

PROPOSED
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
May 21, 2026

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, May 21, 2026 at the Central Library and remotely pursuant to due notice to trustees. The following members were present:

Carima El-Behairy, Chair
Christopher Sasiadek, Esq., Vice Chair
Prof. Christine P. Bartholomew, Esq., Secretary
Michael Amodeo, Esq.
Nathaniel W. Barnes
Kathleen Berens Bucki, MLS
Kimberly Johnson
Sharon M. Kelly, Esq.
Joel C. Moore, Esq.
Elaine M. Panty

Chair El-Behairy called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m. After a call of the roll, it was noted that a quorum was present.

Agenda Item B – Approval/Changes to the Agenda. Chair El-Behairy noted that a walk-on proposed resolution will be introduced under Agenda Item K – New Business. Each Board Member was provided a copy of the proposed resolution at their seat. Chair El-Behairy also noted that an Executive Session will be added under Agenda Item E.3 – Search Committee to discuss a personnel matter related to the “appointment of a particular person” ([OML Section 105\(f\)](#)). Trustee Berens Bucki noticed an error in the title of Agenda Item C. This was corrected.

Agenda Item C – Minutes of Preceding Meetings.

Agenda Item C.1 – Meeting of April 16, 2026. Trustee Panty made a motion to approve the Minutes. Trustee Johnson seconded, and the Minutes were approved unanimously.

Agenda Item C.2 – Special Meeting of April 28, 2026. Trustee Panty made a motion to approve the Special Meeting Minutes. Trustee Johnson seconded, and the Special Meeting Minutes were approved unanimously.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair. Chair El-Behairy began her report by requesting that the Building Oversight Committee convene a meeting in the month of September. Chair El-Behairy asked if there is a Chair of the Building Oversight Committee. She was informed that there is not. Trustee Johnson volunteered to be the Interim Chair of the Building Oversight Committee. Chair El-Behairy stated that during the meeting she

would like to present on the current location of the North Park Branch Library, as well as potentially establishing another library in the City of Buffalo.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. Vice Chair Sasiadek summarized the Executive Committee report as presented below.

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
Board of Trustees – Executive Committee
May 14, 2026

Present: Chair – Carima El-Beahry, Vice Chair Christopher Sasiadek, members Kimberly Johnson, Sharon Kelly, and Elaine Panty. Also present were Interim Director Dorinda Darden, Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Angela Marinucci, Library Administrative Manager Tracy Palicki, and Assistant to the Director Cait 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.

Chair El-Beahry began the meeting by reviewing the proposed agenda. There will be an Executive Session added to discuss a personnel matter related to the “appointment of a particular person” ([OML Section 105\(f\)](#)). After some discussion, it was agreed that the Executive Session should be added under Agenda Item E.3 – Search Committee.

For the Report of the Chair, Chair El-Beahry stated that her Report would be focused on her role in the Search Committee.

Library Administrative Manager Palicki reported that she will present the financials ending on March 31, 2026.

For the Report of the Director, Interim Director Darden shared that all 37 Buffalo & Erie County Public Library locations are participating in Project Flight’s *Books for Kids* donation drive throughout the month of May. On May 15 at Wegmans on Sheridan Drive, a community live appeal with Channel 2, WYRK Radio, the Buffalo News, and the Library 2GO van will be held. This will mark the *Books for Kids* 30th Anniversary with 3.2 million books to date donated. As part of this year’s anniversary observance, Project Flight will present its Legacy of Literacy Award to several individuals and organizations including the Library for their contributions that helped shape and protect the drive’s mission.

Interim Director Darden went on to somberly share that today marks the fourth year since the horrific racist Buffalo Massacre at Tops Supermarket on Jefferson Avenue. The 5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition, for which the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library is a founding member, co-hosted a *Community Conversation* event at the Buffalo History Museum on May 8. Attendees included 30 + East Side community groups and individuals in support of reflecting on the history of systemic racism in Buffalo and the continued impact that 5/14 has on the East Side community. One of the

meeting goals was to work together to preserve, educate, and build relationships that will help the community of survivors impacted by the 5/14 attack. The Library has completed 16 oral histories and over 1,000 materials were salvaged from the Tops site. Two thirds of those materials have been cleaned, preserved, and rehoused at the Buffalo History Museum Resource Center.

Interim Director Darden shared that the Library's Special Collections staff participated in the *5/14 Remembrance & Day of Service*, a citywide day of service at Buffalo's Beverly Gray Business Center, hosted by the Clementine Gold Group, which was held earlier today. Library staff were also available onsite to record oral histories.

The Community Health Center of Buffalo, Inc. Resiliency Center is hosting a *Pre-Ceremony Observance* program at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library today until 6:00 pm, focusing on the families and survivors' needs while providing space for reflection.

Interim Director Darden and Assistant Deputy Director Joy Testa Cinquino attended the *Dedication of the Richard Earne Reading Garden* at the Grand Island Memorial Library on May 13. The event celebrated the life and legacy of late Trustee Richard "Dick" Earne with a dedication of the garden space to him. Interim Director Darden shared that the reception was lovely. Several Trustees and Staff shared fond memories of Mr. Earne and his service.

Interim Director Darden proudly reported that the Angola, Aurora, Boston, Collins (Town of), Concord, Elma, Grand Island, North Collins, and the City of Tonawanda Libraries were awarded a total of \$163,128 in funds from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation's *Rural Library Grant Program*. All of the grants were edited and vetted through the Development & Communications Office. Assistant Deputy Director Testa Cinquino submitted them through the grant portal. The funds are part of a \$500,000, 3-year grant program awarded to Rochester Library Resources Council (RLRC) and the Western New York Library Resources Center (WNYLRC) for distribution to rural public libraries. Chair El-Behairy asked if the libraries are awarded each year as part of the 3-year grant program. Interim Director Darden stated they would need to reapply each year.

The Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT) General Meeting will be held at the Town of Collins Public Library on May 16.

Next week, Interim Director Darden stated she will report on the *Passport to Reading* program – which currently has a dozen who have successfully completed visiting all 37 Buffalo & Erie County Public Library locations to receive a golden library card. Discussion ensued regarding the *Passport to Reading* program. Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Marinucci stated that she has visited 12 libraries so far!

Chair El-Behairy continued through the proposed agenda.

There being no further business, Trustee Sasiadek motioned to adjourn, and Trustee Panty seconded. The meeting ended at 4:20 p.m.

Vice Chair Sasiadek shared that his family is participating in the *Passport to Reading* program and has visited 15 out of 37 libraries so far. Discussion ensued regarding the *Passport to Reading* program. Trustee Panty stated that at the Executive Committee meeting it was announced that 12 patrons have already received a limited golden library card for completing the *Passport to Reading* program. Interim Director Dorinda Darden shared that there are even more patrons that have since earned a golden library card, which she will report on under Agenda Item F – Report of the Director.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Monthly Financial Report. Library Administrative Manager Tracy Palicki summarized the Monthly Financial Report ending on March 31, 2026. Discussion ensued regarding interest rate earnings, personnel costs, retirement, and the New York State budget. Further discussion continued regarding utilities, use of fund balance, and New York State Aid.

Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Angela Marinucci noted that James Mitaritonna was present virtually. Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Marinucci shared information regarding James Mitaritonna’s professional background and how the Library is excited for him to start. James Mitaritonna introduced himself to the Library Board. He will be joining Library Administration as Assistant Deputy Director – Controller beginning on June 1.

Agenda Item E.3 – Search Committee. Chair El-Behairy thanked Special Projects Coordinator Erin Vest, Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Marinucci, Assistant Deputy Director – Human Resources Judy Fachko, Interim Director Darden, and Assistant to the Director Cait Goodrich for welcoming the outside candidates into the Library on April 28. Chair El-Behairy went on to say how arduous the director search process was.

Chair El-Behairy asked for a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss appointment of a candidate to Library Director. Chair El-Behairy invited Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT) President Martha Buyer to stay, as she is a member of the Search Committee. Trustee Kelly made the motion. Trustee Johnson seconded, and the Library Board entered into Executive Session at 4:18 p.m.

The Library Board exited Executive Session at 4:36 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Amodeo and a second by Vice Chair Sasiadek. No action was taken.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Interim Director Darden began her report by sharing that Summer Reading has kicked off with the *Passport to Reading* program. This year, a special, limited edition golden library card will be given to the first 1,000 people who travel to all 37 libraries between now and August 21. Library patrons with a financial, family, or vehicle hardship will be offered options to obtain a golden library card. To date,

nearly 40 people have already completed the journey to all library locations. Interim Director Darden shared that patron and staff engagement has been fantastic.

Earlier today, Interim Director Darden participated in a virtual meeting with Bostwick Design Partnership about their cost projections for the Central Library's *Space Utilization Study*. The project in its entirety is projected to exceed \$89 million dollars, in seven phases. She expects representatives from Bostwick to present to the Library Board in the fall.

The Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library is now serving as a Local Community Location (LCL) for the *Virtual Court Access Network (VCAN)* program as part of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's partnership with the New York State Unified Court System operating through the 8th Judicial District Erie County Family Court. A *Ribbon Cutting Ceremony* to celebrate the opening of the VCAN site will be held at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library on June 17 at 4:00 p.m.

The Center for the Digitization and Curation of African American History through the Smithsonian will travel to Buffalo for the 2026 Community Curation Program. This includes *Community Archiving Workshops*, *Collecting Community and Family Oral Histories*, and other programs and events. The Special Collections Department at the Central Library and the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library will be hosting some of these events in May and June [Community Curation 2026: Buffalo | National Museum of African American History and Culture](#).

Assistant Deputy Director – Buffalo Libraries Maria Lowe is working with the University at Buffalo professors, Dr. Michael Applegarth, Dr. Jessica Kruger, and Dr. Linda Kahn, from the Departments of Social Work, Public Health, and Family Medicine, to have four Graduate students work throughout the Central Library on Mondays and Thursdays beginning June 8 for 10 weeks. Students will conduct needs assessments and provide referrals under the guidance of their professors. The professors will produce a final report including outcomes, lessons learned, and recommendations for long-term sustainability that will be presented to Library Administration during the fall 2026 semester.

The *Five-Year Library System Plan of Service* and the *Central Library Plan for 2027-2031* are due to the New York State Division of Library Development by October 1, 2026. Staff and trustees are invited to participate in the planning process, which will begin in June.

Interim Director Darden shared that she is happy to announce that the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library has received an additional \$74,096.00 for a grand total of \$2,085,393.00 from the State Aid for Library Construction. The additional funds will be spent on the construction project at the Elaine M. Panty Branch Library.

Assistant to the Director Goodrich attended the New York Library Association's *Spring on the Hill: You've Got the Power* mini-conference in Albany on May 19. The full day of educational programming focused on advocacy. This was an opportunity for Caito

become an advocacy ambassador for the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System. She will assist Development & Communications with future advocacy initiatives and trainings.

Lastly, safety and security interactions at Central and the Buffalo Branches over the last month have been in line with what is typically expected, including occasional violations of Rules of Conduct handled by Security. Interim Director Darden shared a few notable updates regarding security at the Central Library:

- On April 22, a teen patron entered the Central Library and expressed fear of being “jumped.” While moving to the Clinton Street Security post to await his ride, a group of teens followed him and appeared to be challenging him. The teen who reported fear of being jumped sprayed the other teens with what was believed to be pepper spray. No fight occurred; the group that was originally following the teen immediately left the library and the one who used the pepper spray was escorted by Security to his mother’s vehicle. Security spoke with the teen’s mother about the incident and about the Library’s Rules of Conduct.
- On April 23, there were two physical altercations between groups of teens in the Reading Park. The Reading Park is commonly believed to be Library premises but is owned and operated by the City of Buffalo and Buffalo Place. The Buffalo Police Department handled the altercations. To assist the police in conducting the investigation, Security at the Central Library placed a one-hour “no entry” restriction on teens present at the Reading Park during the altercation. No fighting occurred in the library and no teens in the building were asked to leave.
- The Erie County Sheriff’s Office informed us that due to budgeting constraints, May 16 was the last day that they would provide Deputy Sheriffs on Saturdays at the Central Library. They will continue to provide coverage Monday through Friday. Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Marinucci and Director of Security and Safety Management Aaron Swan informed Buffalo Police of this change in scheduling and as of now, do not have concerns about decreased safety for Saturday patrons.

Vice Chair Sasiadek asked if there are many issues on Saturdays that require Erie County Sheriffs. Interim Director Darden stated that there are not. Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Marinucci added that Saturdays are typically lighter days for the Central Library; school day metro passes do not work on the weekends, and there are no Erie County Sheriffs present on Sundays. She stated that she and Director of Security and Safety Management Swan would continue to monitor the need for Erie County Sheriffs on Saturdays. However, it is her understanding that budgeting constraints in the Erie County Sheriff’s Office led to the removal of Erie County Sheriffs on Saturdays.

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



Arab American Heritage Month – In celebration of *Arab American Heritage Month*, the Special Collections Department hosted the *Arabic Calligraphy and Vegetal Arts in Islam Workshop* in the Grosvenor Room at the Central Library on April 18.

Blues Memorial: A 5/14 Community Project - Rare Book Curator **Heather Gring** with assistance from Assistant Maintenance Supervisor **Thomas Murphy** and Stationary Engineer **Nicholas Greaves** installed *Blues Memorial: A 5/14 Community Project* flags at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library. This project is now on display at both the Central Library and Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library with plans of future installations in other Buffalo Branches. The *Blues Memorial: A 5/14 Community Project* involved over 80 art-making sessions in 2024 that created thousands of flags as a way to process the grief of the May 14, 2022 racist Buffalo Massacre at the Tops supermarket on Jefferson Avenue.

