

MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
July 18, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, July 18, 2024, at the Central Library and remotely pursuant to due notice to trustees. The following members were present:

Kimberly Johnson, Chair  
Carima El-Behairy, Vice Chair  
Alan J. Bedenko, Esq., Treasurer  
Joel Moore, Esq., Secretary  
Prof. Christine P. Bartholomew, Esq.  
Kathleen Berens Bucki, MLS  
John D. Craik, Esq.  
Sharon M. Kelly, Esq.  
Elaine M. Panty  
Christopher Sasiadek, Esq.

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. A call of the roll was taken. A quorum was present.

Agenda Item B – Approval/Changes to the Agenda. Director John Spears proposed that Agenda Item K.1 – Robert Patterson – Bond, Schoeneck, & King Attorneys be moved to the beginning of the Board meeting. Director Spears also introduced walk-on Resolution 2024-18 - Approval of the Annual Report of the Director – 2023 which will be discussed and voted on in Agenda Item K – New Business.

Agenda Item C – Minutes of the Meeting of June 20, 2024. Trustee Panty made a motion to approve the minutes, Trustee Bucki seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Trustee Bartholomew arrived at 4:04 p.m.

Agenda Item K.1 – Robert Patterson – Bond, Schoeneck, & King Attorneys. Robert Patterson introduced himself and explained that he is the General Counsel of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library. Patterson went on to explain that he is also backed by a whole team of lawyers that assist when appropriate. Patterson then informed the Board of services he provides, such as contracts with vendors, governance questions, policies, First Amendment concerns, and more. Discussion ensued regarding Robert Patterson and the services he provides to the Library. Trustee Kelly asked

Robert Patterson if he is on retainer. Robert Patterson explained that he is on retainer and has been for a number of years.

Trustee Moore arrived at 4:07 p.m.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair. Chair Johnson moved right into proposed Resolution 2024-16 to intermit the August Board of Trustees meeting.

Agenda Item D.1 – Resolution 2024-16 – Intermit August Meeting. Chair Johnson explained that the Executive Committee will meet, however, the Board will not.

#### RESOLUTION 2024-16

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 1 of *Bylaws of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library* states: “the Board may, by resolution, intermit meetings for a particular month or months,” and

WHEREAS, in the past, the Board has suspended meetings during summer months when Library business permits, and

WHEREAS, the Library Board will meet in September 2024, and

WHEREAS, Article VI, Section 1 of *Bylaws of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library* states: “The Executive Committee, in intervals between meetings of the Board of Trustees, shall have all the powers and duties of the Board of Trustees not inconsistent with law. All Trustees should be notified of any actions within three (3) business days,” and

WHEREAS, absent other urgent business, this action enables the Library Board to intermit its regular August meeting, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the August 2024 meeting of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees is hereby intermitted.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval of Resolution 2024-16, Trustee Bedenko seconded, and this was approved unanimously. Chair Johnson also mentioned that if something arises before the Board meets again in September, the Executive Committee will be meeting to make decisions. Director Spears shared that Assistant Deputy Director-Controller Emily Patronik and he are planning to schedule a Budget and Finance Committee meeting in August as well.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on July 11, 2024. A copy of the written report was included in the Board packet. Trustee El-Behairy briefly summarized the meeting. Trustee Kelly moved to have the written report

entered into the Minutes, Trustee Moore seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Present: Executive Committee Chair Kimberly Johnson, Vice Chair Carima El-Behairy, and members Elaine Panty and Christopher Sasiadek. Also present were Director John Spears, Assistant Deputy Director-Controller Emily Patronik, and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich

Excused: Member Lucy Candelario

The meeting of the Executive Committee began at 4:00 p.m. After a call of the roll, it was noted that a quorum was present.

Chair Johnson began the meeting by asking if there will be any changes or additions to the proposed draft agenda for the Board of Trustees meeting next week. Director Spears stated that there will be three policies for the Board to review. These policies are regularly reviewed, and there are no changes recommended. The policies suggested for review under Agenda Item K – New Business are: Cooperation with Organizations and Agencies, Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Harassment, and Sexual Harassment Prevention. Discussion ensued regarding the policy review schedule and the Policy Committee. Trustee Panty, as the chair of the Policy Committee, agreed to bring these policies to the Board for review. Trustee El-Behairy suggested adding a reminder to the trustees to complete their Sexual Harassment Prevention training under Agenda Item J – Unfinished Business. It was agreed that Director Spears will mention this reminder during Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Discussion ensued regarding various trustee training and outstanding Board appointments and re-appointments.

Next, Chair Johnson continued reviewing the proposed draft agenda.

For the Report of the Chair, Chair Johnson said that there will be a proposed Resolution to intermit the August Board meeting. Next, Chair Johnson mentioned the *5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition* event held at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library. She stated that it was very informative and how important it is to collect and archive these materials, as well as the oral histories. Discussion ensued among members regarding the preservation of materials and documentation of these tragic events. Further discussion ensued regarding oral histories.

ADD-Controller Patronik discussed the proposed Resolution 2024-17 – 2025 Proposed Budget Guidance. She stated that this proposed resolution happens annually. ADD-Controller Patronik stated that she plans to send out an email to the Budget and Finance Committee to find a date to meet in August. Discussion ensued regarding the purpose of the resolution. ADD-Controller Patronik went on to say that the Library is still operating within budget. The Library did receive a grant closeout from the Ralph C. Wilson Foundation for \$165,000. This money was used to cover charges that were waived and overhead costs associated with the Wilson Sports Equipment program.

For the Report of the Director, Director Spears stated that he will be reminding the Board of their Sexual Harassment Prevention Training requirement.

Moving through the proposed agenda, Trustee El-Behairy stated there will be a Report of the Foundation. The Foundation has met two times since the last Board meeting.

Further discussion ensued regarding member library visits and Angola Public Library's Annual Hotdog Fundraiser.

