

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BUFFALO AND ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
APRIL 19, 2007

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, April 19, 2007, in the Central Library pursuant to due notice to trustees. The following members were present:

W. Lawrence Buck, Chair
Rebecca L. Pordum, Vice Chair
Sheldon M. Berlow, Treasurer
Phyllis A. Horton
Annette A. Junciewicz
Susan Maggiore
Elaine M. Panty
Judith K. Summer
Sharon A. Thomas
Wayne D. Wisbaum

George M. Zimmermann, Trustee Emeritus

Excused: Richard L. Berger, out of town
Jack Connors, excused
Frank Gist
Hormoz Mansouri, conflict
Mario J. Rossetti, out of town

Chair W. Lawrence Buck called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m. in the Joseph B. Rounds Conference Room.

Agenda Item B – Agenda/Changes to the Agenda. There were no changes to the agenda.

Agenda Item C – Minutes of the Meeting of March 15, 2007. Ms. Horton moved for approval, Ms. Panty made a second, and approval was unanimous.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair. Chair Buck shared a thank you note from William A. Miles, who was very appreciative of having the Center for African and African-American Studies at the Merriweather Library dedicated in his honor. Mr. Buck reported that Wayne Wisbaum informed him he plans to provide an update on Library Foundation matters at the next B&ECPL Board meeting.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on April 12th in the Central Library. Trustees Buck, Berger, Horton and Panty were present. The

Director and CFO introduced proposed Budget and Finance agenda items, and each item was confirmed. Development Officer Ruth Collins briefed the group on the status of the recruitment process for the Office of Development and Communications. Committee members were advised that 28 applications had been received and reviewed, of which 15 candidates were deemed qualified. Of those 15, 10 were identified for telephone interviews. A committee of fundraising/development professionals and internal stakeholders has been assembled to conduct the first phases of the interview process, prior to finalists appearing before the full Board. Mrs. Collins will provide additional details in her oral report.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee. The Chair asked Deputy Director Kenneth Stone to proceed with budget and finance items.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Amend Budget: LSTA Database Direct Grant Award. This will accept and budget a \$15,000 grant that will provide database training for the public. Ms. Junciewicz moved for approval. Ms. Summer seconded. Approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2007-14

WHEREAS, the Library has been awarded a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Service Improvement Grant, and

WHEREAS, the grant is in the amount of \$15,000, and

WHEREAS, these funds will be used to educate and train students, teachers, parents and staff in the utilization of databases provided by New York State's Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL), and

WHEREAS, these databases are available via the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees authorizes accepting the grant proceeds and establishing a grant budget to facilitate this training opportunity as shown below:

2007 Grants Budget: LSTA Database Direct

Revenue \$15,000

Grant Expenditures \$15,000

Agenda Item E.2.b – Amend Budget: New York State Construction Grant Awards. New York State has approved budgets for all of the B&ECPL construction projects. This resolution adjusts the 2007 grants budget to accept the funds. Ms. Summer made a motion, Ms. Horton seconded, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2007-15

WHEREAS, on December 21, 2006, the Board of Trustees adopted Resolutions 2006-66, 2006-67, 2006-68, 2006-69 requesting funding from New York State's \$14 million Library Construction Grant Program to help address capital needs at the Crane, East Clinton, North Park and Central Libraries, and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2007, the Board of Trustees adopted Resolution 2007-12, requesting funding from New York State's \$800,000 Library Construction Grant Program to help address capital needs at the Riverside Branch Library, and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees strongly supports these projects, which are consistent with the goals outlined in the System Five-Year Plan of Service and previous strategic planning documents, and

WHEREAS, the Library has received notice that \$570,428 in State Public Library Construction Grant funding has been awarded for these projects, and

WHEREAS, the next step to implement these projects is to budget the grant proceeds and B&ECPL's local share contribution consistent with the above resolutions, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees amends the Library Grants Budget to establish these State Public Library Construction Grant projects, budgeting grant proceeds and B&ECPL's local share contribution pursuant to the above resolutions as shown in the attached Exhibit.

**Resolution 2007-12 Exhibit
NYS \$14 MILLION AND \$800,000 Public Library Construction Grant Programs**

Description	Local Funds		NYS Const Grant	Total	Grant Pgm
	Buffalo City (est.)	In B&ECPL Grants Budget	In B&ECPL Grants Budget		
Buffalo Branch Library Projects					
Crane Library Restoration, Energy Controls & Theft Detection	\$33,012	\$33,322	\$87,229	\$174,493	\$14 M
East Clinton Library Restoration, ADA Restrooms & Theft Detection	\$30,163	\$14,043	\$30,706	\$91,414	\$14 M
North Park Library Interior/Exterior Restrooms & Theft Detection	\$30,825	\$14,043	\$84,369	\$139,730	\$14 M
Riverside Library Roof Building & Theft Detection	\$94,000	\$17,001	\$41,240	\$144,000	\$800k
Total Buffalo Branches Libraries	\$224,799	\$80,373	\$243,544	\$668,705	