Buffalo Toronto Public Media Living Library & Screening Event – The Special Collections Department hosted the Buffalo Toronto Public Media’s *Living Library & Screening* in the Ring of Knowledge at the Central Library on April 25. Local professionals and community members became “Human Books”. As part of the *Living Library*, they shared their personal stories, perspectives, and lived experiences with attendees who “checked” them out. This was followed by the screening of the Indie Lens film, *The Librarians*, which features librarians across the U.S. facing the impact of library collection standards that include restrictions on race-related and LGBTQIA+ content.

Civics Day – System Adult Outreach Services Manager **Carol Kowalik-Happy**, System Adult Outreach Librarian **Jacob Rachwal**, and System Youth Outreach Services Manager **Chelsey Lonberger** served as Community Advisors at Generation Citizen’s *Civics Day* at the Buffalo History Museum on April 29. Community Advisors listened to presentations on various civic issues from students who represented various high schools in the City of Buffalo. The presentations were then scored based on the rubric provided.

Week of the Young Child – **Chelsey Lonberger** spoke on behalf of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library for the *Week of the Young Child* celebration at the West Seneca Public Library on April 7. Guest speakers at the event included Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz and Deputy Erie County Executive Lisa Chimera. This year’s national annual observance of the *Week of the Young Child* was from April 11-17. This is a time for communities to come together to celebrate young children, their families, and educators and place emphasis on the importance of early childhood education and the role families play in shaping a child’s development.



Photo - Chelsey Lonberger (left) pictured with Deputy Erie County Executive Lisa Chimera and others at the Week of the Young Child celebration at the West Seneca Public Library

Adult Services Librarian **Leslie Carr** was appointed as a member of the Northeast Region Steering Committee of the Federal Depository Library Program in April. The committee is under the supervision of the Superintendent of Documents of the Government Publishing Office in Washington D.C. **Leslie's** appointment will involve providing direction and assistance to other Northeast federal depository libraries with their government documents collections.

Teen Services Manager **Taylor Harding** and System Youth Outreach Services Librarian Trainee **Max Brousseau** visited nine Charter School for Applied Technologies' 7th grade classrooms, in April, to teach students about media literacy using a Family Feud style game. The teens told staff, "the game was a lot of fun," and they were excited about the prizes: Smarties and buttons. **Taylor** and **Max** also showed students how to sign up for digital library cards and use the Library's online databases, subject guides, and the Libby app. Staff reached 185 students through this outreach.

Teen Services Library Assistant **Sarah Barry** hosted April's Teen Advisory Group (TAG) meeting, coordinating with **Heather Gring** to introduce the group to some of the highlighted collection in the Rare Book Vault. The teens were able to see early editions of children's books, Shakespeare folios, and the oldest item in the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library collection: a cuneiform tablet.

Buffalo Mayor Sean Ryan held his *City of Buffalo Breaking Down the Budget* community information session in the Central Library Auditorium on April 21.

City of Buffalo Comptroller Barbara Miller-Williams held a community meeting regarding the recommended City of Buffalo budget on April 29 in the Central Library Auditorium.

Sunday Concerts @ Central continued with the Buffalo Jazz Collective/Mark Filsinger Chamber Big Band on April 19.

1. Programs and Outreach

Central Library – Adult and Launch Pad Services

- *Universal Anime Saturdays*
- *Blind Date with an International Book*
- *Adult Take & Makes*
- *Book Clubs: Cookbook Club, Speculative Fiction, & Ethics Book Club* in partnership with Erie County Ethics Officer Barbara A. Piazza
- *Buffalo Chess Association*
- *Noon Yoga Refresh* with Parkside Yoga
- *Tea Blend Workshop*
- *Craft & Create*
- *Dungeons & Dragons Drop-in*
- *Trivia at the Library!*

Central Library – Teen Services

- *After School Bingo*
- *Teen Crafting*

Central Library – Children’s Services

- *Peaceful Playtime*
- *Pint-Sized Picassos*
- *Tiny Tots Storytime*
- *Take & Makes*
- *Scavenger Hunts*
- *School Classroom Visits: Buffalo Public Schools (BPS) #32 Bennett Park Montessori, Pre-Kindergarten-2nd grades; Home School Club; Elmwood Village Charter School, Kindergarten,*
- *Tour: Librarians from Rural Impact Summit Conference*

Central Library - Special Collections/Rare Book Room

- *Book a Librarian Genealogy Session: Ancestry Library Edition*
- *Oral History and Memory Lab Training* for the Buffalo Genealogical Society of the African Diaspora
- *Connect Us: Exploring Family History* - Twentieth Century Club of Buffalo
- *Lectures: A Night on the Town: Harry Altman’s Entertainment Empire* presented by author and historian Susan Fenster, *Exploring the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* with Dr. James Russell - Ring of Knowledge at the Central Library
- *Paper and Photograph Preservation* presentation – Erie County Historical Federation Annual Meeting held at the Elma Senior Center.
- *Oral Histories for the 5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition* – Canisius University
- *Tarot Tuesday*
- *Paging Through History: The Grosvenor Room Quiet Reading Club*

Central Library – System Adult Outreach Services/ TechKnow Lab

- *Book a Librarian*
- *Book a Technology Trainer*
- *Notary Service*

- *Buffalo Promise Neighborhood Job Fair* - the Westminster Community Charter School in Buffalo
- *Wellness Fairs* - BPS #366 - Research Laboratory High School, Trocaire College
- *S.A.V.E. Suicide Prevention Training* presented by the U.S. Veteran's Administration at the Central Library
- *Masten Stakeholders Brunch* - Delavan-Grider Community Center in Buffalo.
- *Arabic Heritage Month Celebration* - The Buffalo History Museum
- *Family Literacy Night* - Clarence Public Library
- *Wellness @ Central*
- *Erie County Department of Health Benefit Fair*
- *Clothing Giveaway* - Ring of Knowledge at the Central Library presented by Amazing Women's Outreach Inc.
- *Tabling: Erie 1 BOCES Job Fair*

Central Library – System Youth Outreach Services

- *Story Time* - North Park Branch Library
- *4th Annual Recreational Festival* hosted by the Parent Network of Western New York at the R.O.C.K. in West Seneca, NY
- *Tabling: Play for All: Creating Inclusive Foundations Mini Conference* presented by Parent Network of Western New York
- *Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO) Little Kids Pre-Concert* events
- *Tabling: GLYS Youth GSA Summit* - BPS #363 Lewis J. Bennett School of Innovative Technology

Mobile Services - Library on Wheels Bookmobile/Library2Go Van

In addition to regularly scheduled stops throughout the month, the Library on Wheels Bookmobile and the Library2 Go Van participated in the following special events:

- *Tabling: Saturday Academy* - BPS #97 Harvey Austin School, BPS #76 Herman Badillo Bilingual Academy
- *Tabling: Cultural Connections Night* - BPS # 302 Emerson School of Hospitality
- *Independent Health Foundation's Good for the Neighborhood* wellness event - Akron Newstead Senior Center

Tours and Visits:

Students from SUNY Buffalo State University's Patricia H. and Richard E. Garman Art Conservation Department visited the Grosvenor Room at the Central Library on April 20 and explored the public and storage spaces in the Grosvenor Room and will prepare reports outlining how the department might improve preservation conditions for Rare Books and Special Collections at the Central Library. The monthly Special Collections tour of the Grosvenor Room, Rare Book Room and the Mark Twain Room was provided to patrons on April 25. Six tours were conducted throughout the month of the Rare Book Room collection.