Chair Johnson continued through the proposed agenda for the Board meeting scheduled on July 18. Director Spears stated that Robert Patterson of Bond, Schoeneck, & King Attorneys is scheduled to be present to discuss his role as legal counsel.

There being no further business, Trustee Sasiadek motioned to adjourn and Trustee Panty seconded. The meeting ended at 4:22 p.m.

#### Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Resolution 2024-17 – 2025 Proposed Budget Guidance. ADD-Controller Patronik explained proposed Resolution 2024-17 as presented below. She stated that this is a recurring resolution that is brought before the Board every year. Since the Board intermits the August meeting when the budget is submitted, this resolution is proposed for budget guidance. ADD-Controller Patronik discussed key points of the resolution and a proposed meeting date and time for the Budget and Finance Committee.

#### RESOLUTION 2024-17

WHEREAS, the Library recently received Year 2025 budget instructions from the Erie County Budget Office, with budget requests due to the Erie County Budget Office no later than August 12, 2024, which is before the next scheduled Board meeting, and

WHEREAS, in order to provide a timely response to the County, proposed budget preparation and review criteria were transmitted electronically for review by the Board's Budget & Finance Committee, and

WHEREAS, it is in the Library's interest for Library trustees to articulate guidelines for preparing the 2025 Budget request, designate the Library Director as responsible for preparing a draft budget request consistent with these guidelines, and submit the request to Erie County, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library hereby directs the Library Director to complete the 2024 Budget request utilizing the following criteria:

- Incorporate a provision for a \$.50 per hour increase in the New York State minimum wage signed into law by Governor Hochul and effective January 1, 2025, impacting page and senior page wage rates;
- Incorporate the cost of contracted bargaining unit agreements, a reserve for non-represented personnel pursuant to pending Board action, and rate changes for contractually obligated fringe benefits including health insurance and employer contributions to the New York State and Local Retirement System; and
- Prioritize public access to libraries in any budget adjustments needed to balance the 2025 Budget request.

RESOLVED, that the Director transmit the resulting request to the County of Erie's Division of Budget and Management as close to the deadline as schedules and preparation time will allow.

Trustee Bedenko motioned for approval of Resolution 2024-17, Trustee Bartholomew seconded, and this was approved unanimously. ADD-Controller Patronik went on to inform the Board that she and Business Office Manager Tracy Palicki attended a meeting at the Erie County Legislative building which included a presentation by Erie County Deputy Budget Director Mark Cornell in which he elaborated upon a 5.2 million dollar surplus through May 2024 in the Erie County budget. Discussion ensued regarding Erie County budget information.

ADD-Controller Patronik then informed the Board that she and Director Spears had the 2025 Capital Budget meeting with officials from Erie County which involved projects such as Central's building envelope repair. ADD-Controller Patronik went on to briefly explain what the building envelope repair would entail. She also stated that she has received quotes for the repair, but they did not include asbestos abatement. Chair Johnson asked what needs to happen regarding the asbestos removal. ADD-Controller Patronik stated that they have to follow New York State guidelines for removal and will not know until the building envelope repair process is underway what needs to happen.

ADD-Controller Patronik went on to mention that the Erie County Department of Public Works submitted a request for \$3.5 million for a green roof that is planned to be installed at the Central Library. Director Spears mentioned that this project is now projected to cost over \$9 million. Therefore, additional funding streams are going to be sought. Discussion ensued about New York State Construction Aid, potential add-ons such as solar and vegetation, and the environmental impact. Trustee Panty asked how many years this project will take. Director Spears stated that it will most likely be phased over the course of several years. Discussion ensued about the process of the green roof.

Agenda Item E.2.c – Monthly Financial Report. ADD-Controller Patronik informed the Board of the monthly financial report ending on May 31, 2024. She stated that the Library is in good standing. ADD-Controller Patronik explained the line for “Refunds for Prior Year Expenses” which was provided for the Board of Trustees in their Board packet.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Spears began his report by reminding the Board of their annual requirement for Sexual Harassment Prevention Training. He went on to explain that if trustees received this training at their workplace, the Library would just need them to fill out the certification form and submit a certificate of completion or letter from their Human Resources Department stating that they completed the training. If trustees did not receive this training, the Library can provide interactive training for them. Director Spears added that if trustees had questions or needed the information regarding training again to reach out. Trustee Moore clarified that this is the same training that all Erie County and New York State officials are required to take. Director Spears confirmed that it is.

Next, Director Spears stated that at the Executive Committee meeting on Thursday, July 11, it was discussed that it would be beneficial to have meetings at other libraries around Erie County. He stated that they are looking at having the Thursday, September 19 Board of Trustees meeting at the Audubon Branch Library. Due to technical restraints at the Audubon Branch Library, though, there will not be a virtual component, and in-person attendance will be required. Discussion ensued about the recently completed construction project and technical capacities of the Audubon Branch Library.

Moving on, Director Spears mentioned that he and Chair Johnson received a letter from Chris Hawley of the Central Terminal Neighborhood Association and will be forwarding it to the Board with Chair Johnson’s permission. For background, several articles were written by Garrett Looker from *Investigative Post* regarding book deserts in the East Side of Buffalo. Director Spears went on to say that if you are in the Broadway Fillmore area, it is a 3 mile walk to visit your closest library. Director Spears met with Chris Hawley regarding how the Library can get involved in their campaign for a library in the East Side that is walkable. They discussed short term options for now, such as having the book mobile at events near the Central Terminal and conducting pop-ups at different locations, especially at community events. Discussion ensued regarding the future of a physical library location in the East Side, funding, and staffing. Further discussion ensued about possible locations such as the Broadway Market and libraries in general.