Central Library Interior/Exterior Renovation/Reconfiguration, Dual Fuel Energy & Archival Preservation				
Archival Storage HVAC, Archival Quality Temperature Humidity and Filtration - 8300 sq. ft.	\$87,539	\$87,535	\$175,071	\$14 M
Fuel Tank & Controls Replacement	\$138,823	\$133,727	\$272,550	\$14 M
Exterior Staircase Replacement	\$44,874	\$44,872	\$89,746	\$14 M
New Interior Mezzanine Storage	\$80,780	\$80,750	\$161,530	\$14 M
Total Central Library	\$0	\$326,884	\$653,897	
Combined Buffalo Branches & Central Library	\$224,788	\$412,458	\$570,438	\$1,207,872

B & ECPL Local Funds Sources - Buffalo Branch & Central Library Projects		
B&ECPL Private Funds including Branch Encore Accounts Budget as Other Income Revenue Line in Grant Budget.	\$101,399	Central Archival Project and Crane
Reduce B&ECPL Designated for Grant Local Share Match Fund Balance Account and Budget as "Use of Fund Balance Revenue" to Grant Project	\$311,057	Central, Crane, East Clinton, North Park, Riverside
Total B&ECPL Local Funding to be budgeted into B&ECPL SAP Grant Projects:	\$412,456	

Agenda Item E.2.c – Authorize Chair to Execute 2007 Contracts with Contracting Libraries and Approve Implementation of Budget Adjustments. Mr. Stone said both the State and County budgets have now been adopted, allowing the Library to finalize 2007 contracts with contracting libraries. This resolution also approves transfers required to implement 2007 budgets. Ms. Pordum made a motion and was seconded by Ms. Panty. Ms. Panty inquired about the number of libraries still operating independently of the Centralized Human Resources (CHR) program. Six libraries still must transition over to CHR, with Amherst being the only remaining large library. Mr. Mahaney stated the Library is committed to having all libraries in the CHR program by the end of 2008. Mr. Stone said 2008 contracts will include this stipulation.

RESOLUTION 2007-16

WHEREAS, budgetary allocations from Erie County and New York State to the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library constitute more than 90% of the financial resources supporting the contract with the “Public Library,” and

WHEREAS, Erie County’s 2007 allocation was not known until mid-December, and New York State’s allocation was not known until April 2007, and

WHEREAS, the timing and extent of Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority procedural requirements was not fully known at the time the 2007 budget was adopted, and

WHEREAS, given these factors, it was difficult for the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library and the contracting libraries to develop, consider and approve a contract prior to the beginning of the 2007 fiscal year on January 1, 2007, and

WHEREAS, to meet 2007 payroll and other operating expenditure needs of the contracting libraries, on November 16, 2006, the B&ECPL Board of Trustees adopted Resolution 2006-61, which provided for extending the 2006 contract terms until a 2007 contract could be finalized, or June 30, 2007, whichever was earlier, with funding based upon the estimated allocation of the 2007 B&ECPL Board-adopted budget, and

WHEREAS, Erie County's 2007 budget is now in place, New York State's budget has been adopted and Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority contract review procedures are in place, and

WHEREAS, implementing service restorations funded by the County Legislature's \$500,000 funding restoration and effecting additional reconfiguring opportunities results in the need to transfer funds between accounts as part of implementing the 2007 contracts, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library authorizes the Chair of the Board of Trustees to execute 2007 contracts incorporating these changes and authorizes the Library Director or his designee to submit them for Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority review, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library approves the budget adjustments and transfers shown in the attached Exhibit.

**Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
Resolution 2007-16 - Exhibit**

Description	2007 B&ECPL Operating Budget Current	Change	Revised	Notes
IMPACTED EXPENSE BUDGET LINES				
Salaries & Wages, Full Time	7,807,778	169,588	7,977,366	Over 95% of the personnel account changes reflect the City of Tonawanda Library leveraging its minimum hours restoration funds with a staffing reconfiguration to convert four personnel from RPT to full-time. The Library is now open the state minimum standard for its city population, which is 40 open hours per week.
Wages, Part-Time	2,223,038	10,586	2,233,624	
Wages, Regular Part-Time	896,004	(191,613)	704,391	
Subtotal		(11,439)		
Employer FICA - REGULAR	709,018	(709)	708,309	
Employer FICA - MEDICARE	165,949	(166)	165,783	
Retirement	1,249,261	234	1,249,495	
Subtotal		(641)		
Payments to Contract Libraries				
Ewell Free - Alden	61,191	18	61,209	
Angola Public	57,414	(2)	57,412	
Boston Free	61,389	(311)	61,078	
Concord Public	95,223	435	95,658	
Lackawanna Public	201,605	706	202,311	
Marilla Free	322	(311)	11	
Subtotal		535		
Professional Svcs Contracts	953,299	1,078	954,377	
Interfund Exp - Utilities	1,398,113	9,537	1,407,650	
Total Expense Change		(930)		Increase (Decrease) in Expense
IMPACTED REVENUE BUDGET LINES				
Refunds from Contract Libraries		(930)	(930)	
Total Revenue Change		(930)		Increase (Decrease) in Revenue

