

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BUFFALO AND ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JANUARY 18, 2007

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, January 18, 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

Frank Gist, Secretary

Sheldon M. Berlow, Treasurer

Richard L. Berger

Jack Connors

Phyllis A. Horton

Annette A. Juncewicz

Hormoz Mansouri

Elaine M. Panty

Judith K. Summer

Sharon A. Thomas

Wayne D. Wisbaum

Excused: Susan Maggiore, conflict

Mario J. Rossetti, out of town

Chair Rebecca L. Pordum called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. in the Joseph B. Rounds Conference Room.

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

Agenda Item C Minutes of the Meeting of December 21, 2006 . Minutes were approved unanimously, as mailed, upon motion by Ms. Horton and a second by Mr. Buck.

Agenda Item D Report of the Nominating Committee.

Agenda Item D.1 Election of Officers and Executive Committee. Chair Summer reported the Committee met on January 8 th . The following slate was nominated for 2007:

Chair W. Lawrence Buck

Vice Chair Rebecca Pordum

Secretary Frank Gist

Treasurer Sheldon Berlow

In addition, it was proposed that Trustees Richard Berger, Phyllis Horton and Elaine Panty serve on the Executive Committee. Mr. Connor moved for approval. Dr. Mansouri made a second. Approval was unanimous.

Mr. Buck was invited to Chair the remainder of the meeting. He thanked Ms. Pordum for the outstanding job she had done over the past three years as Chair of the B&ECPL Board. She spent an enormous amount of time attending meetings and advocating for libraries during the turmoil of the County budget crisis and subsequent downsizing of the Library System.

Trustees Berger and Juncewicz arrived at approximately 4:05 p.m. and 4:06 p.m. , respectively.

Agenda Item E Meeting Schedule for 2007. The 2007 meeting schedule was included in the Board packet.

Agenda Item F Report of the Chair. Mr. Buck reminded trustees to turn in committee selection forms by February 2 nd . Committee assignments will be reported in February.

Agenda Item G Committee Reports.

Agenda Item G.1 Executive Committee. Ms. Pordum reported the Executive Committee convened on January 11 th at the Central Library. Trustees Horton, Panty, Pordum and Summer were present. The Director, CFO and COO presented proposed agenda items for the January 18 th meeting of the Board. The Committee discussed and confirmed each item.

Agenda Item G.1.a LSTA Invitational Grant 2007. Chief Operating Officer Mary Jean Jakubowski informed the Committee of the need to take action on one item of business, approving an invitational grant application whose deadline preceded the January 18 th Board meeting. Discussion followed. Ms. Horton made a motion, seconded by Ms. Panty, and the Executive Committee unanimously adopted the following resolution, which was transmitted in the Board packet on

January 12th .

RESOLUTION 2007-1

WHEREAS, New York State has announced the availability of 2007 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Service Improvement Invitational Grant funds, and

WHEREAS, the proposed project would reintroduce System-wide technology training for children and young adults, and

WHEREAS, the goals of this proposal are consistent with the B&ECPL five-year plan of service, *Back to Basics and Beyond*, and would result in improved service delivery to the community, and

WHEREAS, the proposal meets LSTA requirements, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library approves the proposed LSTA grant application for submission to New York State.

Agenda Item G.2 Budget and Finance Committee. Trustee Berger asked Deputy Director Kenneth Stone to introduce the next item of business.

Agenda Item G.2.a Contract Library Transfers. This resolution involved routine transfers within the budget of the Amherst Public Library. Ms. Juncewicz moved, Ms. Horton seconded, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2007-2

WHEREAS, a request for budget transfers has been received from the Amherst Public Library, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library approve transfers totaling \$2,400 within the budget of the Amherst Public Library.

Agenda Item H Report of the Director. Director Michael Mahaney expressed his appreciation to out-going Chair Rebecca Pordum, who demonstrated leadership and grace under fire during some of the toughest challenges the Library System ever faced. She set a new record, having served a total of six years as Chair. Mr. Mahaney said he looks forward to working with Chairman Buck, and the entire staff wishes him every success in his new role.