Following that, Director Spears stated that Trustee Craik has talked extensively about getting the Board together to create a vision, mission, and values statement for the Library which could include a retreat to discuss their opinions. There was a solicitation

for bids, and the contract was awarded to Mary Beth Debus of Program Savvy Consulting. Director Spears gave a brief outline of the work ahead of them. Mary Beth Debus will be meeting with Trustee Craik, Chair Johnson, and other members of the Board that are interested to identify areas of the Board's vision that they want to test through community engagement. Discussion ensued regarding this process and surveys that would be sent out to Library users for community input.

Finally, Director Spears shared with the Board that the Library's Administrative Team has been working with Frank Ciccio of Illuminare Group, Inc. He informed the Board that they will be working with Frank on a quarterly basis and have assignments to help them in-between. Discussion ensued regarding how the process is going so far and how beneficial it has been. Trustee Sasiadek asked about programming at various libraries and specifically mentioned the Staycation: Teen Spa Night at the Library program at East Aurora. He asked if these programs are tested at other branches, such as the City of Buffalo branches. Director Spears stated there are opportunities for those successful programs to be shared with other Library Directors. He also stated that the Library is working on centralizing certain programs and offering them to member libraries, such as the Black History Month programs offered in February 2024. Discussion ensued about how successful those programs were and the large positive responses from member libraries. Further discussion ensued about centralizing programs. Discussion branched into the budget meetings ADD-Controller Patronik, Director Spears, and Business Officer Manager Palicki have been having with member libraries to inform them about the Library's budget process.

Lastly, Trustee Craik mentioned to Director Spears several local organizations that are conducting community assessments in the East Side that would be worth looking into. After discussion continues with the Central Terminal Neighborhood Association it might make sense to coordinate with these organizations for extra resources and knowledge.

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

### **B&ECPL Monthly Report June 2024**

**Bubble Party!** - On June 27, the Central Children's Room staff put on the Summer Reading Kickoff Party, which featured bubbles! They had various stations and devices families could use to make bubble, advertised for our upcoming events, and offered snacks, water, and giveaways. A total of 85 people attended throughout the day.

**5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition** - Members of the *5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition* (formerly the *May 14th Buffalo Collection Initiative*), coordinated by Rare Book Curator **Heather Gring** and Special Collections

Manager **Susan Buttaccio**, hosted an outreach event at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library on June 28 to provide the public with an update on the collecting initiatives for the May 14, 2022, Buffalo Mass Shooting. Assistant Deputy Director **Dorinda Darden** welcomed, and Melissa Brown, Executive Director of the Buffalo History Museum, and Barbara Nevergold, Co-Chair of the Uncrowned Queens Institute, provided an introduction about the coalition. Melissa also provided updates from the *Collection Committee*, and **Heather Gring**, as a member of the *Oral History Committee*, presented on the *Oral History Project*. Director **John Spears**, Assistant Deputy Director **Joy Testa Cinquino**, retired B&ECPL Librarian Sharon Holley, and B&ECPL Board of Trustees Chair Kimberly Johnson and Vice Chair Carima El-Behairy were also in attendance. "The coalition is composed of local organizations, victims' family members, community members, and cultural heritage professionals focusing on the preservation and documentation of the 5/14 massacre and beyond."

**Job Fair** - System Adult Outreach Services Librarian **Jacob Rachwal** organized a *Job Fair* at the Central Library in partnership with the New York State Department of Labor. There were 78 vendors and almost 300 job seekers who participated in this event. One vendor who employs people for the Buffalo Bills High Mark Stadium stated that they had received 190 applications during the event.



**Nickel City Comic Con** - System Youth Outreach Services Librarian III **Chelsey Lonberger**, System Youth Outreach Services Librarian Trainee **Amealia Brousseau**, System Youth Outreach Services Library Assistant **Emily McDonald**, **Jacob Rachwal**, Central Adult Services Librarian Trainee **Faith Miller**, Launch Pad Makerspace Technology Library Clerk **Amanda Brown**, Mobile Services Librarian Trainee **Susan Blake**, and Mobile Services Senior Page **Oliva Newton** participated in the *Nickel City Comic Con* held at the Buffalo Convention Center on June 29 and June 30. They provided *Superhero and Sidekick Training Camp*, *Cosplay 101*, *Junior Royal Rumble* wrestling event, and *Who Will Defeat the Dragons* event for multigenerational participants. Button making and crafts were among the other activities, as well as giveaways that included comic books, graphic novels, and other books by provided by Project Flight and various comic book stores. There were 1,600 participants between both days.





**Summer Reading at New York Libraries** – Libraries throughout the B&ECPL System are participating in the *Summer Reading at New York Libraries* program, with the theme *Adventure Begins at Your Library*. This includes the online *Summer Reading Challenge* for children, teens, and adults held from June 2 through August 10. System Adult Outreach Services Librarian **Melissa Blattner** moderates the book reviews for teens and adults and keeps track of the number of minutes read by the children in the contest. They are entered to win prizes, including a LEGO set, Magna Tiles, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or a Grocery Store Gift cards. Also new this year, the system-wide *Adventure is Out There* series of weekly contests, managed by the Development & Communications Department. Prizes include tickets to KIDZ BOP LIVE 2024 Concert at Darien Lake, rock climbing passes, Erie County Fair gate admissions, tickets to the Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo Zoo, and Buffalo Bisons baseball, and more. The contest runs through the end of August, with a grand prize of an all-ages *Reading Adventure Package*, which includes a tent, sleeping bags, s'more's maker, hammock, and other outdoor items.

## 1. Public Services

### Central Library:

**Plant Swap** – On June 1, **Amanda Brown** hosted the Launch Pad's semi-annual Plant Swap event outside in the Reading Park. Amanda facilitated the trading of various house plants and garden seedlings between 26 library patrons who happily gave away plants that were not fitting well in their life and went home with plants more suitable for them as individuals. By hosting the event itself, Amanda promoted the Launch Pad's Seed Library to event passersbys and community members via social media.