Agenda Item E.2.d – Merchant Credit Card Services Renewal. This would continue the contract with Key Bank that enables the Library to accept credit card transactions at the Central Library. Key Bank has been performing this service for the B&ECPL since 2001. Key Bank rates are competitive, its service performance has been satisfactory, and the company’s automation system is compatible with the Library’s automation vendor. This will allow the B&ECPL to move forward with e-commerce when it is ready. Ms. Horton moved and was seconded by Ms. Summer. Approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2007-17

WHEREAS, in order to provide more convenient service to library patrons who wish to pay fines, fees, or other charges, the Library provides the option of accepting credit cards for payment, and

WHEREAS, in January 2001, the Library issued a request for proposal (RFP) inviting interested parties to submit a proposal for a system that would allow the Central Library to accept MasterCard, Visa, Discover Card and bank debit cards for the payment of fines, fees, charges and sales transacted with the Library, and

WHEREAS, three major banking institutions responded to the RFP, and

WHEREAS, in its meeting of April 19, 2001 the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library adopted Resolution 2001-22, approving Key Merchant Services, LLC as the vendor of merchant credit card services for the B&ECPL, and

WHEREAS, that approval was for a three-year period, with the option that services may be extended beyond the initial three-year period for up to two successive three-year periods, subject to the approval of the Library Board, and

WHEREAS, in its meeting of June 17, 2004 the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library adopted Resolution 2004-27, exercising the first extension option continuing Key Merchant Services, LLC as the vendor of merchant credit card services for the B&ECPL, and

WHEREAS, the Library has received good service under this agreement and desires to continue these services for another three-year period, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library approves continuing to utilize Key Merchant Services, LLC as the vendor of merchant credit card services for the B&ECPL for another three-year period, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library authorizes the Library Director or his designee to execute any paperwork required to continue this service.

Trustee Wayne Wisbaum arrived at approximately 4:15 p.m.

Agenda Item E.2.e – Vending Contract Amendment. This resolution authorizes the Director to approve a contract amendment with the Library's vending service provider that reflects current employee levels. There are now approximately 140 fewer individuals working in the Central Library than when the vendor bid on this contract, resulting in greatly diminished revenues. The vendor approached the Library, requesting an adjustment in monthly terms to reflect reduced staff levels. Board approval will permit the Library to waive the monthly minimum requirement. Commission will remain at 12%. Ms. Panty moved, and Ms. Summer seconded. The amendment was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2007-18

WHEREAS, in July 2004, anticipating the opening of the first phase of the Central Library's renovation in Spring 2005, the Library issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit a qualified private firm to operate the café and the Library's existing employee break room vending area, and

WHEREAS, the winning vending proposal, by Loose Ends Vending, Inc., offered a 12% commission on sales with a minimum monthly payment of \$500, and

WHEREAS, proposing vendors based their projected revenue and commission estimates upon the employee population based at the Central Library, which at the time of the RFP in mid-July 2004 consisted of approximately 204 full-time and 187 part-time personnel, and

WHEREAS, shortly after beginning service under this contract, Erie County's budget crisis erupted, and the 25% reduction in County support for the Library between 2004 and 2006 triggered layoffs, eliminating positions vacated by retirement, and other downsizing measures that reduced the employee population based at the Central Library, with the count in the most recent pay period running at 138 full-time and 113 part-time personnel, and

WHEREAS, the reduced market potential hit the vending service particularly hard, making the present terms uneconomic, and

WHEREAS, the contractor requested the Library consider amending the contract to ensure mutual viability resulting in a series of discussions and a proposed contract amendment to ensure continued service, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library authorizes the Library Director to negotiate and execute a contract amendment with Loose Ends Vending, Inc. with the following changes: 1) eliminate the monthly minimum requirement; 2) allow the removal of the ice cream machine as said machine's sales were far too low to warrant maintaining the equipment and providing Library-paid utilities and 3) allow the Library Director or his designee to agree to terms to either purchase the used machine from Loose Ends or independent of Loose Ends, or if cost favorable including maintenance, lease the first floor public area change machine, with the straight purchase cost if exercised not to exceed \$1,500.

Agenda Item E.2.f – Monthly Financial Report. The monthly financial report for the period ending 2/28/2007 was presented for information.

Agenda Item 3 – Advocacy Committee. The Committee convened on April 4th at the Central Library. Trustees Maggiore, Panty, Summer and Pordum were present. The Committee received an update on advocacy efforts related to New York State Aid, including details of the 2007-2008 budget, which increases System Aid and maintains last year's high levels of construction aid. In addition to thanking legislators for their

support, trustees must continue to urge legislators to adjust the percentage formula for construction grant matches because it is difficult for financially strapped local governments to meet the current 50% match. This is an election year for County legislators, and trustees were asked to keep this in mind when talking to local candidates.