The Director informed trustees that newly appointed Trustee Mario Rossetti sent his regrets that, due to previous commitments, he will be unable to join fellow Board members until the March meeting.

The Director stated he plans to deliver his annual State of the Library address on

February 7th at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. in the Mason O. Damon Auditorium. Trustees throughout the System have been invited to attend.

Trustees were updated on the event being planned to honor William A. Miles by naming the Center for African and African American Studies at the Merriweather Library after him. The event will be held on February 24th at 4:30 p.m. , with a reception to follow. Invitations will be mailed shortly. The next planning meeting will be held on January 31st at the Merriweather Library. Any trustees interested in participating are welcome.

Each year, the Association of Contracting Library Boards of Trustees (ACT) collaborates with System staff to deliver training for library trustees. The 2007 Trustee Workshop has been set for the morning of Saturday, March 17th , at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Library. Library innovator Stephen Abram will deliver a presentation on the future of libraries. Also on the agenda is an electronic resources orientation similar to the one conducted for Erie County Legislators last year. More information will be forthcoming.

The Director explained that Mrs. Collins was unable to present a report due to her late return from overseas. Trustees will soon receive a full report on 2006 development efforts. On behalf of Mrs. Collins, he thanked all trustees who contributed to the Library's first annual fund drive. To date, donations have exceeded \$17,000.

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

B&ECPL Ends 2006 with Increasing Activity: Despite fewer locations, reduced hours of access and a slowly recovering materials budget, the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library System saw an upward trend in circulation and computer use in 2006. In December, the System-wide increase in circulation was 8.9% over December 2005, with Buffalo branches posting an 8.1% increase over the same period, Central Library rising 0.7%, Institutions rising 1.0% and contracting libraries increasing 3.2%. Circulation from e-Branch, which accounts for all online and telephone renewals, soared by 60%. Although total annual circulation declined 7.7% when the 52 libraries operating throughout most of 2005 are compared with the 37 libraries open today, circulation actually increased by 1.2% when the comparison is confined to 37 locations. The rise in public access computer activity was especially impressive, with System-wide sessions increasing 0.5% *? even when today's smaller complement of 37 libraries is compared directly with the 52 libraries operating in 2005!* When the comparison is confined to 37 libraries, the increase is a healthier 14.4%. The December 2006 monthly increase over December 2005 is much more dramatic, with a System-wide increase of 25.5%. Contracting libraries posted a 19.2% monthly rise; Central Library reported 17.6% and Buffalo branches soared 58.2%. With healthier materials budgets and increased hours in 2007, those statistics should

continue to climb.

Cooperation Continues between ECFSA and B&ECPL: When the Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority (ECFSA) imposed a hard control period over Erie County government and covered organizations, including B&ECPL, a freeze on hiring and restrictions on contract execution ensued. As noted in the December 2006 Report of the Director, Library officials and ECFSA Executive Director **Kenneth Vetter** reached agreement on mechanisms to ensure that the transaction of Library business, including the filling of needed positions and the execution of contracts in excess of \$50,000, would receive ECFSA's prompt attention. To date, ECFSA has been extremely responsive to every request, including approval to execute 2006 contract extensions with all 22 B&ECPL contracting libraries and all requests to fill vacant positions, ranging from part-time pages whose primary function is shelving books to contract library directors in the Village of Alden and the Towns of Amherst, Cheektowaga and Orchard Park. The ECFSA Board of Directors has convened several of its recent meetings, including committee sessions, at the Central Library.

Miles Dedication Scheduled for February 24 th : The dedication of the African-American Resource Room at the new **Frank E. Merriweather, Jr.** Library in honor of former B&ECPL Extension Services Administrator **William A. Miles** has been set for Saturday, February 24 th (time to be determined). Planning continues. Invitations will be mailed before the end of January. Public officials have been advised of the event and asked to present proclamations or testimonials, recognizing Mr. Miles and his many contributions to B&ECPL and the community at large. On October 19 th , the B&ECPL Board of Trustees adopted Resolution 2006-57, renaming the Resource Room, the William A. Miles Center for African and African-American Studies. It is especially appropriate that this dedication occurs during Black History Month because this center is home to Western New York 's most distinguished collection of print and non-print resources celebrating African-American culture and history.

