jewelry** - On May 24, Launch Pad Technology Clerk **Amanda Brown** created Embroidered Necklace Take & Make bags for library patrons, which include all the necessary craft supplies and instructions on how to complete the embroidery and necklaces. Of the 60 that were made, 40 have been taken by library patrons so far.

#### **System Services:**

**Financial Literacy** - **Carol Kowalik-Happy** hosted the *700+ Credit Score & Money Management Workshop* held virtually on May 28. Blake Vetrone from Operation Hope was the presenter. This presentation was part of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) grant.

**Genealogy Training** - **Rhonda Hoffman** presented genealogy training that included *My House is Giving Me a Vibe* at the Grand Island Memorial Library on May 7, *From Birth to Death: Vital Records from New York State and Beyond* at the Family History Center in Williamsville on May 11, *Jumpstart Your Genealogy* at the Anna Reinstein Memorial Library on May 20, and *Cool Tools for Genealogy* at the Akron-Newstead Senior Center on May 24 and at the City of Tonawanda Public Library on May 30.

**Health and Wellness** - **Sophia Charles** and **Jacob Rachwal** coordinated the *Wellness @ Central* tabling event held at the Central Library on May 16. There were 18 organizations providing health and wellness resources to patrons that included information on employment, housing, literacy, food assistance, mental health services, and other programs.

**Nature Book Club** - **Andrew Maines**, Library Display Artist **Dawn Stanton**, and Collection Development Librarian **Michelle Snyder** participated in the quarterly meeting of the online *Nature Book Club* on May 13. Participants met to discuss the book *The Secret Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben.

**Personal Archiving** - Special Collections Librarian **Adam Rubin** taught a virtual *Personal Archiving* class on May 15. Participants learned the basics of archival organization and digitization and the process of creating a personal archival collection. Students from St. Francis High School visited the Special Collections Department for a tour and to research local history topics on May 22.

#### **Tours and Visits:**

Rare Book Curator **Heather Gring** provided a tour of the Grosvenor Room at the Central Library on May 2 for a group of Buffalo Public School (BPS) teachers that was organized by Community Engagement Manager **Anne Conable**. BPS teachers experienced a selection of Rare Book items that are available to them and their students. **Anne** also organized a tour of the Special Collections Department conducted by Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio** on May 8 for representatives of the Erie County Department of Environmental Planning. The tour included a look at items from the Rare Book Room curated by **Heather Gring**.

**Heather** participated in a research project held virtually on May 10 for Hamburg Middle School's seventh grade students organized by History teacher Jason Steinagle. Students selected digitized primary source resources from the Grosvenor Room's special collections and learned how to analyze the document and form a thesis statement.

A group of children and adults attended the monthly Special Collections tour conducted by **Heather Gring** on May 25. Parents found their ancestors listed in the city directories, and the children expressed enthusiasm for the dinosaur book collections in the closed stacks.

#### **Buffalo Branches:**

##### **Panty Programming Highlights:**

- Branch Manager **Stefanie Anawald** held a weekly storytime and sing-along every Tuesday in May exploring themes of color, shapes, self-image, sharing, and kindness. Throughout the month there were 55 attendees.
- Bad Art Night was hosted by **Stefanie** on May 13. Participants created origami butterflies, a card, and a stick house.
- The Elaine M. Panty Branch Library partnered with the TechKnow Lab to host a Basic Computer Maintenance workshop.
- The monthly no-pressure book club had six participants and several lively discussions about book banning, strong female leads, cultural appropriation, the natural world and science, and memoirs vs. biographies.

##### **North Park Programming Highlights:**

- PT Librarian **Erin Dunn** hosted NPK's first afternoon tea book club with 12 patrons attending on May 14.
- Librarians **Alyssa Clark** and **Erin Dunn** hosted a May flower craft fest, making bookmarks with pressed flowers and seed bombs with locally sourced compost and native NY wildflower seeds with five patrons attending on May 21.
- Storytime is back on alternating Thursdays, and 21 patrons attended.
- 29 kids participated in the pet week scavenger hunt in the kids section.
- 185 take-and-makes were distributed throughout the month, including paper flowers, Mother's Day cards, penny spinners, and a handprint cactus. **Alyssa Clark, Erin Dunn**

and Senior Library Clerk **Suzanna Krausner** alternate weeks for responsibility of that week's craft.