The Committee considered plans to advocate for increased support from Erie County in 2008, emphasizing how this year's modest increases have led to higher circulation and other elevated activity at those libraries whose hours expanded and/or changed. Committee members suggested the entire Buffalo Common Council be invited to the next meeting of the Buffalo Library Services Committee. Also, staff will contact the Association of Erie County Governments to arrange an appearance before that body to advise town and village officials of recent changes within the System. Mr. Mahaney and Ms. Pordum appeared before the Association during the budget crisis. It would be worthwhile to update this group on the current library situation and is an excellent opportunity to keep lines of communication open.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Michael Mahaney expressed the Library's gratitude for the dedicated support of long-time Trustee Emeritus Morton H. Stovroff, who passed away on April 4th.

Mr. Mahaney mentioned the on-going Buffalo Public Schools student artwork exhibit currently on display at the Central Library. This exciting collaboration with the school district is an event the Library tries to accommodate every year. The display continues through May 10th, and trustees are encouraged to view the artwork.

Buffalo Library Services Committee Chair Sharon Thomas will convene a meeting of this group in May. Buffalo Common Council members will be invited. A Policy Committee meeting will also be scheduled for May. Mr. Mahaney asked Development Director Ruth Collins to brief the Board on progress in the recruitment of a new Development Director. Mrs. Collins said the process is on schedule. The Search Committee met Monday to review questions being posed to the candidates. This Committee included two outside fundraising professionals, stakeholders from the B&ECPL library community, as well as a member of the public. Administrators Mahaney, Jakubowski, Woods and Collins are also taking part in this process. The Committee will assist with the search process, not the selection, which is solely the purview of the Board of Trustees. The 10 most-qualified candidates are scheduled for telephone interviews on April 23rd and 24th. From this group, five candidates will be scheduled for personal interviews on May 2nd and 3rd. Ultimately, the Committee hopes to have two or three individuals to present for final interviews. Once trustees decide on the date for final interviews, the intention is to recommend one final candidate for Board approval at the May 17th meeting. The Chair asked trustees to consult their calendars in order to select a convenient date for the final interviews.

Mr. Wisbaum asked Mrs. Collins if she could provide him with a written list of pertinent interview dates and times. He was unclear on the interview process and asked for clarification of who was on the Search Committee because he believed he was on that

Committee. Mr. Buck said the thought was to hold off interaction with trustees until final candidates were selected due to time issues. It is important that everyone involved in the selection process hear from all candidates in order that a fair assessment can be made, and this requires a major commitment of time. Mr. Buck said the Search Committee process remains open to any trustee who wishes to be involved at any level, as long as they commit to attending all meetings. He suggested it might be better for trustees to hold off at least until personal interviews commence. Mrs. Collins said she distributed the search process timeline at the March meeting and had also included a draft in the February Board packet, and she felt the process had been accepted. Ms. Panty said it was her understanding that staff and selected stakeholders were going to screen the applicants and then present a small group for final interviews. Mr. Buck said this process was explained and agreed upon at the March meeting, and he reassured Mr. Wisbaum that if he wishes to attend the telephone interviews, he is more than welcome, as long as he could commit to spending several hours on both days.

After reviewing calendars, trustees agreed to schedule final Board interviews for Monday, May 14th, beginning at 4 p.m. Mrs. Collins said she would update the timeline with specific dates and times and send that information to Board members. Mr. Mahaney repeated that any trustee is welcome to participate at any time in this process with one qualification—anyone who participates at any level of the process must be present to hear from all candidates who are participating at that level so there is a complete understanding of what the range of candidates is. He estimated telephone interviews would take six to eight hours over a two-day period. Everything must be completed in a compressed time frame in order to meet deadlines, with a plan of bringing the final candidate before the Board for approval on May 17th. Mr. Berlow requested complete information in writing. Mr. Wisbaum agreed that anyone involved at any level must commit to attendance for the duration of that level. Trustees were advised to allow one hour per candidate for final interviews, plus additional time for deliberations. Mrs. Collins offered to facilitate the process by sharing questions and responses given by finalists from their preliminary interviews for background information.

Trustee Thomas arrived at approximately 4:37 p.m.

Mrs. Collins reported that Choco-logo is offering a promotion in celebration of National Library Week by inviting customers to purchase chocolate for their favorite librarians, and also offering 20% off chocolate purchases to library “friends” on April 20th. In closing, she reported the Development Office has received several contributions in memory of Morton Stovroff and said an appropriate memorial, in keeping with Mr. Stovroff’s dedication to the mission of the Library, will be made in the future.