City Branch Libraries

All Branches: *Take n' Make craft bags and scavenger hunts* (themes: Easter Eggs, Sabres, insects, spring, frogs, Dogman, Super Mario, octopuses, birds, origami corner bookmark buddy, Lorax, Collage Poetry, Pollinators, Fairy House, libraries)

Multiple Branches:

- Chess
- Storytime
- Board game and video gaming groups
- Adult Book Groups by theme: General fiction, Horror, Mystery, Nature, Tea & Books and Romance & Rants (read what you want)
- Book a Technology Trainer appointment by Branch or Systems staff
- Movies
- Tea Swaps (North Park, Crane, Isaías González-Soto)
- Arabic Calligraphy Classes (Leroy R. Coles, Jr. and East Clinton)
- Ancient Movement with Arts for Learning WNY (East Clinton and Isaías González-Soto)
- LEGO clubs
- Kid, Teen and Adult Craft programs
- Wellness programming and information by Buffalo State Undergraduate School of Social Work Interns (North Park, Central, Leroy R. Coles, Jr.)

Individual Branches: The Buffalo Libraries host unique programs based on the needs and interest of their community. Below is a selection of programs offered this month.

- Drop in Craft of DIY Wind Spinners (upcycled cd's) (Leroy R. Coles, Jr.)
- World Drumming (Leroy R. Coles, Jr.)
- Devi Bollywood Dance (Leroy R. Coles, Jr.)
- Make your Own Terrarium with Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens (Crane)
- Board Game Café (Dudley)
- Pick up a Free Tree in collaboration with Neighborhood Forest (Dudley)
- Catch the Reading Bug (East Clinton)
- Drop-in Rubber Duck Decorating (North Park)
- Interactive Dance Party with Arts for Learning WNY (North Park)
- 'Love You to Death' history lecture with Forest Lawn Cemetery (North Park)
- Pizza Plant-It Program (North Park)
- Zine Making Workshop with Arts of Learning WNY (Elaine M. Panty)
- All Ages Maker Event: Native Flower Seed Bombs (Isaías González-Soto)
- DMV mobile unit (Frank E. Merriweather, Jr.)

Outreach:

- **Tours and Visits:** Lighthouse Center preschool visit (Frank E. Merriweather, Jr.)
- Storytime outreach to BPS #37 Marva J. Daniel Futures Preparatory School Pre-K and Kindergarten (Frank E. Merriweather, Jr.)
- Charter School for Applied Technologies, nine 7th Grade classes (Central teens)

Assistant Deputy Director **Joy Testa Cinquino** participated in Canisius University's *Student Headshot & Networking* event designed to help business students practice speaking with professionals and exploring career paths on April 22 at Canisius.

Displays and Exhibits:

- Arab American Heritage
- Non-fiction Financial Rights & Wrongs

2. Collection Development

Physical Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	2,219	10,451	292	1,258	507,366
Young Adult Print	289	1,722	82	395	68,416
Adult Print	2,974	12,726	641	2,837	1,750,555
Media	2,070	6,966	253	883	504,243
Other*	2,073	6,538	23	121	169,532
Subtotal	9,625	38,403	1,291	5,494	3,000,112

*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other.

Electronic Collections*:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	6,404	19,605	1,405	5,932	134,374
eAudiobooks	7,527	35,555	415	1,692	64,311
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6,643
Subtotal	13,931	55,160	1,820	7,624	205,328

*The B&ECPL also provides access to 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	23,556	93,563	3,111	13,118	3,205,440

Rare Book and Special Collections:

The Rare Book Room has acquired *the J. Warren Perry Historic Buffalo Collection*, a group of framed historic illustrations of Buffalo, transferred from the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site. The collection contains approximately 135 framed works depicting the local landscape.

The Special Collections Department acquired a collection of eight Erie County maps donated to the Boston Free Library.

The extensive collection of Buffalo related photography and ephemera from Jim Mendola's local history collection will be added to Special Collections as an important link for Buffalonians conducting local history and genealogy research.

3. Fundraising

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1 - April 30, 2026	\$74,746.96

4. Facilities

On April 16, Bostwick Design Partnership held a virtual meeting with Launch Pad staff to discuss the temporary relocation of the department during their Central Library Space Utilization Study design. This relocation could occupy the second floor Collections Gallery Space in Phase 1, until Phase 2 would be fully funded and allow the full Launch Pad to be constructed. Equipment orientation, offices, studios, power requirements, and storage locations were discussed. Bostwick indicated they would incorporate these conclusions in their final design estimates.

On April 24, CPL: Architecture – Engineering – Planning firm held a meeting with Library Maintenance and Facility staff to review the preliminary design of the Central Library Building Envelope Rehabilitation. Design progress is roughly at 30% complete. Cleaning of the building, sealant replacement, marble panel repairs, tentative schedules, and bid processes with the inclusion of bid alternatives were discussed. It was agreed that further PCB testing of the building exterior would provide a clearer picture for cost estimating. This is currently in the process of being scheduled.

On April 24, Zaxis Architectural PC held a kick-off meeting with Allstate General Contracting, Inc., RP Mechanical, and Library Maintenance & Facility staff for the remaining work at the Leroy R. Coles, Jr. Branch Library. Remaining scope of work includes the rebuilding of the air handler and installation of Siemens Building Control system. Topics of discussion included work schedules, building permits, emergency contacts, procedures for processing field decisions and contract amendments, submittals, procedures for payment applications, and safety/security of premises and work restrictions. Preparatory site work is scheduled to begin in mid-May.

On April 30, Erie County Department of Public Works (DPW) held a kick-off meeting with Watts Architecture, Jameson Roofing, J.W. Danforth Co., and Library Maintenance & Facility staff to discuss the upcoming Central Library Roof Replacement & Green Roof Project. The scope of work was reviewed and confirmed, including removal of the roof, mechanical disconnect & reconnections, plumbing, installation of the vegetative overburden, and hazardous material monitoring. The project schedule was discussed with the tentative start date of June 1 (weather permitting). Permits and insurance documentation was reviewed. Site usage and material staging were also discussed, as there will be no on-site parking for contractors.