**Outreach:**

Coles Library Branch Manager **Danielle Ptak** participated in Career Day outreach at Harvey Austin Elementary on May 15. **Danielle** gave presentations to four classes of students, grades Pre-k through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, on what a librarian is and how to become one. Students had the opportunity to ask questions, and if there was enough time, she also read them a story.

**Carol Kowalik-Happy** attended a *Job Fair* at Erie 1 BOCES in West Seneca on May 1. **Carol** shared library resources such as the *Book a Librarian* service, as well as job applications for positions currently available in the B&ECPL System with about 300 people.

TechKnow Lab Librarian **Jacqueline "Jackie" Hovey** and Institutional Services Library Clerk **Jodie Tarry** staffed an outreach table at the University at Buffalo's *All of Us Journey Tour* event held May 1 through May 3. **Jackie** was also interviewed during the event.

**Jacob Rachwal** attended the *Job Fair* sponsored by the New York State Department of Labor and New York State Assemblymember Karen McMahon at the Northwest Amherst Community Center on May 9. He shared information with 100 people on B&ECPL's various services and current job openings.

**Carol Kowalik-Happy** and **Jacob Rachwal** participated in the Groundwork Market Garden and Fare Share WNY *Fourth Annual Plant Sale* held on Genesee Street in Buffalo on May 11. They provided information about library services and distributed seeds and cookbooks to attendees.

System Youth Outreach Services Manager **Chelsey Lonberger** and System Youth Outreach Services Librarian Trainee **Amealia Brousseau** attended the *World's Largest Yard Sale* held at the Hamburg Fairgrounds on May 10. They promoted the *Summer Reading at New York Libraries* program, with the 2024 theme being *Adventure Begins at Your Library*, and distributed flyers detailing upcoming programs at the nearby Hamburg Public Library and Lake Shore Branch Library. Crafts were also available for children, including one with fan favorite storybook character *Pete the Cat*. **Jacqueline** and **Jodie** participated in the event on May 11, as well.

**Chelsey** and **Amealia** participated in the *Free Comic Book Day Fest* presented by the Justice League of WNY at the King Urban Life Center in Buffalo on May 11. In addition, the Library on Wheels Bookmobile, staffed by Mobile Services Librarian **Jennifer Block** and Mobile Services Senior Page **Loch McLaughlin**, also participated in the event.

**Chelsey Lonberger** attended the *Civics Day* event held at the Buffalo History Museum on May 23. This event was hosted by the Generation Citizen organization. **Chelsey** participated as one of the Community Advisors at the event. She listened to students explain their topic and graded student presentations.

## 2. Collection Development

### Physical Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	4,025	15,232	264	1,399	522,487
Young Adult Print	620	2,766	111	479	72,942
Adult Print	4,742	19,850	782	3,789	1,776,564
Media	1,116	10,671	71	1,048	530,317
Other*	1,628	8,756	119	161	171,782
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>12,131</b>	<b>57,275</b>	<b>1,347</b>	<b>6,876</b>	<b>3,074,092</b>

\*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other.

### Electronic Collections\*:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	3,174	23,775	1,357	7,188	126,580
eAudiobooks	9,629	49,028	400	2,000	73,496
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5,214
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>12,803</b>	<b>72,803</b>	<b>1,757</b>	<b>9,188</b>	<b>205,290</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>24,934</b>	<b>130,078</b>	<b>3,104</b>	<b>16,064</b>	<b>3,279,382</b>

**Digital Collections** - Rare Book Room Clerk **Nicole Kondziela** and **Adam Rubin** added two new items to the digital collections: Dr. James Newman's study of cholera epidemiology during the 1854 outbreak in Buffalo and the city Board of Health's report on the same topic.

**Oral History** - **Adam Rubin** has compiled a second oral history recording kit in preparation for the May 14th Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition's *Oral History Project*.