In regard to Mr. Stovroff, Trustee Wisbaum stated he visited Mr. Stovroff in Florida shortly before he passed away. Paramount in their discussion was the Library and Mr. Stovroff’s vision for its future. Mr. Stovroff had a deep affinity for the Library, and Mr. Wisbaum feels it would be appropriate for the Library, as an institution that had received Mr. Stovroff’s support for many years, to do something to build on the existing Stovroff Fund, providing the family endorsed the concept. Mr. Berlow asked whether something

like this would be better handled by the Library Board or the Library Foundation. Mr. Wisbaum said a collaborative effort, promoted by both entities, offering donors a choice, might be a good approach. Trustees Wisbaum and Berlow felt this was a worthwhile idea and suggested some research be done to determine how this could be most effective. Mr. Buck agreed the idea should be reviewed.

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

State Budget Increases Library Aid for Second Year: Governor **Eliot L. Spitzer** and legislative leaders reached agreement on a 2007-2008 New York State budget, adopted April 1st. The budget contains a second annual supplement in State Aid for library systems. While the details/categories are yet to be released, the estimated increase for B&ECPL System services is approximately \$141,000. Additionally, the Legislature did not change the Governor's recommendation for State Library Construction Grants, which are included again in the State Capital Projects Budget at the \$14 million level (\$664,000 for B&ECPL projects). All libraries and library advocates are encouraged to thank the Governor, State Senators and Assembly Members for recognizing the value of libraries in their communities and affirming that recognition with continued financial support. Those libraries that have potential construction projects are encouraged to accelerate work on their plans and estimates as the funding request process begins in May, with a deadline as early as mid-September 2007. (See last month's report and the item below on NYLA Legislative Day for related advocacy efforts.)

“Show Goes On” Despite Absence of Keynote Speaker: On March 17th, fifty-five participants (trustees and directors) representing 13 contracting libraries joined B&ECPL trustees and administrators at the **Frank E. Merriweather, Jr.** Library for the annual Trustee Workshop. Following a continental breakfast, the Director welcomed everyone to the System's newest community library, the first constructed in Buffalo in 20 years. ACT (Association of Contracting Library Boards of Trustees) President **George Oliver** conducted a brief business meeting, including the election of officers. Elected were **George Oliver**, President; **Suzanne Jacobs**, Secretary and **David Engberg**, Treasurer. (**Martha Mummery** is midway through her two-year term as Vice-President.) Librarians **Daniel Caufield**, **Angela Pierpaoli** and **Mary Ann Tingley** followed the ACT business meeting with a demonstration of B&ECPL's electronic databases and online resources, updating and reprising the presentation they delivered to County Legislators last fall. Next came the customer service video “Give ‘em the Pickle!” which was so well received by both trustees and staff that it will be incorporated into the 2007 Staff Development Day agenda. COO **Mary Jean Jakubowski**, CIO **Shirley Whelan** and Extension Services Administrator **Ann Kling** then took the stage, filling in for keynote speaker **Stephen Abram**, who was unable to reach Buffalo when his flight was grounded in eastern Pennsylvania due to a major mid-Atlantic snowstorm. It was a challenge, given only a few hours notice, but this group demonstrated true teamwork and managed to have some fun, too, as they developed and delivered their presentation, “Libraries Today – Libraries Tomorrow,” which borrowed liberally from Abram's website and previous presentations. Their spirit, proficiency and

grace under fire deserve special commendation. Following a delicious lunch by Fables Café, Ms. Kling led attendees on a brief tour of the Merriweather Library.

2007 Technology Plan Completed and Delivered: Last month, as required by multiple authorities, paper and electronic copies of B&ECPL's newest multi-year Technology Plan were completed and submitted to the New York State Division of Library Development. Approval of this plan is required for B&ECPL to qualify for E-rate funding in FY 2007-2008. This submittal was the culmination of many months of work by CIO **Shirley Whelan** and other staff, representing a major milestone, not only defining B&ECPL's technology objectives, but also preserving the Library's eligibility for funding vital to its mission of service to the community.

B&ECPL Representatives Attend NYLA Legislative Day: On March 13th, COO **Mary Jean Jakubowski**, Extension Services Administrator **Ann Kling**, Merriweather Library Manager **Sandra Williams-Bush** and Coordinated System Services Librarian **Kelly Donovan** visited each of Western New York's Assembly Members and Senators during the New York Library Association's annual Legislative Day in Albany. Armed with "Your Return on Investment in the Library" brochures and assorted leave-behinds, B&ECPL's contingent discussed issues regarding State Aid in general, specific funding formulas and the continued need to preserve the "hold harmless" provisions that sustain funding levels despite population decline. Efforts such as this contribute to continued awareness and support from elected leaders in Albany.

Administrators Begin New Round of Site Visits: In 2006, as part of the Library's five-year planning process, members of the B&ECPL administrative team visited more than 60 public and support services locations throughout the System to interact with members of the staff and learn which issues were uppermost in their minds, which of their questions demand immediate answers and what their visions of the Library System might contain. Those meetings provided important insights and understandings integral to developing plans for B&ECPL's future. A second annual series of visits is underway, and it is clear that some frustration and doubt remain in the wake of the dramatic cuts of 2004 and 2005, but many sense that the Library has weathered a storm and started to rebuild. An interim report will be presented to the Board's Planning Committee in the weeks ahead.