**Roycroft Program** – On June 15, Central Adult Services Librarian **Leslie Carr** hosted a program called "The Fascinating Life and Work of Elbert Hubbard and the Roycroft Campus: a WNY Original." Roycroft Program Director Alan Nowicki gave a fascinating and well researched presentation. The Grosvenor Room participated, as well, embellishing the display case in the Ring of Knowledge with some of Hubbard's and Roycroft's works. In the fall, this topic will continue, with cameos about the careers of many famous people that had a connection to or started their career at Roycroft.

**Magic Tree House Book Club** – Central Children's Services Librarian **Jennifer Lelinski** started her sold-out program of Magic Tree House Book Club. Activities included making an active volcano, dinosaur bingo, painting, and a notebook craft.

**Displays** - The Graphics Department's **Dawn Stanton** and **Darlene Pennachi** designed and hung a new exhibit in the Ring of Knowledge for *Adventures @ Your Library /Summer Reading 2024*. Trees, mini picnic tables, and tents are featured.

**Summer Music Series at the Reading Park:** June 1 marked the beginning of a series of outdoor concerts at Central. Featured acts included the Dale Toliver Jazz Trio, an affiliate of the Colored Musicians Club; the exotic sounds of Nusantara Arts; and

Colored Musicians Club affiliate Native Tongue offered R&B-flavored jazz. Rain moved the June 29 concert by South American-inflected Comienzos inside the building. The series, coordinated by Manager of Community Engagement **Anne Conable**, continues July 6, August 10, August 17, and August 24. These free concerts are Saturdays from 2:00-3:30 p.m.

**System Services:**

**Ask a Tech Geek** – Throughout the month of June, TechKnow Lab Librarian **Brendan Chella** provided open technology assistance at a table near the TechKnow Lab at the Central Library as part of the *Ask a Tech Geek* program.

**Displays - Heather Gring** developed two Rare Book and Special Collections displays, one on *Elbert Hubbard and Roycroft* and the other on *WNY Pride*.

**Genealogy Training** – Genealogy Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman** presented genealogy training that included *Applying Google Earth Pro to Family History* virtual class on June 5 and *Jumpstart Your Genealogy* at the Hamburg Public Library on June 13. She also taught *New York State Census Records Are the Bomb!* at the Amherst Senior Center on June 18 and *Cool Tools for Genealogy* at the Dorothy Collier Community Center on June 27 as part of the University Express program provided by the Erie County Department of Senior Services.

**Susan Buttaccio** presented *Getting the Most out of Ancestry Library Edition* at the East Aurora Public Library on June 8.

**Health and Wellness** – New York State Public Health Corps Graduate Fellow **Sophia Charles** and **Jacob Rachwal** coordinated the *Wellness @ Central* tabling event held at the Central Library on June 20. There were 18 organizations who provided health and wellness resources to patrons that included information on employment, housing, literacy, food assistance, mental health services, and other programs.

**Lecture and Speaker Series - Susan Buttaccio** hosted a speaker series with Explore Buffalo. *Buffalo Then and Now: What Building was there 100 Years Ago?* was presented by Chuck LaChiusa in the Ring of Knowledge at the Central Library on June 1. **Susan** also hosted *The Real People of Buffalo's Grain Elevators* at the Central Library on June 8. The program highlighted some of the stories of the *Spilling Grain Oral History Project* created by journalist Kate Kaye, which is included on the B&ECPL's Digital Collections platform. Local historian and former mill worker Donald Dodd and Professor Emeritus Lynda Schneekloth of the University at Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning joined Kate for a discussion about the grain elevators and their place in Buffalo's past, present, and future.

**Jacob Rachwal** coordinated with University Express on a lecture they hosted at the Central Library on June 8 titled *The Two Wives of Millard Fillmore*, presented by Rachelle Francis.

**Tours and Visits:**

**Susan Buttaccio** hosted the monthly Special Collections tour at the Central Library on June 22. The tour included an in-depth look at the Local History, Genealogy, Map, Music, and Rare Book collections, as well as the Mark Twain Room and Rare Book exhibits.

Throughout the month of June, the Rare Book Room had four researchers visit and scanned four rare items for national and international researchers.

**Buffalo Branches:**

**Elaine M. Panty Branch Programming Highlights:**

- The summer reading program kicked off at the Elaine M. Panty Branch. Kids 0-18 can participate in events and activities throughout the summer. Participants earn lots of fun prizes, plus a chance to win one of our grand prizes, a new bike! There are four prize levels based on age.
- On June 10, Branch Manager **Stefanie Anawald** hosted Bad Art, an open craft program for youth and adults. Animals and nature seemed to be the unofficial theme of the day.
- **Go Bike Buffalo** was at the branch on Wednesday, June 12, with their mobile bike repair workshop and rodeo. Patrons brought bikes for a summer tune up, adults practiced riding while using hand signals, and the younger riders had an opportunity to practice safe riding and maneuvering skills. At least eight patrons took advantage of the programs.
- **Arts for Learning WNY** sponsored a dance instructor to teach a free Hip Hop Dance Workshop to young patrons at the Elaine M. Panty Library on Saturday June 15. Six patrons attended and learned some simple but impressive dance moves. The class also taught the kids (and parents) about the importance of movement for both exercise and expression.

**North Park Programming Highlights:**

- Approximately 140 take and makes were distributed throughout the month, including a rainbow mobile, summer bucket list, toilet paper tube butterfly, and a watermelon collage.
- North Park hosted three events sponsored by **Arts for Learning WNY**, including kids yoga, The Wondermakers puppet story time, and book making.
- Patrons attended a special goldfish story time about water safety on June 13 with the **Goldfish Swim School**.
- North Park launched our summer reading challenges, reading log for children, and reading passport for adults.
- The **Buffalo Astronomical Association** presented and offered a craft as the unofficial kickoff to summer reading programming.
- **Technology Clerk Andrew Henning** offered drop-in and scheduled tech help sessions throughout the month.