**Special Collections** - **Adam Rubin** and **Heather Gring** have been collaborating with Launch Pad Makerspace Manager **Jordan Smith** to develop Special Collections social media videos which will focus on a high quality, "deep dive" collection content.

### 3. Funding/Fundraising

#### **Funding:**

In April of 2024 it was announced that Library Operating Aid was increased by \$1,725,000 from the Governor's \$102,127,000, which brings the final total to \$103,852,000. Also to note, Library Construction Aid is at \$44,000,000, a \$10 million increase over the prior year! Another big announcement regarding the Budget is that it includes \$3 million for NOVELny, which will be a cost savings for the B&ECPL regarding databases, newspapers, maps and more. Library Materials Aid for schools still remains at \$6.25 per pupil.

#### **Fundraising:**

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1 – May 31, 2024	\$198,147.75

#### **Highlights:**

Night at the Ballpark is planned for Friday, July 19. Tickets to the Bisons game are \$17 each, and there will be fireworks after the game. Tickets can be purchased at <https://ways2give.buffalolib.org/bisons> or by calling Maureen Germaine at 716-858-7197. Proceeds benefit the 37 Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries.

### 4. Facilities

On May 9, Library staff met with Watts A/E and Erie County personnel for a roof replacement and green roof design progress meeting. Discussions involved an update on the roof assembly drawings, updates on the proposed leak detection system, scheduling of site visits and surveys, and preliminary discussions of bid timelines. The follow up meeting is scheduled for June 13.

Also on May 9, National Grid, Frey Electric, Greybar, and Library staff met to discuss the electrical switchgear replacement at the Central Library. It had been discovered that some of the current equipment in the Library's original electrical switchgear may not be compatible with the proposed replacement equipment. Due to some personnel turnover, more research will need to be done on National Grid's end to ensure the functionality of the proposed replacement parts.

On May 16, Library staff met with Erie County DPW personnel to discuss available funding sources for the Central Library roof replacement and green roof design. In order to submit a FY 2025 NYS Library Construction Aid application, the Library must show that there are sufficient funds available to cover the cost of the project less the construction aid. A follow up meeting will be scheduled to discuss the County's findings for alternate sources of available funding.

On May 20, the Central Library Shipping & Receiving Department participated in a department wide training program related to loading dock safety. Elements of the well-attended training included general safety on the loading dock, proper lifting techniques, appropriate attire, and awareness of potential hazards.

On May 21, Library Facility staff, Zaxis A/E, City of Buffalo DPW personnel, and multiple potential contractors met at the Leroy R. Coles Branch Library for a pre-bid walkthrough of the facility. The contractors inspected the roof, parking lot, building exterior, front façade, and mechanical room to familiarize themselves with the project in order to provide an accurate bid. The base scope of work will include the replacement of the roof and HVAC system, with the parking lot replacement, front façade replacement, lighting, and concrete pad replacement as bid alternates. Bids will be opened on June 5, 2024.

On May 24, Library staff met with Architectural Resources and Progressive Roofing to investigate the rooftop railing at Crane Branch Library. As part of the proposed rooftop access project there, the existing railing will need to be raised in order to comply with ADA requirements. There is uncertainty if the existing railing will remain within code if an extension is installed on the current railing. The architect and engineer inspected the structure of the railing and the way in which it is secured to the rooftop. Results from the investigation should be returned shortly.

Five new environmental data loggers were purchased to monitor the temperature and relative humidity in the Rare Book Room vaults.

Supervisor of Building Operations & Maintenance **Mark Kross** had new fire extinguishers installed in Grosvenor and the Rare Book Room vaults which contain specialized fire retardant materials which will not harm special collections objects in the event of use.

## 5. Staff Development

***Spring Into Safety Training Series Continues*** - This organization-wide program from Western New York Council on Occupational Safety and Health (WNYCOSH) that kicked-off in April continued throughout May, with eight more classes scheduled this month. Additional times for *Fire Extinguisher Operation and Safety* were provided, including one for all leadership at the monthly Manager Director Meeting. May also had sessions on *Blood-Borne Pathogens and Exposure Risks* and *Good Computer Ergonomics and Sitting Wellness*. A special training for the Shipping and Receiving team on *Loading Dock Safety and Lifting Ergonomics* was held onsite at Central Library on the dock itself. The series continues through the end of June, with new topics slated for next month.