Staff Continues to Monitor Activity and Income: March 2007 activity measures indicate a modest reversal of February's decline. System-wide, circulation increased 2% over March 2006, with the largest increases again attributed to e-Branch (39.8%), Institutions (9.4%) and Buffalo branches (12.3%). The Central Library and contracting libraries posted an identical 3.2% decline for that same period. Some specific increases among individual locations clearly reflect expanded and/or revised schedules. Libraries with reduced hours last year that offer increased hours this year show some clear gains in March (e.g., Boston Free up 11.2%, Eden up 8.6%, Lake Shore up 28.2% and Marilla Free up 15.3%). Public access computer statistics continue to reflect healthy activity across the county, with total sessions increasing 28.1% in March. All areas (Central, Buffalo branches and contracting libraries) reported gains. In March, System-wide receipts totaled \$97,092.16, compared to \$111,313.63 for the same period in 2006 — a decrease of \$14,221.47 or 12.8%. Year-to-date receipts totaled \$270,843.60, down \$33,063.30 or 10.88% over March 2006. The Central Library collected \$20,919.92 in the month, a decrease of \$4,259.52 or 16.92% from 2006. Buffalo branches collected

\$9,491.06, a decrease of \$743.52 or 7.26% from the amount collected in March 2006. The new Merriweather Library, which opened on April 1, 2006, continues its high activity in all areas compared to activity at the old North Jefferson Branch, resulting in fine revenue increases of \$806.50 or 88.4% above March 2006. Contracting libraries collected \$66,681.18, a decrease of \$9,218.43 or 12.15% less than the amount they collected in March 2006. The 2007 adopted budget of \$1,095,661 (\$777,588 for contracting libraries, \$318,073 for the Central Library and Buffalo branches) projected a modest decrease, anticipating that automated e-mail reminder notices implemented in Fall 2006 would improve on-time return rates in addition to providing better customer service. This feature reduces patron wait times for popular titles, ultimately lowering the quantity of individual popular titles that need to be ordered. Also, February's harsh weather affected circulation, down 3.8% for the month. Because fewer items circulated in February, there are fewer late items/fines at the end of February and into March.

Storage Project for Rare and Valuable Materials Proceeds: As plans move forward to construct a secure climate-controlled area to store the Library's rare and valuable materials, approximately 25,000 shelves of books have been relocated throughout the Central Library's closed stacks or "tier" areas. The planning and preliminary moves, which began several months ago, shifted into high gear with the possibility of an April 19th construction start date. During the past month, a total of 45 staff and 6 volunteers from across the System have worked arduously to clear the construction space. Additional work hours and overtime were authorized to complete the project on schedule. As book trucks were loaded and hastily moved, all material needed to be kept in appropriate order to insure retrieval for patron requests as items were assigned new locations. Coordinated System Services Administrator **Carol Batt** and Stacks Supervisor **Susan Carson** coordinated and oversaw the logistical challenges of moving such a huge amount of material, while insuring continual access and organization. This massive move allowed for a more logical reorganization of collections, integration of 'overflow' materials that did not fit on the shelves, improved use of limited space and shelf cleaning that might not have been done in some areas since the building opened in 1964. With the construction area cleared, the ongoing reorganization of tier materials will take several months to complete.

Mark Your Calendar for 2007 Buffalo Book Fair: Community Relations Officer **Ami Patrick** and Development Officer **Ruth Collins** have been meeting with the Buffalo Book Fair planning committee as it organizes this year's day-long, family-oriented celebration of literacy, a love of reading and Buffalo's rich cultural heritage. The event opens on the evening of Friday, July 6th with a fund raising cook-out on the Central Library ramp. The Book Fair itself follows on Saturday, July 7th inside the Central Library and spreading outside to adjacent areas as weather permits. The event features national and local author appearances, panel discussions and workshops, interactive children's activities, a literary café, vendors and much more. Since the fair has been renamed (formerly Harlem Book Fair), B&ECPL Graphics Department artists **Dawn Stanton** and **Darlene Pennachi** and webmaster **Dave Wojtasik** have created several draft logos for the committee to consider for permanent branding purposes. The preliminary designs generated great enthusiasm, with the final logo to be selected shortly. Mr. Wojtasik is also developing a new website for fair promotion and information. Mrs. Patrick, with the assistance of the Graphics Department, is creating

media kits publicizing the event for distribution to key contacts. To generate further interest and engage young adults, a new element being offered this year is the “B is for Buffalo” contest. Students aged 10 to 18 are being asked to think about the treasures in our community — the people, places and things that make Buffalo a great city. Participants select a specific item, illustrate it within the accompanying letter (example “P” is for Philharmonic, “S” is for Sabres) and compose a brief description. Winning entries representing all 26 letters of the alphabet will be selected and showcased online as well as in a commemorative book. The more creative and original the effort, the greater the chances of winning. In addition, several community leaders will be invited to submit entries for inclusion in the book. Other new features under discussion are an inspirational breakfast to kick-off the event as well as a teen author appearance.

