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For More Information: Sharon Thomas, Chair, Board of Trustees, 716-783-6903
Joy Testa Cinquino, Library System Public Affairs Manager
testaj@buffalolib.org, 716-858-7182

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System Community Update ***County Executive-elect Poloncarz Attends Library Board Meeting***

Sharon A. Thomas, chair of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System, and Mary Jean Jakubowski, director of the Library System, issued the following statement after the monthly board meeting of the trustees held yesterday, Thursday, December 15, 2011 at Central Library in downtown Buffalo.

"We were most fortunate to have welcomed Erie County Executive-elect Mark Poloncarz to the final Trustees meeting this year. This meeting was significant because the Board reviewed and approved the Library System's 2012 Operating Budget and discussed the unstable history of funding for the 37-member system," said Chair Thomas.

Erie County's share of the 2012 adopted budget is \$21,872,457. Mr. Poloncarz and the Board were given year-to-year comparisons of county funding which showed a \$6.8 million dollar reduction in county funding to the Library since 2004.

While funding has decreased, more people are using library services. Last year's total door counts numbered more than 3.9 million with 8 million items borrowed.

Director Mary Jean Jakubowski said, "I know I speak for the Library Administrative and Board when I say that we are looking forward to working closely with the newly elected County Executive, his administration and the Legislature. I believe we can establish a long-range plan to stabilize funding for the Library System because now more than ever, the community relies on our free services for reference information, employment and business resources, computer use, entertainment, literacy and literary services and much, much more."

2011 marks the 175th Anniversary of the first lending library in Buffalo. You can learn more about the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System by visiting www.BuffaloLib.org.