Good News from Albany: Last month, the B&ECPL Board of Trustees ranked and approved project requests eligible for funding under the \$14 million New York State Public Library Construction Grant Program. B&ECPL's maximum share of this statewide pool exceeds \$664,000, and the latest word from the Division of Library Development in Albany is that all ? or very nearly all ? of this State Aid has been approved and will be available to underwrite projects at the Orchard Park Public Library, the Eden Library, the Central Library and the North Park, Crane and East Clinton Branches in Buffalo. Many thanks to Chief Financial Officer **Ken Stone** for shepherding these projects through a difficult and demanding process. In other matters, the Division of Library Development also approved the B&ECPL Five-Year Plan of Service, adopted by the Board of Trustees in September. **Book Orders Surge as Year Ends:** December witnessed the traditional surge of book and media ordering from libraries across the System.

Acquisitions, Serials and Catalog Department staff have been working overtime to order, invoice and receive incoming materials in a timely fashion. Processing personnel have begun to feel the impact, too. As planned, an additional book processor has been recalled to work to address some of the backlog. Meanwhile, administrators **Carol Batt** and **Ann Kling** have collaborated with Chief Operating Officer **Mary Jean Jakubowski** to allocate the 2007 Materials Budget. Much healthier than the meager budgets of 2005 and 2006, a total of \$3,925,000 will enable libraries to rebuild their collections and provide the residents of Erie County with more of what they want and need.

Downloadable Audio Books Arrive: On December 27 th , B&ECPL introduced a downloadable audio book service through SirsiDynix partner OverDrive, Inc. This service allows B&ECPL patrons with valid library cards to download audio books to their personal computers. These audio books may then be enjoyed on the PC or transferred to a personal MP3 Player. If publisher licensing permits, some titles may also be burned to CD. This new collection contains approxi425 titles and is expected to expand. Fiction and non-fiction best sellers, classics, and popular authors, as well as titles included on school reading lists will be purchased as they become available. During an unadvertised trial period, this service has already been well received with hundreds of titles checked out (downloaded) over the first ten days.

Storage Project Advances to House Rare Items : Plans proceed to construct a secure climate-controlled area in the Central Library's closed storage area on Tier A to house more of the Library's rare books and other valuable materials. This construction project is approved (preliminarily) to receive funding under the New York State Public Library Construction Grant Program. Materials currently housed in two secure storage cages are being relocated temporarily to a secure area on the ground floor. Both shelving and collections are being shifted throughout Tier A and Tier B to accommodate this new area. Support Services Administrator **Carol Batt** , along with Library Associate **Susan Carson** and Grosvenor Room librarian **Robert Alessi** , are planning and coordinating the project. Construction is expected to begin in early spring.

Kids Take Winter Break at Central Library: On December 27 th , the Central Library Children's Department conducted the family program, Take a Snowflake Break. Librarians **Mary Ann Budny** and **Gwen Collier** presented various activities and read to enthusiastic children and parents who were enjoying the Christmas school break together. Also during this seasonal period of increased family visits to the library, librarian **Kerra Alessi** conducted the final session of the Verizon Yellow Pages Be a Super Thinker series, December 28 th .

Retirements and Vacancy Management Savings Allow Limited Staff Recalls: From December through mid-January, a number of laid-off staff began returning to work or saw their hours increased as they were moved from part-time to full-time status. Funding resulted primarily from an unexpected number of retirements during the last quarter of 2006. Prior to filling, all vacated positions were reviewed, and some were restructured. It is gratifying to see valuable employees return to work after the extensive layoffs of 2005.