5. Staff Development

Public Library Association (PLA) Conference – The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library sponsored attendance for four employees to attend the *PLA 2026 Conference* in Minneapolis, MN from April 1 to April 3. Assistant Deputy Director of Buffalo Libraries **Maria Lowe**, Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Librarian **Heather Bermingham**, Clarence Public Librarian **Sarah McLean-Plunkett**, and Adult Services Senior Library Clerk **Hailey Oldham** attended a variety of educational session and networking opportunities specific to public libraries, including *Engage, Empower, Evolve: Using Staff Input to Strengthen Culture, AI Book Clubs and Digital Literacy for Older Adults, Curiosity in*

Crisis: Managing Conflict in Growing Uncertainty, and Beyond Storytime: Community-Building Through Music, Play, and Partnerships.

New York Library Association (NYLA) Youth Services Section (YSS) Spring Conference

– On April 17, the NYLA YSS Conference was hosted in Buffalo, NY, allowing many Buffalo & Erie County Public Library staff to attend this statewide event. Fifteen employees from across the System attended the conference, which had the theme *Joy in the Library*. Three staff members were also presenters; **Chelsey Lonberger** presented a session on *Literacy Plans for Public Libraries* and **Heather Bermingham** and Anna B. Reinstein Librarian **Hannah Krull** jointed presented the session *Don't Make Me Read Another Picture Book! Genre-fying Diverse Children's Collections*.

Customers of SirsiDynix Users Group, Inc. (COSUGI) Virtual Conference

– On April 21 and 22, six staff members attended the virtual *COSUGI 2026 Conference: Libraries Standing Strong*. This annual conference is specifically for SirsiDynix customers and features presentations from SirsiDynix on products, updates, and Q&A, as well as presentations from customers sharing their unique applications of program features. Attendees included System Borrower Services Manager **Linda Rizzo**, Technology Support Librarian **Angela Pierpaoli**, Technical Services Manager **Jennifer Childs**, IT Administrator **Justin Rosado**, Senior Computer Operator **Craig Schmidt**, and Computer Application Support Technician **Elijah Terrell**.

Webinars – Employees participated in a variety of webinars and other online learning programs in April, with several staff members attending these sessions: *Enhance Your Library, Enhance Your Well-Being* (from Limitless Librarian), *From Selection to Separation: Hiring and Parting Ways Respectfully* (from ESLN), *Harassment Self-Defense: A Practical, Hands-On Workshop* (from NYS Library), and *Practical AI in Public Libraries* (from CLRC).

6. Communications

Media Coverage

The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library garnered coverage across a range of topics in April.

Love your Library Month

Escape the Algorithm launched April 1, across all 37 branches for Love Your Library Month. The campaign made a straightforward case: at a moment when most of what people read, watch, and discover is chosen for them by platforms optimizing for engagement, the public library is the counterpoint. No ad trackers, no listener profiles, no data shaping what ends up in front of you.

The timing was grounded in a 2025 Pew Research Center survey finding that eight in ten U.S. parents say the harms of social media outweigh its benefits, and nearly two-thirds say they personally spend too much time on their own devices.

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date / Publish Date
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Press Release	Love your Library Month	Release: Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Invites Patrons to ESCAPE THE ALGORITHM This April (4/1)
Earned Media	Love your Library Month	Bees: Library campaign urges community to 'escape the algorithm'
Joint Press Release	Books for Kids	Information Page: https://www.buffalolib.org/project-flight
Earned Media	Books for Kids	WGRZ: Books for Kids Book Drive Returns: Help Put Books in the Hands of Local Children

Social Media:

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
Facebook	48	166	2,879	15,491	114	16,524
Flickr	-	-	1,742	7,087	-	59
Google Ads ¹	N/A	N/A	2,583	10,082	N/A	N/A
Instagram	16	54	8,046	40,360	264	10,452
Pinterest	4	5	50	131	-	2,049
Twitter (X)	40	133	52	189	-2	10,347
Bluesky	18	50	58	197	11	1,318
YouTube	2	20	70	1,850	6	902
TikTok	1	3	612	3,524	5	1,089
Total	129	431	16,092	78,911	398	42,740

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

7. Partnerships

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

- 5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition: Confronting White Supremacy
- Buffalo Center for Health Equity
- Cannabis Workforce Initiative
- Cassadaga Job Corps
- Comfort Cotton Collective
- Erie County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD)
- Erie County Historical Commission
- Erie County Office of Geographic Information Services

- Erie 1 Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)
- Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)
- Help Me Grow Western New York
- Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc.
- Live Well Erie
- Musicians Performance Trust Fund
- Outreach Coordinators in New York's Public Library Systems
- UB HEALS (Homeless health, Education, Awareness, and Leadership in Street medicine)
- United Way of Buffalo & Erie County
- Western New York Library Resources Council (WNYLRC) Committees
- Western Region PTA
- Women's Business Center at Canisius University

8. Planning for the Future

Work is well under way for the next Rare Book Room exhibit, entitled, *Cries in the Street: Itinerant Work Past and Present*. Dr. Frances Gage will be co-curating this exhibit with **Heather Gring**.

Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio** has been working with New York State Board of Regents Member Dr. Catherine Collins to plan an exhibit in the fall of 2026 featuring Dr. Collins' collection of teapots, which have been used for social events and tea services in the community over the last 30 years.

Susan Buttaccio and Special Collections Librarian **Elizabeth (Libby) Stengel** have been working with the Graphics Department team and outside partners to develop an exhibit to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The goal is to mount the exhibit by the middle of June 2026.

Books for Kids annual donation drive in partnership with Project Flight, Channel 2, Wegmans, The Buffalo News and Townsquare Media runs May 1-31 in all Buffalo & Erie County Public Library locations. The live community event takes place on Friday, May 15 at Wegmans on Sheridan Drive until 12 noon. Channel 2 will do live interviews and the Library 2GO van will be on-site from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

"We the People: A Quilt of Belonging," a community quilt project celebrating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence will be celebrated with 12 free community quilt programs in our libraries. Explore & More Children's Museum will facilitate. **Susan Buttaccio**, **Carol Kowalik-Happy**, Community Engagement Manager **Hannah Quaintance**, and Graphics Department Manager **Dawn Stanton** are participating on several of Erie County's America 250 planning committees.

Central Library is registered as an official location on the *2026 Buffalo Garden Walk*.