B&ECPL Hosts Gates Foundation Workshops: On April 5th, B&ECPL hosted two sessions of a regional workshop entitled “*TechAtlas* and *Webjunction*: Online Library Resources You Won’t Want to Live Without.” As part of the **Bill and Melinda Gates** Foundation’s Rural Library Sustainability project, these hands-on workshops focused on the specific skills needed to utilize the online resource *WebJunction* to enhance library technology services. In addition, a new Gates U.S. Libraries Hardware Sustainability initiative requires the use of *TechAtlas* to provide a comprehensive inventory of public access computers. To date, several B&ECPL libraries have qualified for grant funding to upgrade public access computers. A petition has been forwarded to the New York State Division of Library Development requesting that all B&ECPL Libraries qualify for this hardware upgrade initiative. Administrator **Carol Batt** coordinated the program with twenty-nine (29) in attendance.

Rapid Reply Checklists Introduced: To assist with library collection development needs, the Office of Coordinated System Services has implemented a new checklist service. In addition to the monthly selection lists that enable consolidated ordering of new titles, these Rapid Reply Checklists provide an opportunity for libraries to purchase replacement or supplemental materials in a timely manner. The initial selection list highlighted popular television series in DVD format, titles that are in demand but many of which are not owned by local libraries. Throughout the year, materials in a variety of formats (print, video, audio, etc.) will be offered.

MindLeaders Offer Staff Online Training Opportunities: Since February, staff at all B&ECPL locations have had access to training and development classes through MindLeaders e-learning courses. Self-paced modules allow training and development in topics such as Microsoft Office productivity, customer service and effective business communication. MindLeaders training is accessible not only from all B&ECPL staff workstations, but also from home through the employee Intranet, becpl4all.

Express, Engage and Explore Teen Life at Your Library: The vibrant, second quarter “Ring of Knowledge” display highlights teen life, encouraging members of this audience to express themselves through art and music; explore their world through reading, sports and games and engage themselves in the community through volunteerism. Bold images of active teens are in the background, while specialized, informational tear-off sheets are available for teens to take with them. The sheets cover the topics of graphic novels, volunteerism, fun activities to do on weekends, the Teen Online Book Club and the Teen Advisory Group. Behind the glass doors on the right, three-dimensional pieces of

artwork are on display as part of the exhibit, "Celebrating Art! Presenting Artwork from Buffalo Public School Students."

PACHUG Reporting Completed for 2007: Reports required for the **Bill and Melinda Gates** Foundation's Public Access Computing Hardware Upgrade Grant (PACHUG) program have been completed. All 201 eligible public access computers were replaced in the summer of 2006. However, some funds that were to be spent in 2006 were not because 1) the new computers cost roughly 35% less than budgeted and 2) Microsoft's operating system and Office upgrades were then unavailable. Approval was sought and granted to extend this spending into 2007. Using a portion of the unexpended balance, B&ECPL staff purchased an additional 37 public access workstations for Lackawanna, the Central Library and those Buffalo branches that could accommodate more computers for patrons.

Verizon's FIOS to Debut at 3 Libraries: Recently, as part of a proposed grant-funded partnership, Verizon contacted B&ECPL to explore opportunities to introduce its new FIOS service product in various Erie County communities. Verizon will provide grant funds for training and to test FIOS-based Internet access at the Orchard Park, West Seneca and Hamburg libraries. B&ECPL management will evaluate the benefits of this partnership and investigate whether FIOS can offer long-term advantages to other parts of the System.

B&ECPL Staff Honored: Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Library Manager **Sandra Williams-Bush** has been selected to receive the **William Wells Brown** Award for the preservation of African-American History. Sponsored by the Afro-American Historical Association, this award will be presented at the Association's annual family history dinner and general membership meeting in May.

B&ECPL Records Management Nominee Nears Confirmation: Business, Science and Technology Department Manager **Nancy Mueller** has been recommended for approval as B&ECPL's Records Management Officer. Recently, Ms. Mueller met with (then interim) Erie County Clerk **Kathy Hochul** and subsequently was interviewed by the Government Affairs subcommittee of the Erie County Legislature, chaired by Majority Leader **Maria Whyte**. The Legislature is expected to confirm her appointment this month. In preparation for her assignment, Ms. Mueller attended the March 21st workshop, "Your Role as a Records Management Officer," sponsored by the New York State Archives in Hilton, New York.

Moesch Assumes Statewide Responsibility: In the wake of the retirement of **Anne Simon** from the New York State Library, City of Tonawanda Library Director **Chris Moesch** has been selected to serve as the New York State representative with the Collaborative Summer Library Program for 2007. With work complete on a programming manual and incentives for the program, Mrs. Moesch will devote her energies to coordinating activities statewide and with 30 other states.