Miscellaneous Meetings: On December 5 th , Human Resources Officer **Doreen Woods** attended the Western New York Library

Resources Council Leadership Institute Task Force meeting. On December 6th , Business, Science and Technology librarian **Dan Caufield** attended a meeting of the Western New York Venture Capital Association, which is comprised of banking administrators, attorneys and members of the business community who act as angel investors. WNY Venture Capital Association may be an avenue to promote the business resources of the Central Library to those who can benefit most from them. On December 12th , COO **Mary Jean Jakubowski** and Human Resources Officer Woods met with the Amherst Public Library Board to advise trustees on the process of recruiting and hiring a new director. On December 21st , Junior Personnel Specialist **Jeanne Diehl** visited the Alden/Ewell Free Library to conduct Centralized Human Resources orientation with new Library Manager **Kristie Rogers** . Catalog Department librarian **Jennifer Trigilio** also visited Alden to offer Ms. Rogers training on the Library's SirsiDynix software applications. On January 11th , Trustees **Phyllis Horton, Elaine Panty** and **Judy Summer** joined the Director, COO Jakubowski and CFO Stone in attending a meeting of the Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority in the Central Library's **Mason O. Damon** Auditorium. Trustee Wisbaum arrived at approximately 4:15 p.m.

Agenda Item I Public Comment. No members of the public wished to comment.

Agenda Item J Unfinished Business. There was no unfinished business.

Agenda Item K New Business.

Agenda Item K.1 Wide Area Network (WAN) RFP Award. Mr. Stone informed Board members they would not be asked to consider Resolution 2007-3 at this meeting. Seven vendors submitted proposals to this RFP, and staff is continuing to review the various options that were submitted for on-going telecommunications services. This includes System-wide dataline services partially paid with e-rate funds. In order to meet the e-rate filing deadline of February 7th , it will be necessary for the Executive Committee to vote on a recommendation prior to the full Board meeting on February 15th .

Mr. Buck asked if the new rates might be lower due to the number of competitors bidding for the contract. Mr. Stone said all bids came in higher than the rates now being paid, which was anticipated. The current contract has been in place for six years. Mr. Stone went on to explain the complexity of the various bids. The initial contract would be for a three-year term with one option to renew. Due to rapidly changing technology, a longer contract period is not recommended.

Dr. Mansouri asked whether the RFP included wireless service. Mr. Stone said while three or four different methodologies had been proposed, none of them included a wireless solution. Some proposals involve using the Internet to connect libraries. This technology must be carefully explored to ensure it would not slow down other library services. Reliability and cost are the two key factors being

examined. Mr. Berlow recommended good service as another key factor. Mr. Stone agreed. He stated e-rate regulations require that cost be the primary component, but not the sole component, and said the award will go to the lowest, *most responsible* proposal.

Mr. Berlow asked if the RFP also included telephone service. Mr. Stone said it is only for data transmission service. Telephone service involves a separate contract that is in effect for one more year. Mr. Berlow wondered if it wouldn't be advantageous to request proposals combining telephone and telecommunication services. Mr. Stone said a decision was made to leave telephone services separate because the Library's current contract has very favorable rates. Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) will be explored before the current telephone contract expires next year. However, using this technology would require different handsets and that cost is not reimbursable under the e-rate program. Central Library equipment is furnished by Erie County, and the service provided is commensurate with what is provided to large businesses in Erie County.

Dr. Mansouri asked if e-rate funding is available for security cameras. Mr. Stone replied that e-rate only funds telecommunication and data transmission lines. Security camera systems do not qualify for e-rate funds. Dr. Mansouri said he believed the Buffalo Public School System was going to receive partial funding from the e-rate program for some security systems being installed in Buffalo schools. He wondered if there might be an opportunity for the Library to participate with Buffalo schools in the program. Mr. Stone said he would look into this, but it is his understanding that security equipment and hardware is not covered, only the capability to transit data is covered. In cases like that, such as the Merriweather Library security system, the Library already receives funding.

Agenda Item K.2 Extend Contract with Development Director. Mr. Mahaney introduced a resolution that would allow the B&ECPL to retain the services of Development Officer Ruth Collins until a full-time successor is hired later this year. The contract may be terminated without penalty when the search is concluded, or at any time the Board is satisfied that she has fulfilled all of her obligations to the Library. Regarding the recruitment process, a preliminary draft job description was presented to the Executive Committee at its January meeting for review. Mr. Buck suggested the Executive Committee, with the participation of any other trustees who wish to volunteer, would serve as an Executive Search Committee with the charge of finalizing the job description and defining the recruitment process.