9. Director Activities

List of Meetings and Events

Attended by Interim Director Dorinda Darden

April 2026

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

DATE	MEETING / EVENT
April 1, 2026	Meeting - Cait Goodrich
April 1, 2026	Virtual Meeting - 5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition Communications Committee
April 2, 2026	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
April 7, 2026	Meeting - Jennifer Childs
April 7, 2026	Meeting - Angela Marinucci
April 7, 2026	Meeting - Chelsey Lonberger
April 7, 2026	Meeting - Susan Buttaccio
April 8, 2026	Radio Interview - <i>On Target</i> hosted by Judge Penny Wolfgang
April 8, 2026	Meeting - Cait Goodrich
April 8, 2026	Meeting - Carol Kowalik-Happy
April 8, 2026	Meeting - Linda Rizzo
April 8, 2026	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
April 8, 2026	Meeting - Michigan Street Preservation Corporation Board
April 9, 2026	Meeting - Maria Lowe
April 9, 2026	Meeting - Administrative Team
April 9, 2026	Meeting - Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees Executive Committee
April 10, 2026	Virtual Meeting - Peacemakers with Angela Marinucci and Maria Lowe
April 10, 2026	Meeting - Andrew Maines
April 10, 2026	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
April 10, 2026	Virtual Presentation - Know Your Rights Workshop with the New York Immigration Coalition
April 13, 2026	Meeting - Jennifer Childs
April 13, 2026	Virtual Meeting - Staff Forum
April 13, 2026	Virtual Meeting - 5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition Steering Committee
April 13, 2026	Meeting - Administrative Team
April 13, 2026	Meeting - Andrew Maines
April 14, 2026	Meeting - Chelsey Lonberger
April 14, 2026	Meeting - Angela Marinucci
April 14, 2026	Virtual Meeting - American Library Association (ALA) Committee on Library Advocacy (COLA) Ecosystem Sub-Committee
April 14, 2026	Virtual Meeting - Public Library Systems Directors Organization (PULISDO)
April 14, 2026	Meeting - Staff Forum
April 15, 2026	Meeting - Staff Forum

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

April 15, 2026	Meeting - Cait Goodrich
April 15, 2026	Meeting - Linda Rizzo
April 15, 2026	Meeting - 5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition
April 16, 2026	Meeting - Maria Lowe
April 16, 2026	Meeting - Susan Buttaccio
April 16, 2026	Meeting - Carol Kowalik-Happy
April 16, 2026	Virtual Meeting - Bostwick Design Partnership
April 16, 2026	Virtual Meeting - Public Library System (PLS) Directors
April 16, 2026	Meeting - Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees
April 16, 2026	Event - Family Literacy Night at Clarence Public Library
April 17, 2026	Virtual Meeting - Melissa Brown
April 17, 2026	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
April 18, 2026	Event - Zonta Club of Kenmore Lucky Number Brunch
April 20, 2026	Meeting - Melissa Goodrich
April 20, 2026	Meeting - Jennifer Childs
April 20, 2026	Meeting - Administrative Team
April 20, 2026	Meeting - Andrew Maines
April 21, 2026	Meeting - Susan Buttaccio
April 21, 2026	Meeting - ErieNet Local Development Corporation Board of Directors
April 21, 2026	Event - City of Buffalo Breaking Down the Budget with Mayor Sean Ryan
April 22, 2026	Virtual Meeting - SUNY Erie Library Advisory Council
April 22, 2026	Meeting - Linda Rizzo
April 23, 2026	Event - State of the County Presented by Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz
April 23, 2026	Event - BABEL Author Series: Imani Perry
April 29, 2026	Meeting - Jennifer Childs
April 29, 2026	Meeting - Administrative Team
April 29, 2026	Meeting - Andrew Maines
April 29, 2026	Meeting - Linda Rizzo
April 30, 2026	Meeting - Maria Lowe
April 30, 2026	Meeting - Chelsey Lonberger
April 30, 2026	Meeting - Carol Kowalik-Happy
April 30, 2026	Meeting - Susan Buttaccio

Appendices

A. Monthly Statistics

System Programming Statistics:

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Regular*				

Adults	1763	6028	4684	15583
Children 5 and under	1099	4862	6120	23652
Children 6-11	3669	14390	6290	24328
Intergenerational/Combined	6094	20525	12214	37648
Teens	373	1303	915	2893
Regular Total	12998	47108	30223	104104
Regular Total	12998	47108	30223	104104
Virtual				
Live Virtual				
Adults	4	37	58	314
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	0	0	0	0
Intergenerational/Combined	20	31	77	343
Teens	2	42	2	42
Live Virtual Total	26	110	137	699
Recorded Virtual				
Adults	4	16	95	596
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	2	8	405	2073
Intergenerational/Combined	5	30	1974	7533
Teens	0	0	0	0
Recorded Virtual Total	11	54	2474	10202
Virtual Total	37	164	2611	10901
Grand Total	13035	47272	32834	115005

*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, Wi-Fi usage, and program attendance and a summary of open hours can be found at <https://www.buffalolib.org/about-becpl/monthly-statistics>.

Detailed reports on circulation, computer sessions, Wi-Fi usage, and library visits can be found at <https://www.buffalolib.org/monthly-statistics/2026-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

Adult Crafts – The second Saturday of the month the library hosts a craft class for adults, a popular program that usually has a waiting list. In April, we created a pressed flower lantern that was a lot of fun to build, and May will feature a drip painted hydrangea. Each month our awesome patrons get to exercise their creativity!

Show and Tell – April 21 the library partnered with the Collins Regional Historical Society to do a "Grown Up Show and Tell". Both Historical society members and patrons brought in some interesting items and told us about their history. Some notable items

were a pair of ox shoes and a kettle produced in the town in the 19th century. This was a great hit, and we look forward to doing it again!

Outreach – On May 2, Director Abbie Barten-McGowan got out into the community doing outreach at the Collins Regional Historical Society's annual Craft Show. She had crafts for the kids and discussed upcoming events like the concert series and summer reading. The Historical Society is one of the library's biggest supporters and partners in the community.

New Library of Things Items – After patron and staff suggestions and a round of patron voting, the Collins Library is excited to be adding new items to our Library of Things collection! Top voted items include an electric power washer, pom-pom maker, and a mini thermal imaging camera. These and more will soon be available for checkout along with the over 100 items from sewing machines to metal detectors currently in our collection.

Music in the Library – June 5 our annual summer concert series inside the library will kick off featuring The Untouchables with some great music at 7:00 p.m. These after-hours concerts are a community staple and run through October. The Friends of the Collins Public Library fund this concert series.

Hot Dog Roast – June 13 the Collins Library will host its annual Hot Dog Roast! We will also hold outdoor activities and crafts, a bake sale from the Friends of the Library, and more. We are coordinating with other organizations like the Collins Fire Company's car seat check and the Sheriff's Department outreach to make this a community-wide event. Funds raised will go toward summer programming.

Partnership - The Town of Collins Public Library continues to partner with the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities to provide space and programming including movies and crafts for their clients throughout the area.

Summer Reading Kick off – June 29 Collins Library will hold its Summer Reading Kick-off. With Summer Reading Logs for Kids, Teens, and Adults, this will be a summer of fun!