- **Librarian Erin Dunn** hosted the June edition of the afternoon tea book club with nine patrons attending to discuss *The Secret Garden*.

**Outreach:**

On Sunday, June 2, over 20 library families and friends marched or otherwise participated in Buffalo’s annual Pride Parade. In addition to marching, another five volunteers worked a table in front of the Crane Branch Library where they made buttons and gave out coloring pages. As parade marchers moved along Elmwood Avenue, they were met with overwhelming love and support for our library system. Thank you to Central Children’s Services Librarian II **Dan Lewandowski** for organizing the Library’s participation and **Chelsey Lonberger** and **Amealia Brousseau** who volunteered and were stationed at the Crane Branch Library where they did crafts with the public and provided information on free resources for the community.

**Jacob Rachwal** tabled at the *Erie County Employee Wellness Day* held at the Buffalo Convention Center on June 25. **Jacob** shared information on health and wellness resources that are available at the library. He also collected library card applications.

**Brendan Chella** conducted the TechKnow Lab’s first visit to the Town of Aurora Senior Center on June 26, as part of Erie County Department of Senior Services’ *University Express* program. **Brendan** taught a class on *Android Basics* with 26 in attendance.

Mobile Services Manager **Andrew Maines** and Institutional Services Library Assistant **Anthony Skubis** attended the Akron West Shore Farmers Market on June 27. The evening included farm vendors, food trucks, and a classic car show. The Bookmobile utilized one of the new System Youth Outreach Services Story Walks, debuting *Miss Maple’s Seeds*, and provided library services to attendees at the farmers market.

**2. Collection Development**

**Physical Collections:**

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	1,681	16,913	217	1,616	518,494
Young Adult Print	414	3,180	82	561	72,953
Adult Print	4,071	23,921	671	4,460	1,777,263
Media	2,818	13,489	290	1,338	528,749
Other*	1,887	10,643	64	225	173,347
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>10,871</b>	<b>68,146</b>	<b>1,324</b>	<b>8,200</b>	<b>3,070,806</b>

\*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other.

**Electronic Collections\*:**

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	2,056	25,831	1,287	8,475	125,350
eAudiobooks	8,194	57,222	381	2,381	72,718
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5,430
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>10,250</b>	<b>83,053</b>	<b>1,668</b>	<b>10,856</b>	<b>203,498</b>

\*The B&ECPL also provides access to all *hoopla* 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	
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,121</b>	<b>151,199</b>	<b>2,992</b>	<b>19,056</b>	<b>3,274,304</b>

**Digital Collections** - Rare Book Clerk **Nicole Kondziela** and Special Collections Librarian **Adam Rubin** added nine additional medieval and renaissance manuscript items to the Digital Collections.

**Susan Buttaccio** has been working with *Newspapers.com* (a subsidiary of Ancestry.com) to partner with them on the digitization of B&ECPL's local newspapers that are on microfilm. In the coming weeks, rolls of microfilmed local newspaper titles will be shipped out to them for digitization. In exchange, the Central Library will be able to provide a public access to those digitized records through *Newspapers.com*.

**Vinyl LP Record Collection** - Senior Pages in Special Collections have been reviewing the *Vinyl LP Record Collection* diligently, identifying dozens of uncatalogued items to be cataloged each month. Patron listening stations in the Grosvenor Room are being used by patrons who listen to LP selections while reading.

The IMAGINE Buffalo series of weekly live interviews on Zoom has concluded for the summer. Twenty guests were featured since January, including Scott Scanlon from *The Buffalo News*, Mary Wilson from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, Suzie Molnar from Albright Knox Art Gallery, and Mark McGovern and Jamie Hamann-Burney from transportation systems. The program, produced by the Development & Communications Department, will resume in September. Past programs are available to view on the [Library's YouTube](#).

IMAGINE Buffalo is hosted weekly by volunteer Dennis Galucki of the *Center for the Study of Art, Architecture, History and Nature (C-SAAHN)*.

**3. Fundraising**

**Fundraising:**

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
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Annual Appeal Total	January 1 – June 30, 2024	\$203,997
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**Highlights:**

*Give 716*, an annual online fundraiser lead by the Buffalo Bills and Buffalo Sabres Foundations, will begin on July 15 at 7:16pm and run through July 16. Online donations made to the Library during this event will support the purchase of new reading materials that will be added to the Library’s collections.

*Library Night at the Ballpark* is planned for Friday, July 19. Tickets are \$17 each, with fireworks after the game. Tickets can be purchased at: <https://ways2give.buffalolib.org/bisons> or by calling Maureen Germaine at 716-858-7197. Proceeds benefit the 37 Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries.

Mass emails sent in June:

**Night at the Ballpark** – sent to past ticket purchasers, approximately 100, had a 73% open rate.

**Summer Reading** – sent to library card holders, approximately 275,000, had a 47% open rate.

Online Store: 179 orders in the first six (6) months of 2024, totaling \$4,946.57.

**4. Facilities**

On June 5, bids were opened for the planned Leroy R. Coles Jr. Branch Library improvement project. The contract was awarded to Allstate General Contracting. The HVAC portion of the project will be de-scoped and rebid at a later date.

On June 6, Library staff accompanied Erie County DPW staff, Millennium Construction staff, and Trautman Associates to conduct field visits of epoxy coating products at locations around WNY. The purpose of these visits was to investigate the durability and effectiveness of these coatings in garage/loading dock locations. The Library is waiting for cost savings analysis of using a product of this type as opposed to traditional concrete for the Loading Dock Rehabilitation at the Central Library prior to making a decision.