In order to conduct this business, as well as routine Executive Committee matters such as the WAN award just reported by Mr. Stone, Mr. Buck advanced the next Executive Committee meeting one week to February 1st. Any trustees who wish to participate in the search process need to advise the Chairman immediately so necessary materials can be forwarded prior to the February 1st meeting. Trustee Summer moved for approval of the proposed resolution and was seconded by

Trustee Thomas.

Mr. Gist asked if a nationwide search would be conducted. Mr. Mahaney said that is the intention. Dr. Mansouri inquired about salary requirements. The Director said that topic would be discussed and decided by the Search Committee. Also to be determined is whether the relationship will be as employer/employee or on a contractual basis. Dr. Mansouri asked whether approval to fill the position was required from the Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority, and he was told it would be. Mr. Buck called for a vote on Ms. Summer's motion, and approval was unanimous.

RESOLUTION 2007-4

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library established a Development Office as its primary fund raising arm in 2006, and

WHEREAS, the current agreement with Development Officer Ruth A. Collins allows for a maximum of two (2) 12-month extensions of the original contract, and

WHEREAS, the process to select a replacement to oversee B&ECPL development efforts is not expected to conclude until the second quarter of 2007, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Chair and the Director are authorized to execute an extension of Mrs. Collins' current contract, with the understanding that it can be terminated without penalty subsequent to the appointment of a replacement to oversee B&ECPL's development operations, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Director or his designee is authorized to implement transfers within the 2007 B&ECPL budget if necessary to support this transition, which shall be reported to the Board of Trustees at the next regular meeting following said transfer.

In reply to a query from Mr. Wisbaum, Mr. Mahaney stated it is his intention to share the job description with the entire Board before the position is advertised. All levels of development, communication and fund raising will be tapped. The search will not be limited to candidates with a library background because the required skill set crosses many disciplines. Dr. Mansouri asked if money is set aside in the budget to conduct a nationwide search. Mr. Stone said he believed there would be sufficient fund balances available to cover the cost. One major cost factor will be whether a professional is hired to conduct the search or it is handled in-house. When an estimate of the total cost is determined, sufficient funds can be transferred. Mr. Berger felt the Search Committee needed to make some important decisions before an estimate of expenses could be given to Mr. Stone. After an estimate is established, Mr. Stone will be able to provide specific

options on ways to manage the cost. Mr. Berger predicted search costs may be in the range of 25-35% of the salary or compensation package. Other potential expenses, such as travel for visits, moving expenses, etc., also need to be considered. Once the Search Committee determines a cost estimate, the information will be sent to the Budget and Finance Committee. That Committee will then make a suggestion for a specific plan to cover the search costs.

Dr. Mansouri agreed that a nationwide search should be conducted to test the waters, but said he would prefer to see a candidate from Erie County hired, if possible. Mr. Wisbaum concurred with this opinion. It would take several months for someone from outside the area to get acclimated to this community. While in many instances an outside candidate's credentials may be equal to or surpass those of a local candidate, in the arena of fund raising, lifelong community contacts present a very strong advantage. Despite the potential advantages in obtaining a local candidate, Mr. Connors felt it was important that a nationwide search be conducted. Mr. Mahaney agreed with these assessments. While the job skills required for a director or chief financial officer are largely transferable throughout the country, for someone involved in development it is very advantageous to know the community. Mr. Gist agreed with Mr. Connors and felt it was important to conduct a nationwide search, and he gave Ken Stone as an example of how the B&ECPL was able to hire a quality individual from outside the area. Ms. Panty reminded everyone that when the search to replace Daniel Walters was made, it was conducted in-house. A respectable number of quality candidates applied, so a decent search can be conducted without spending thousands of dollars on a consultant.

There being no further discussion or business, on motion by Ms. Horton and a second from Ms. Panty, the meeting was adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Gist

Secretary