***Annual Mandatory Compliance and Technology Training Campaign Continues*** - This year's annual compulsory compliance and technology training campaign that started in April continued through the month of May. This entails all staff going through web modules on *Workplace Violence Prevention*, *Harassment Prevention*, and

*Cybersecurity.* All employees must complete all training requirements by 6/30/24. As of the end of May, over 75% of employees have finished all modules.

**Using Social Media to Reach Teens ALA Online Class** - Based on a staff suggestion, the library invested in seven seats to an ALA virtual session on *Using Social Media to Reach Teens*. The class covered different ways you can use social media to engage, program, and market library services to the teen demographic. After the course, all staff participants agreed to collaborate on developing a resource based on what they learned to share within our organization.

**Webinars** - Employees attended a range of webinars and other online events in May, with multiple staff participating in the following sessions: *Project Management for Libraries* (from Long Island Library Resources Council), *Powering Your Public Service Career Forward* (from NextGen and GovLoop), and *Less Winging It, More Strategy: How to be a Strategic Leader* (from GovLoop).

## 6. Communications

### Media:

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
Interview with Children's Librarians <b>Chelsey Lonberger</b> and <b>Dan Lewandowski</b>	Summer Reading trends	<i>Investigative Post</i> , has yet to be posted
Media Release	Mary Wilson and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation honored w/ the 2024 IMAGINE Greater Buffalo Recognition Award	May 6, <i>The Buffalo News</i>
Media Release	Family History Day Kicks off Special Collections Programs	May 10, <i>Buffalo Challenger</i>
Taped TV news interview with Library Director <b>John Spears</b>	The state on New York's libraries	May 16, <i>Spectrum News</i>
Interviews and photographs with Special Collections Manager <b>Susan Buttaccio</b> and Rare Book and Map Librarian <b>Charles Alaimo</b>	Hidden treasures in the Central Library's Rare Collections vault	May 13, <i>The Buffalo News</i>

The local organization [embrace Western New York](#) honored the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library with a Community Service Citation Award for promoting a positive and affirming position of equity for the LGBTQ+ community. Library Board Chair Kimberly Johnson and Assistant Deputy Director of Human Resources **Judy Fachko** – a strong advocate for educating staff about diversity, equity and inclusion - accepted the award on the Library's behalf. *Embrace Western New York* is dedicated to equality and fairness within Western New York and seeks to raise awareness, understanding, and acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community among all citizens.

### Social Media:

Staff Activity

Public Activity

Followers

	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
Facebook	124	576	5,229	14,414	51	13,655
Flickr	5	123	2,336	21,636	-	61
Google Ads <sup>1</sup>	N/A	N/A	2,370	13,626	N/A	N/A
Instagram	12	75	1,201	12,519	48	5,707
Pinterest	62	220	88	488	1	2,053
X(formerly Twitter)	58	301	166	2,016	3	10,962
YouTube	9	55	2,069	11,572	17	640
TikTok	-	-	122	860	27	643
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>1,350</b>	<b>13,581</b>	<b>77,131</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>33,721</b>

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

## 7. Partnerships

**Buffalo History Channel - Heather Gring** met on May 5 with Doug Ruffin, local documentary filmmaker and creator of the Buffalo History Channel, to explore opportunities for collaboration.

**Buffalo Toronto Public Media** - Assistant Deputy Director **Dorinda Darden** and **Chelsey Lonberger** met virtually on May 21 with Barbara Irwin, Tony Buttino, and Pam Johnson to discuss a book launch event for their book, *Creating Reading Rainbow: The Untold Story of a Beloved Children's Series*. This book speaks on the creation of *Reading Rainbow* and the roots it has locally through the Buffalo & Erie County Library and WNED-TV, the local PBS station. Retired Library Director Diane Chrisman and retired librarians Linda Perkins, Peggy Lynch, and Lucille DeFranks were interviewed for the book. B&ECPL staff will be invited to the *Creating Reading Rainbow: The Untold Story of a Beloved Children's Book Launch* event held at Buffalo Toronto Public Media on July 9.