On June 6, a walk through was conducted at the East Clinton Branch Library in advance of the architecture and engineering bid openings for the improvements planned there. The scope of work for this project includes replacement of the roof, replacement of doors and windows, brick repointing and replacement, installation of security cameras, rehabilitation of the sinking concrete slab, and replacement of floor tiles.

On June 14, Library staff met with CIR Electric at the Isaías González-Soto Branch Library. There had been uncertainty regarding the number, location, and type of

electrical floor box outlets to be installed during the course of the present construction. All parties in attendance agreed that the number of floor boxes called for in the drawings are to be installed and that Library Maintenance would address the need for any future floor boxes, if necessary.

On June 20, a walkthrough was conducted at the Central Library in advance of the Space Utilization Study bid opening. This work will include design options and cost estimation for the interior reimagining and reconfiguration of all floors of the building to create flexible space conducive to realizing the Library's vision to be a vibrant destination. In total, 18 firms from around the country attended the walkthrough. The bids for this project will be opened July 9.

## 5. Staff Development

**ALA Director Crash Course Group Project** – In February, four seats were funded for the American Library Association (ALA) webinar series *Public Library Director Crash Course: Getting the Skills You Need*. The course covered key topics necessary to run a library such as finances, trustees, personnel issues, and facilities management. After the series concluded, B&ECPL Staff Development facilitated a learning group for all participants. Members of the group worked together to create a resource based on the best of what they learned in the course. At the June Managers/Directors Meeting, the group shared out their *Director's Ready-to-Use Templates* resource. Access to the templates and other supplemental materials are now available on the Staff Intranet.

**Staff Development Day Interest Survey for Managers and Directors** - We are in the very early stages of potentially starting to plan for *Staff Development Day*. This full-day professional development conference was an every-other-year, in-house-planned event for all employees. The last *Staff Development Day* took place in May 2018. The May 2020 event was fully planned, but it was cancelled due to the pandemic. An initial survey was sent to all Managers, Directors, Team Leaders, and Administrators to begin to determine current interest levels and some general preferences. We had a 75% response rate to the survey, with 92% of respondents who want this even to return in some form. The next step is an interest survey for all employees, which is planned for August.

**Conclusion of *Spring Into Safety Training Series*** - This organization-wide program from Western New York Council on Occupational Safety and Health (WNYCOSH) that kicked-off in April finished up in June, with nine more classes offered to round out the series. This month included sessions on *Workplace Violence Prevention*, *Mitigation of Bed Bugs in Libraries*, *Construction Zone Safety*, and *Good Computer Ergonomics and Sitting Wellness*. Classes had options to attend either online or in person, with the in-person offerings held at several different library locations. This training is funded through a WNYCOSH grant, which we were informed has been secured for another year.

**Annual Mandatory Compliance and Technology Training Campaign Closes** - This year's annual compulsory compliance and technology training campaign that started

in April closed at the end of June. All staff were required to complete online modules on *Workplace Violence Prevention, Harassment Prevention, and Cybersecurity*, as well as to submit related tracking forms. Several communication efforts were made over the months of the campaign, including custom reminder emails, targeted newsletter content, and posters in staff areas. Over 99% of all employees completed all requirements by the 6/30/24 deadline.

**Webinars** - Employees participated in several different webinars and other online events in June, with multiple staff attending following sessions: *Unattended Children: How to Talk to Parents About their Children's Behavior* (from Homeless Training by Ryan Dowd), *AI Innovations Toolbox: Use AI to Research Historical Documents and Letters* (from National Genealogical Society), and *The Supportive Library: Helping Patrons Experiencing Homelessness* (from Library 2.0).

### 6. Communications

**Media:**

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
Media event with Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, Library Director John Spears, Assistant Deputy Director Samantha Purpora, and Teen Services Manager Taylor Harding	Ribbon Cutting for Central Library's Teen Space	June 4, covered by TV stations Channels 2, 4, 7 and Spectrum News
Media Release and Invitation	5/14 - Buffalo Massacre - Community Memory Coalition public information meeting	Sent on June 15, event on June 27, covered by TV stations Channel 2 and Channel 7
Media Release	Adventure Begins at Your Library This Summer	June 18, WKSE, WYRK and WBLK radio stations, Channel 7
Media Invitation	Job Fair @ Central Library	Posted June 2, 5, 12, 20 - 24

**Social Media:**

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
Facebook	113	689	8,285	22,699	70	13,725
Flickr	-	123	2,520	24,156	-1	60
Google Ads <sup>1</sup>	3845 web interactions	N/A	2,637	16,263	N/A	N/A
Instagram	25	100	7,677	20,196	427	6,134
Pinterest	18	238	69	557	0	2,053
X(formerly Twitter) <sup>2</sup>	68	369	112	2,182	13	10,949
YouTube	7	62	1,677	13,249	9	649



TikTok	2	2	1,273	2,133	109	752
<b>Total</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>1,583</b>	<b>24,250</b>	<b>101,435</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>34,322</b>

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

<sup>2</sup> Twitter (X) analytics were hand-calculated, as the platform now only offers built-in analytics statistics to premium (paying) users.

## 7. Partnerships

**Coordinated Outreach Advisory Group - Andrew Maines**, System Adult Outreach Services Manager **Carol Kowalik-Happy**, and **Jacob Rachwal** met with Katie Earl, Project Administrator for the Erie County Department of Senior Services, and Dawn Vanderkooi, Director of Contact Services for 211 Western New York. They participated in the year’s first Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System’s *Coordinated Outreach Advisory Group* meeting held at the Central Library on June 7. The library is tasked with working with community partners to provide consistent and quality library services to historically disadvantaged populations.

**Lupus Foundation of America - Jacob Rachwal** met virtually with Eric Johnson from the Lupus Foundation of America on June 20. **Jacob** will be working with them to get their literature distributed throughout the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System.