Families Enjoy F.R.E.E. Time @ the Library: Thursday evenings have proven to be popular for children's programming at the Central Library. In March, three programs in the Thursday evening series were conducted by Children's Department staff. On March 1st, patrons and staff celebrated *The Cat in the Hat's* 50th birthday. A pajama party took place on the 15th, and "Spring is Sprung" was the theme of a program on the 30th. Eighty-seven (87) children and forty-two (42) adults attended these programs.

Say Cheese! On March 15th, **Steven Neff** from Delaware Camera presented an informative lunchtime program on how to take better digital photos. Members of the public and staff received practical tips on composition, lighting, storage and equipment. Library Display Artist **Dawn Stanton** organized the presentation to coordinate with the hobby-themed display at the “Ring of Knowledge.”

Branch Staff Go the Extra Mile: On March 19th, Dudley Branch Library senior page **Lettie Marinaro** and frequent patron **Peter Warn** returned a South Park High School ring to the mother of Army Specialist **David McKeever**, a local member of the U. S. armed forces who was killed in Iraq, April 5, 2004. Found on the ground near the Dudley Branch, the South Park High School ring’s only distinguishing characteristics were the year 1998 and the inscription, “David.” Ms. Marinaro and Mr. Warn worked together, poring over the 1998 South Park High School yearbook and discovered that only one student with the name David graduated that year. The ring was returned to McKeever’s grateful family, coincidentally, on the third anniversary of his death. Across town, staff at the Niagara Branch Library were startled when a patron persistently knocked at the window one day before the library opened. Through the glass, the individual showed the staff a library card and a wallet, indicating he had found them in front of his house. Recognizing a B&ECPL borrower’s card, he presumed the library could help identify its owner. Branch Manager **Kathy Goodrich** contacted the patron whose name appeared on the library card, and the patron was, of course, thrilled that her wallet and all ID had been found and returned to her.

Miscellaneous Meetings and Appearances: On March 3rd, **Frank E. Merriweather, Jr.** Library Manager **Sandra Williams-Bush** attended the African-American Genealogical Seminar in Cleveland, Ohio, which included a program on slave research that proved extremely beneficial and timely as, the following Monday, a patron asked her how to find information on enslaved ancestors. On March 14th, Crane Branch Manager **Peter Lisker** presented the workshop, “Outrageous Customer Service” at the New Mexico Library Association/Mountain Plains Library Association pre-conference. With nearly two dozen in attendance, Niagara Branch Manager **Kathy Goodrich** conducted the second Spanish Language Outreach workshop at the Niagara Branch on March 14th. Between March 18th and 23rd, librarian **Bruce Weymouth** (Business, Science and Technology Department) represented B&ECPL at the annual Patent and Trademark Conference in Washington, D.C. On March 24th, Grosvenor Room librarian **Cynthia Van Ness** represented B&ECPL at an Educator’s Fair at Buffalo’s Karpeles Manuscript Museum. Designed to introduce area educators to resources of various historical organizations, Ms. Van Ness distributed handouts and answered questions regarding B&ECPL resources and services. On March 26th, at the “Access for All” library conference on Long Island, Children’s Department librarian **Gwen Collier** presented a program based on her article, “Deinstitutionalization of People with Mental Illness (Challenges and Solutions for Libraries),” originally published in the journal, *Public Libraries*. On March 28th, 18 B&ECPL staff members from various locations attended the Western New York Library Resources Council conference, “Web 2.0 – Libraries Meeting the Challenge,” at the Ramada Hotel and Conference Center. The keynote address by UB’s **Mark Greenfield**, “Born to Be Wired: Serving Technology, Communication and the Millennial Generation,” was enthusiastically received.

Agenda Item G – Public Comment. No public comment.

Agenda Item H – Unfinished business. No unfinished business.

Agenda Item I – New Business. Judy Summer mentioned recent accolades for the B&ECPL and its staff from author Mark Goldman in relation to his new book, *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York*. Mr. Wisbaum suggested it might be worthwhile to ask Mr. Goldman to give a book talk at the library as a fundraising event.

Mr. Mahaney stated the Chair suggested it might be beneficial to have members of the staff give brief presentations about special resources in the Library's possession or different services it provides to the public to assist trustees in becoming more familiar with the B&ECPL. Trustees were in favor of this idea. The Director said presentations would be planned for months when the agenda is light.

Agenda Item J – Adjournment in Memory of Morton H. Stovroff. Two weeks ago, the community lost a dear friend in the passing of Morton H. Stovroff. Mr. Buck went on to state that Mort was a wonderful man who loved everyone and was, in turn, loved by everyone. He was a trustee of the Library System from 1978 to 1994, served as Chairman of the Board from 1983 to 1985 and was elected Trustee Emeritus shortly after his departure from the Board. In honor of his countless demonstrations of service to the people of Western New York and everywhere else he went during his 86 years of life, the Chair entertained a motion to observe a moment of silence for this fine man and to adjourn the meeting in his memory. Ms. Pordum moved and Ms. Panty made the second. A moment of silence was observed. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Gist
Secretary