**Challenger Community News - Heather Gring** and **Susan Buttaccio** met with Leah Hamilton, Associate Publisher of the Challenger Community News, on May 10 to discuss opportunities to highlight local African American history resources in the Grosvenor Room.

System Services staff were also in contact or attended meetings with representatives of the following groups and organizations:

- **Buffalo Public Schools**
- **FeedMore WNY**
- **Live Well Erie Task Force**
- **New York State Library**
- **Townsquare Media**
- **University Express**



- **Western New York Library Resources Council (WNYLRC) Committees**
- **WNY Digital Equity Coalition**

## 8. Planning for the Future

**Susan Buttaccio** and **Adam Rubin** met with WNYLRC staff and Tim Monreal, Assistant Professor in the Department of Learning and Instruction at the University at Buffalo, on May 29. They discussed potential *Hispanic Heritage Month* programming, including possible usage of the *Hispanic Heritage History Project* digital collection available on the B&ECPL Digital Collections platform.

**Joy Testa Cinquino** is working with Project Flight's Dr. Geraldine Bard and Dr. Elizabeth Cappella to plan for the 2024 Books for Kids community donation campaign with partners Wegmans, WGRZ TV-Channel 2, The Buffalo News, and Townsquare Media. The campaign will run September 9 to September 22.

## 9. Director Activities

### List of Meetings and Events

Attended by Director John Spears

May 2024

DATE	MEETING / EVENT
May 1, 2024	Meeting - Dr. Bard and Dr. Capella (Project Flight)
May 1, 2024	Event - State of the City of Buffalo at Shea's 710 Theater
May 2, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden and Samantha Purpora
May 2, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Buffalo Cultural Leaders
May 2, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual
May 2, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
May 2, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Christine Carr (Mission Ignite) and Heidi Ziemer (Western New York Library Resources Council)
May 2, 2024	Meeting - Paris Roselli (Richardson Olmsted Campus)
May 3, 2024	Virtual Meeting - ErieNet Personnel Committee
May 4, 2024	Meeting - ACT at Grand Island Memorial Library
May 6, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
May 7, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
May 7, 2024	Imagine Buffalo - Mary Wilson and the Wilson Foundation
May 7, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
May 8, 2024	Meeting - Managers/Directors
May 8, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
May 8, 2024	Meeting - B&ECPL Budget and Finance Committee
May 9, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell

## Minutes of the Board of Trustees

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May 9, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Public Library Systems Directors
May 9, 2024	Meeting - B&ECPL Executive Committee
May 10, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
May 13, 2024	Virtual Meeting - 5/14 Steering Committee
May 13, 2024	Event - 5/14 Memorial Announcement at the Apollo Media Center
May 14, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
May 14, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
May 14, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Southern Adirondack Library System and Mohawk Valley Library System
May 14, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Public Library System Directors Organization
May 14, 2024	Meeting - WNYLRC Board
May 15, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
May 15, 2024	Meeting - Jacqueline Hovey
May 15, 2024	Meeting - Library Foundation
May 16, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
May 16, 2024	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees
May 17, 2024	Meeting - Pastor Giles (Back to Basics Ministries) and Jeannine Purtell
May 17, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Intellectual Freedom Manual
May 17, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
May 20, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
May 20, 2024	Virtual Meeting - WNYLRC Business and Finance Committee
May 20, 2024	Virtual Meeting - NYALS Advocacy with Grace Riario (Ramapo Catskill Library System), Sheryl Knab (WNYLRC), and Anna Lee Dragon (New York Library Association)
May 21, 2024	Interview - Garrett Looker, Investigative Post
May 21, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
May 21, 2024	Meeting - ErieNet LDC Board of Directors
May 21, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
May 22, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Retreat
May 23, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Retreat
May 28, 2024	Event - Pride Week Flag Raising
May 28, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
May 31, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
May 31, 2024	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	1104	5336	4281	17396
Children 5 and under	1311	6405	5963	26608
Children 6-11	1614	7550	3137	15675
Intergenerational/Combined	3880	24331	8376	51399
Teens	461	1887	704	3212
<b>Regular Total</b>	<b>8370</b>	<b>45509</b>	<b>22461</b>	<b>114290</b>
<b>Regular Total</b>	<b>8370</b>	<b>45509</b>	<b>22461</b>	<b>114290</b>
<b>Virtual</b>				
<b>Live Virtual</b>				
Adults	12	91	131	1087
Children 5 and under	0	1	0	12
Children 6-11	0	3	0	96
Intergenerational/Combined	5	25	114	403
Teens	2	51	10	109
<b>Live Virtual Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>1707</b>
<b>Recorded Virtual</b>				
Adults	5	35	381	877
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	2	10	216	1436
Intergenerational/Combined	8	50	1171	4105
Teens	0	0	0	0
<b>Recorded Virtual Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>1768</b>	<b>6418</b>
<b>Virtual Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>8125</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8404</b>	<b>45775</b>	<b>24484</b>	<b>122415</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 <https://www.buffalolib.org/monthly-statistics/2024-circulation-public-access-computer-wifi-and-library-visits-detail>.