**New York State Correctional Facility Libraries - Andrew Maines** facilitated the 2024-2025 *Authentication of Annual Negotiations for the New York State Public Library System Services to State Correctional Facility Libraries State Aid Program*. Assistant Deputy Directors **Dorinda Darden** and **Emily Patronik**, Library Administrative Manager **Tracy Palicki**, Director of New York State Correctional Library Services Corinne Leone, Collins Correctional Facility Senior Librarian Cara Bradberry, and Wende Correctional Facility Senior Librarian Sandra Blackman also attended the negotiation and contract signing. Since 1984, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System has worked with New York State correctional facilities and with the facility librarians and administrative staff to supplement library services and resources for incarcerated individuals in New York State correctional institutions by providing incarcerated individuals with broader access to library materials, services, and the statewide library network.

**New York State Library - Carol Kowalik-Happy** attended a virtual meeting on June 11 for the newly formed statewide, *Project Advisory Committee*. This committee was convened by the New York State Library for the *Library Technology for All* initiative. The committee consists of individuals living with disabilities, their advocates, members of the library community, and representatives of government agencies and non-profit organizations who work with individuals with disabilities. The committee will work with a consultant to provide recommendations and self-assessment tools to help public libraries and library systems improve their ability to serve individuals with disabilities in terms of accessibility of assistive technology and online services.

**Outreach Coordinators in New York’s Public Library Systems - Carol Kowalik-Happy and Andrew Maines** attended the *Outreach Coordinators in New York’s Public Library Systems* meeting held virtually on June 5.

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

- **Buffalo Museum of Science**
- **Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra**
- **Buffalo Toronto Public Media**
- **Community Access Services**
- **Erie County Department of Health**
- **FeedMore WNY**
- **Mission: Ignite**
- **Oxford Pennant**
- **PEN America**
- **Project Flight**
- **University at Buffalo**
- **Western New York Library Resources Council (WNYLRC) Committees**
- **YMCA Young Explorers Summer Camp**

### 8. Planning for the Future

July 27-28: the Central Library’s gardens and the Reading Park are again an official site for **Garden Walk Buffalo** (Sat-Sun 10 a.m.-4 p.m.). Central is also a partner for the **20<sup>th</sup> Annual Queen City Jazz Festival** on Saturday, July 27 (1-9 p.m.), a free outdoor concert staged by the Colored Musicians Club in front of the Library at Washington Street and Lafayette Square. The event is free and features national jazz headliners, vendors and food trucks.

### 9. Director Activities

#### Meetings/Events Attended by Director

June 2024

Date	Meeting/Event
June 3, 2024	Meeting - Mike Cardus and Jeffrey Pietrzak (Organization Development)
June 3, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
June 3, 2024	Virtual Meeting - WNYLRC Personnel Committee
June 4, 2024	Media Event - Teen Space Opening with County Executive Mark Poloncarz
June 4, 2024	Tour of Central - Carima El-Behairy, Vice Chair of B&ECPL Board of Trustees, and Chris Spicer, Vice President of Planned Parenthood
June 4, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
June 5, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
June 6, 2024	Meeting - Cultural Leaders of Buffalo/Erie County Cultural Plan

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June 6, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
June 7, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik and Joy Testa Cinquino
June 7, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
June 7, 2024	Virtual Meeting - IF Manual
June 10, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Steering Committee - May 14th Community Collecting Initiative
June 11, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
June 11, 2024	Meeting - Vending at Central
June 11, 2024	Meeting - Scott McCausland and Jessica Rathjen (OCLC)
June 11, 2024	Virtual Meeting - PULISDO
June 11, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
June 12, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Managers/Directors
June 12, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
June 12, 2024	Virtual Meeting - NYLA Legislative Committee
June 13, 2024	Retreat - Rose Jade - May 14th Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition
June 13, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
June 13, 2024	Event - Valerie Thedford Retirement
June 13, 2024	Meeting - B&ECPL Executive Committee
June 14, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
June 14, 2024	Virtual Meeting - IF Manual
June 15, 2024	Event - Summer Music Series: Nusantara Arts
June 17, 2024	Meeting - Space Utilization Study Pre-Walkthrough Huddle
June 17, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
June 17, 2024	Meeting - Personnel Matter
June 18, 2024	Virtual Meeting - B&ECPL Green Roof Budgeting with Reed Braman
June 18, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
June 18, 2024	Meeting - ErieNet Board of Directors
June 20, 2024	Meeting - Space Utilization Study Walkthrough
June 20, 2024	Meeting - Jeannine Purtell
June 20, 2024	Virtual Meeting - PLS Directors
June 20, 2024	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees
June 21, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
June 21, 2024	Virtual Meeting - IF Manual
June 25, 2024	Meeting - Judy Fachko
June 25, 2024	Meeting - WNYLRC Board of Trustees

June 25, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
June 26, 2024	Meeting - Space Utilization Study Walkthrough Responses
June 26, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
June 27, 2024	Virtual Meeting - MetLib 2024 Conference Planning Committee
June 27, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden and Samantha Purpora
June 27, 2024	Phone Meeting - Lisa Stefanie (TripleTrack HR Partners)
June 27, 2024	Event - May 14th Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition at Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library
June 28, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino

**Appendices**  
**A. Monthly Statistics**

**System Programming Statistics:**

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
<b>Regular*</b>				
Adults	510	5846	3095	20491
Children 5 and under	1644	8049	3566	30174
Children 6-11	1598	9148	3069	18744
Intergenerational/Combined	4452	28783	9951	61350
Teens	397	2284	578	3790
<b>Regular Total</b>	<b>8601</b>	<b>54110</b>	<b>20259</b>	<b>134549</b>
<b>Regular Total</b>	<b>8601</b>	<b>54110</b>	<b>20259</b>	<b>134549</b>
<b>Virtual</b>				
<b>Live Virtual</b>				
Adults	7	98	52	1139
Children 5 and under	0	1	0	12
Children 6-11	0	3	0	96
Intergenerational/Combined	5	30	87	490
Teens	3	54	13	122
<b>Live Virtual Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>1859</b>
<b>Recorded Virtual</b>				
Adults	0	35	0	877
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	1	11	107	1543
Intergenerational/Combined	7	57	528	4633
Teens	0	0	0	0
<b>Recorded Virtual Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>7053</b>
<b>Virtual Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>8912</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8624</b>	<b>54399</b>	<b>21046</b>	<b>143461</b>

\*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, wifi usage, and program attendance and a summary of open hours can be found at [www.buffalolib.org/about-becpl/monthly-statistics](http://www.buffalolib.org/about-becpl/monthly-statistics).

