



**Erie County Legislature 2014 Proposed Budget Hearing
Friday November 22, 2013 @ 12:30 pm**

**Jack Connors, Chairman, Buffalo & Erie County Public
Library Board of Trustees:**

Good afternoon and thank you for inviting us here today. On behalf of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library System, please accept my sincerest appreciation for your time. As always, I must express the Library's gratitude for your ongoing support and confidence in the services we provide to the residents of Erie County.

{Recognize any Trustees in attendance}

Libraries are critical to our communities as evidenced by our statistics. Through October this year there have been nearly 3.1 million patrons that have crossed our threshold, 6.7 million items circulated, nearly 740 thousand public computer sessions and over 80,000 WiFi sessions have been logged AND 127,000 have attended library programs.

Libraries are economic incubators, educational centers and cultural institutions. They are gathering places, they are respites and they are safe havens. As Andrew Carnegie said Library's ARE the great equalizers..... where all are welcome and where anyone can transform their life.

On behalf of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System I would like to express our gratitude to Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz for recommending the restoration of \$415,867 in operating funds to Erie County's 37 public libraries in his 2014 proposed budget. In addition, we are grateful for his recognition of the importance of a bookmobile, as well as a shipping and snow plow vehicle, as evidenced by the proposed \$340,000 in capital funds.

And while these funds do not bring our budget to levels required to meet all of the needs of your constituents, we are grateful for them and I urge you to support the County Executive's proposed budget. Thank you.

I will now turn this over to Mary Jean Jakubowski, Library Director.

Mary Jean Jakubowski:

Good Afternoon, thank you Jack and thank you to members of the Erie County Legislature for providing this opportunity to comment on the proposed budget.

I too wish to thank the County Executive for his recommendation for restored funding. The funds will be used to strengthen our programs and services, as well as reduce the amount of library fund balance we will need to use in 2014. We are currently working on specifics.

I am personally thrilled the Poloncarz plan includes \$340,000 in capital funds for library vehicles including a bookmobile. The new vehicle will be flexible. It will be a wireless hub, a mobile classroom and carry a collection of materials. We intend to serve those areas of Erie County without a physical library and provide additional outreach programs.

Let me assure you, as always, the Boards of Trustees, Library Administration and staff will work to maximize the impact of its funding and ensure that each of our 37 libraries across the County provides your constituents with cost-effective services, a fundamental destination for information, as well as exciting and enriching programs and events. We have also stepped up our fundraising. Tonight we have a “Best Sellers” fundraiser, we are currently running our *Bucks for Books* campaign and our Yearend appeal is being mailed to 100,000 people today.

AND, you have our commitment that we will continue to implement more efficient governance and financial stability options to ensure long-term sustainability of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library System.

In the words of Walter Cronkite “Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation.”

I therefore again urge you to support the proposed 2014 budget. Thank you.

Mr. Stone, do you have anything to add?

Mr. Stone provided an overview of the [2014 BECPL Proposed Budget in Brief Charts - Updated 10/31/2013 \(Click Here\)](#)