Grand Island Memorial Library – submitted by Bridgette Heintz, Director

Youth Programs

- Our Youth Services Librarian, Stefanie Anawald, leads three distinct story time sessions designed to support early childhood development. Preschoolers gather on Tuesdays for stories and activities tailored to ages three to five, while Thursdays are reserved for the tiniest patrons during Itty Bitty Story Time, created specifically for babies from birth to walking. The newest addition, Toddler Story Time, now offered on Saturdays, welcomes children from eighteen months to age three. Families have responded enthusiastically, and the children love Ms. Stefanie.
- Youth engagement expanded even further in 2026 with the introduction of a monthly Mario Kart Party, made possible by the generous donation of three Nintendo Switch consoles from community members. Led by Senior Page Ethan Klie, the program has quickly gained momentum among children ages eight to twelve. As participation

continues to grow, the library hopes to offer additional sessions and eventually open the program to other age groups.

Annual Easter Event

- The Annual Easter Event once again brought the community together in a big way. In partnership with the Grand Island Recreation Department, the Grand Island Golden Age Center, and Kornerstone Coffee, the event welcomed 1,250 visitors. Families enjoyed an indoor adaptive egg hunt sponsored by the Miracle League of Buffalo, an outdoor egg trail winding through Veterans Park, craft stations inside the library, photos with the Easter Bunny, and a lively bake sale and basket raffle. With eight years of collaboration behind it, Easter at the library has become a community staple.

Donated Book Sale

- The Friends of the Grand Island Memorial Library continued their strong support through their spring Donated Book Sale, held April 23 through April 25. The sale raised \$2,700 through book purchases, new and renewed Friends memberships and the bake sale. These funds directly benefit library programs and services, reinforcing the Friends' vital role in the library's success.

Richard Earne Memorial Reading Garden

- A major milestone has been reached with the completion of Phase II of the Richard Earne Memorial Reading Garden in August 2025. This final phase transformed the space with expanded garden beds, a paver stone ground cover, flat-topped boulders that serve both as seating and natural borders, and a variety of new plants and trees. A memorial bronze plaque has been installed to honor Richard Earne, a long-time Grand Island Memorial Library trustee and former ACT President who dedicated forty-two years of service to the Library. The project took three and a half years of planning and development and was funded through various patron donations, fundraisers, and Grant-in-Aid support from Assemblymember Angelo Morinello's office. A formal dedication is scheduled for May 13 at 5:00 p.m., followed by a ribbon cutting and reception.

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

- The City of Tonawanda Public Library is proud to continue its partnership with Erie County's Department for the Aging and their University Express series of classes. These classes, intended for those aged 55 and older, offer in-person and virtual lifelong learning experiences for those throughout Western New York. This season, classes begin in May and continue through July. We are hosting 13 in-person classes, of which five will be simultaneously live streamed. Through this partnership, Erie County has also provided technology, including a TV, laptop computer, and livestream management hardware, for the Library's use.

Thanks to funds received from Assemblymember William "Bill" Conrad, the Library is revamping the children's and adult sections to provide updated seating and comfortable, open spaces. Additionally, we will be looking to purchase laptop computers to be used for technology training both in-house and for use in outreach.

- We offer a diverse range of programs, including three story time sessions, LEGO club, Dungeons & Dragons, adult book club, a knitting group, and more.
- Our Community Reading Garden, which was completed last year, will see improvements made this summer with the installation of additional seating.

Agenda Item G – Report of the Foundation. Trustee Bartholomew reported that the Library Foundation met on Tuesday, May 12. There was discussion of potential fundraising efforts. Trustee Johnson stated that a vote was cast to support the University at Buffalo Distinguished Speaker Series. Trustee Panty asked how many members sit on the Library Foundation Board. It was answered that there are nine Board members. Discussion ensued regarding how many members the Library Foundation Board can have.

Agenda Item H – The Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT)/Contracting Library Trustee Report. Martha Buyer shared that an ACT meeting was held on May 16 at the Town of Collins Public Library. Martha Buyer also shared that the Town of Collins Public Library Director Abigail Barten-McGowan was excited to share all of the wonderful things she and her staff are doing. Interim Director Darden prepared a presentation on steps to take when Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Officers come into the library. Martha Buyer also thanked Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Marinucci on her presentation regarding New York State Open Meetings Law. This information is accessible on the ACT website. Lastly, Martha Buyer shared the importance of being a Library advocate. Trustee Berens Bucki made a comment about a tour she took of the Rare Book Room. Further discussion ensued regarding interesting happenings at libraries, as well as statistics on how much foot traffic libraries receive since being fine free.

Agenda Item H.1 – Contracting Library Liaison Report(s). Trustee Kelly reported on her visit to the Library2Go Van. She stated that the staff was friendly and provided a wealth of information. Trustee Kelly went on to describe the services the Library2Go Van offers. Chair El-Behairy stated that she attended the Grand Island Memorial Library Board meeting on May 14. She shared that they had just had their dedication to former ACT President Richard Earne. Discussion ensued regarding Richard Earne and construction projects at the Grand Island Memorial Library.

Agenda Item I – Public Comment. Director of Special Projects from Mayor Sean Ryan’s Office Rebecca Castañeda introduced herself to the Library Board. Rebecca stated that she is at the Board meeting on behalf of Mayor Sean Ryan and Deputy Mayor Maria Whyte. She ended her introduction by saying that if the Board needs anything from the City of Buffalo to reach out to her.

Agenda Item J – Unfinished Business. Vice Chair Sasiadek wanted to share that his daughter is featured on the Newstead Public Library’s Facebook page from participating in the *Passport to Reading* program.

Agenda Item K – New Business.

Agenda Item K.1 – Resolution 2026-3 – Filing NYS Annual Reports: B&ECPL Public Library 2025 Reports. Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Marinucci summarized the proposed resolution as presented below.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2026-3

WHEREAS, Library System Basic Aid, Local Library Services Aid, Local Services Support Aid, Central Library Services Aid, Coordinated Outreach Library Services Aid, State Correctional Facilities Aid and Services to County Jails (Interinstitutional) Aid are annual New York State statutory aid programs aimed at assisting library systems, central libraries, and local libraries in developing collections and providing services to their patrons and have provided significant funding to the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (“Library”) system for many years, and

WHEREAS, in order to maintain the Library’s charter as well as to continue to qualify for State Aid funds, the Library must file reports annually with New York State Library’s Division of Library Development summarizing achievements, activity, and financial performance, and

WHEREAS, the Library files both a Public Library Report and a Library System Report, and each contracting Library also files a Public Library Report, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Library Board of Trustees affirms the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library’s *Annual Report for Public and Association Libraries – 2025* has been reviewed and accepted and assures the Library operated under its approved Plan of Service in accordance with the provisions of Education Law and the Regulations of the Commissioner.