## B. Contracting Library Activity Reports

**City of Tonawanda Public Library** – submitted by John Gaff, Director

- The Library recently finished up work on our Community Reading Garden! This ADA accessible garden was funded through a grant as part of the settlement with Tonawanda Coke. The garden features many native plant varieties to support the local ecosystem and will serve as a venue for programming and educational opportunities

in the future. The garden was also designed with expansion in mind, which we hope to do in the coming years.

- University Express, a life-long learning program through Erie County Senior Services and held at locations throughout Erie County, continues to be a success. In both the Spring and Fall, we offer roughly 20 in-person classes on a variety of topics, including local history, humanities, and finance. For the first time this season, we are also live streaming a number of our classes! This helps expand our reach across the County and gives those an opportunity to experience the class when seating is otherwise at max capacity.
- Thanks to numerous grants, we are in the final stages of reconfiguring the public area of the Library, with most changes focusing on the Children's space. New furnishings have allowed us to free up a great deal of space through better organization. The Library as a whole is now more inviting, comfortable, and cohesive. A major goal has been to merge reading with play, so the Children's area now features many elements of play.

**Newstead Public Library** – submitted by Kristine Sutton, Director

- The Newstead Public Library hosts programs and events of interest to library friends of all ages, babies through seniors! Tuesday's have now become Toddler Tuesday, with alternating story time and music class. It is so fun to see the same families in week after week, many of which have now become friends. A true example of the library becoming more and more the community meeting spot!
- A new event for our library is the bi-monthly visit from the FeedMore Farm Market Truck. The truck sells fresh quality fruits and vegetables at a low cost to members of the community. Shoppers can use their SNAP card for purchases. This great opportunity will run through the whole year.
- We are looking ahead to a fun program packed summer at the library. Our popular Summer Reading BINGO Board will be back for children and adults to earn raffle tickets for summer prizes. Looking ahead to July the library will partner once again with the Akron-Newstead Senior Center and the Independent Health Foundation for the Good for the Neighborhood Health and Wellness Event featuring a School Backpack and supply giveaway.

Agenda Item G – Report of the Foundation. Trustee El-Behairy informed the Board that the Foundation has started a strategic planning process. The goal is to have a strategic plan by September, and representatives from the Library are included in the process.

Agenda Item H – The Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT)/Contracting Library Trustee Report. Martha Buyer shared that the Board has been working on projects and is identifying dates for meetings coming up and that ADD Darden has a list of the ACT meeting dates.

Agenda Item H.1 – Contracting Library Liaison Report(s). Trustee El-Behairy met with the Board Chair of Hamburg Public Library. She also informed the Board of the Annual Angola Public Library Hotdog Fundraiser scheduled for Saturday, June 29. It is their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summer Kickoff. Discussion ensued about the Hamburg Public Library and their Board.

Agenda Item I – Public Comment. None.

Agenda Item J – Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item K – New Business. None.

Agenda Item L – Adjournment. There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee T. Johnson with a second by Trustee El-Behairy, the meeting was adjourned at 4:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Moore  
Secretary