Trustee Amodeo made the motion to approve. Trustee Johnson seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item K.2 – Resolution 2026-4 – Ratification of AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement. Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Marinucci summarized the proposed resolution as presented below.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2026-4

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (“Library”) has statutory authority to manage its budget and has sole authority to negotiate fair settlement of labor agreements with its employees, and

WHEREAS, blue collar workers employed by the Library at locations within the City of Buffalo are represented by The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Local 1095, Council 66 (“AFSCME”), and

WHEREAS, the current labor agreement between the Library and AFSCME expires on December 31, 2026, and

WHEREAS, the Library's Deputy Director - Chief Operating Officer served on the management negotiating team with representatives of the other three joint employers and negotiated with AFSCME regarding the terms of a successor Tentative Agreement to be valid from January 1, 2027 through December 31, 2031, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees and Library Administration have consistently expressed a need to achieve sustainability in the future while ensuring the level of service which our patrons demand and recognize the hard work and dedication of our employees who provide such service, and

WHEREAS, the Tentative Agreement includes salary increases for AFSCME positions effective January 1, 2027, January 1, 2028, January 1, 2029, January 1, 2030, and January 1, 2031, and

WHEREAS, the Tentative Agreement provides for changes to several provisions relating to employee leave and hours of work; and

WHEREAS, the members of AFSCME ratified the Tentative Agreement on or about March 23, 2026, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has been briefed on the terms of the Tentative Agreement, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library ratifies the Tentative Agreement under the terms and conditions discussed and authorizes the Deputy Director - Chief Operating Officer and/or her designee to execute the final Agreement.

Discussion ensued regarding sick bank language that is included in the AFSCME contract, as well as questions pertaining to the length of the contract, Group 3 salary, and the timing of negotiations. Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Marinucci went through the salary steps for a Group 3 employee and a Group 8 employee. Trustee Berens Bucki noticed some typos in the proposed resolution. These were corrected.

Trustee Amodeo made the motion to approve as amended. Trustee Johnson seconded, and this was approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item K.3 – Resolution 2026-5 – Appointment of Deputy Director – Public Services. Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Marinucci summarized the proposed resolution as presented below.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2026-5

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (“Library”) Board of Trustees appointed then Deputy Director – Public Services Dorinda Darden Interim Director for a one year period on May 22, 2025, and

WHEREAS, Interim Director Darden served in this capacity during Director John Spears’ leave and the process to recruit a new Library Director, and

WHEREAS, under New York State Civil Service Law, temporary appointments to Civil Service positions are not permitted for more than a one-year period, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library has exclusive authority to appoint Deputy Directors of the Library for three-year terms pursuant to Section 6224 of the New York State Unconsolidated Laws and the Library Bylaws, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, pursuant and subject to the provisions of the New York State Unconsolidated Laws and the Library Bylaws, hereby authorizes the appointment of Dorinda Darden to the position of Deputy Director – Public Services at an initial annual salary of \$152,487 for a three-year appointment effective May 22, 2026 with all other terms and conditions of her current Benefits Package remaining the same, unless otherwise amended by future vote of the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Johnson made the motion to approve. Trustee Panty seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item K.4 – Resolution 2026-6 – Appointment of Library Director. Chair El-Behairy summarized the proposed resolution as presented below.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2026-6

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (“Library”) has exclusive authority to hire a new Director of the Library and set the salary of the Director pursuant to Section 6224 of the New York State Unconsolidated Laws and the Library’s Bylaws, and

WHEREAS, in September 2025, the Board of Trustees, following the untimely passing of Director John Spears, created an Ad Hoc Search Committee designated to work with the consultants, staff, and Trustees to define, refine, and initiate the Director recruitment process, and

WHEREAS, on the recommendation of the Search Committee following an extensive RFP process, the Board of Trustees adopted Resolution 2025-40 authorizing the Library contract with Bradbury Miller Associates to provide executive search services for a new Library Director, and

WHEREAS, Bradbury Miller Associates' contracted role included conducting a nation-wide recruitment effort, and

WHEREAS, the Search Committee reviewed applications and conducted virtual semi-finalist interviews to narrow the candidates to a group of four finalists for in-person interviews with the full Board of Trustees and other stakeholders, and

WHEREAS, as part of the interview process, System trustees, Contracting Library trustees, all staff, and other stakeholders were provided an opportunity to view prerecorded presentations by the four finalist candidates explaining their Library vision and then provide numerical ratings on several factors for consideration during the System Board of Trustees' final deliberations, and

WHEREAS, as part of the interview process, the four finalist candidates visited Library locations within the System to see operations, and the Contracting Library Directors, System Administrative Team, and Library Foundation President were given the opportunity to attend live Q&A Sessions with each candidate, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees held a Special Meeting on April 28, 2026 to conduct in-person interviews with the four finalist candidates and conduct deliberations, and

WHEREAS, the Search Committee recommends the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees appoint Christine Schonhart as the next Director of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, pursuant and subject to the provisions of Section 6224 of the New York State Unconsolidated Laws and the Library Bylaws, authorizes the appointment of Christine Schonhart as the Director of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library for a three-year appointment at an initial annual salary of \$170,000, effective August 1, 2026, and be it further

RESOLVED, that this salary will be subject to future increases based upon funding availability and satisfactory performance as measured against annually determined goals and objectives, and be it further

RESOLVED, that Christine Schonhart shall receive the benefits package shown in the attached exhibit, as set by Resolution 2025-13 governing managerial-confidential benefits, until otherwise changed by a subsequent vote of the Board of Trustees, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Library will provide Christine Schonhart a one-time lump sum of \$10,000, to be paid in her first paycheck on or about August 14, 2026, as a relocation stipend to cover the costs of moving from Brooklyn, New York to Erie County, New York.

Trustee Johnson made the motion to approve. Trustee Panty seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Christine Schonhart attended the Library Board meeting virtually and introduced herself. She thanked Chair El-Behairy and the Library Board. She shared that she is excited to come home to Western New York and be a part of the remarkable team at the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library.

Chair El-Behairy shared a media press release that will be sent out following this meeting.

Walk-On – Resolution 2026-7 – Authorizing Action of Deputy Directors. Chair El-Behairy summarized the proposed resolution as presented below.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2026-7

WHEREAS, Dorinda Darden’s temporary appointment as Interim Director of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library expires as of May 21, 2026, and

WHEREAS, Christine Schonhart has been appointed as Director of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library beginning August 1, 2026, and

WHEREAS, the Bylaws of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library state, “The Deputy Directors shall be authorized generally, when directed by the Board, to act for and in place of the Director during the Director's absence or inability to act,” now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the duties and responsibilities of the Director of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library in the standard course of day-to-day operations shall hereby be designated jointly and severally to the Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Director – Public Services for the period of May 22, 2026 through and including July 31, 2026, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the duties and responsibilities of the Director of Buffalo & Erie County Public Library designated jointly and severally to the Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Director – Public Services shall automatically revert to the sole authority of the Director of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library as of August 1, 2026.

Trustee Panty made the motion to approve. Trustee Amodeo seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item L – Adjournment. There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee Barnes with a second by Vice Chair Sasiadek, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine P. Bartholomew
Secretary