Detailed reports on circulation, computer sessions, wifi usage, and library visits can be found at <https://www.buffalolib.org/monthly-statistics/2024-circulation-public-access-computer-wifi-and-library-visits-detail>.

**B. Contracting Library Activity Reports**

**Alden Ewell Free Library** – submitted by Rebecca Moe, Director

- Fitness-themed programs funded through the Ralph C. Wilson Foundation:
- Hip Hop Dance Class and Kung Fu Basics (with Arts for Learning WNY)
- Create and Play a Mini Golf Course (with Explore and More)
- Summer Fitness Fun (with a local fitness instructor)
- A visit from Nickel City Reptiles and Exotics
- Pajama Story Time with Barb's Book Buddies Campout
- Independent Summer Reading programs for preschool and school aged children
- Drop in activities (available this summer and all year long):
- Children's Room scavenger hunts
- Make and take craft table (recent crafts have included beaded snakes, shark painting, pom pom caterpillars, and tissue paper butterflies)
- Puzzle Table
- Take and Make crafts (Mothers' and Fathers' Day crafts were especially popular this year)

**Aurora Town Public Library** – submitted by Paula M.A. Klocek, Director

**June Displays** – We received positive responses, in person and on social media, for our displays, particularly for Price Month. However, we did have one display challenge from a concerned parent. Topics covered by June displays were Alzheimer's & Brain Health Awareness, National Immigration Heritage Month, National LGBTQ+ Pride Month (adults), Read with Pride (young adult), Read with Pride (juvenile), Flowers & Fate: Looking for a bit of darkness, drama, and danger?, and Patron Picks & Staff Selections.

**Teen Feedback Survey** – From Friday, June 14 through Saturday, August 10, teens 12-18, are invited to participate in a survey that helps the library to provide books and programs local teens would like to see at our location.

**Summer Reading Registration Celebration with Magic Show and Magician Workshop** – On Saturday, June 1, the children's department launched registration for summer programs with a magic show and ice cream giveaway. 28 children and adults attended the magic show. Parents and children expressed high satisfaction with the

large number and variety of activities on offer this summer. To increase community awareness and participation in the library's summer reading programs, flyers were distributed to area schools and the local Boys and Girls Club.

**Renaissance Faire** – In June, preparations began for our library's inaugural Renaissance Faire, scheduled for July 16 from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., with the assistance of teen volunteers and collaboration with the Aurora Players – a community theater, the Roycroft Campus, and a Buffalo luthier, Daniel Yost.

**Crazy Art Party** – On Saturday, June 5, five teens showed off their artistic skills with some fun abstract art challenges, music, snacks, and a final showing to celebrate all the crazy art pieces! Activities included glow-in-the-dark squeegee painting, cardboard sculptures, and button art.

**East Aurora Preschool Class Visit** – 20 children and adults from East Aurora Preschool came to the library for a story and to check out books.

**The Grosvenor Room Presents: Getting the Most out of Ancestry Library Edition** - On Thursday, June 6 at 11:00 a.m., 11 patrons learned about the library version of Ancestry.com that includes billions of key genealogy records for the United States and worldwide.

**Live Free Concert: Roycroft Chamber Music Festival Concert**

On Thursday, June 13 at 6:30 p.m., 28 children and adults attended a performance of the Roycroft Chamber Music Festival. Free cookies sponsored by Elm Street Bakery were distributed.

**Behind the Red-and-White Striped Awnings with Guest Speaker Don Vidler, President & Co-Owner of Vidler's 5 & 10** – On Thursday, June 27 at 6:30 pm. 33 adults listed to president and co-owner, Don Vidler, tell all about the famous 5 & 10 cent store that has been located on historic Main Street in East Aurora for over 90 years.

**Fitness Fridays: BAM – Balance & Mobility** - On Fridays, from June 7 through June 28 at 1:30 p.m., 43 adults, 55 and older, participated in balance and mobility exercises that prepare for everyday activities and reduce the risk for falls. This class included multiple muscle and joint movements that help with everyday things like lift, bend, twist, squat and haul.

**Read It and Keep It** - Children of all ages are invited to complete a summer reading log to earn a free paperback book. Read and redeem from July 8 - August 10.

**Adventure Academy: Summer Adventure Edition** - Children ages 6-11 can register for Adventure Academy: Summer Camp Edition, happening Mondays from 2:00-3:00 pm on July 8, July 15, July 22, July 27, and August 5. Each week will feature a different

read-aloud and group activity based on high-interest topics including technology, animal life, authors and illustrators, and fascinating places around the world.

**Mr. K's Mobile Dome Planetarium** – On Wednesday, July 10 at 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m., children, ages 6-12, are invited to step inside the dome to explore the wonders of the night sky.

**Fitness Fridays: Chair Yoga** - On Fridays, from July 12 through August 2 at 1:30 p.m., adults, 55+, are invited to experience the benefits of yoga. This class will include both seated postures and standing postures, using a chair for support. All fitness levels are welcome. Students should bring a yoga mat to place under the chair.

**Bob Colligan of Gentle Bee Honey – Honeybees: Products & Native Pollinators** - On Thursday, July 18 @ 6:30 p.m., Children, 8+ and adults are invited to hear Bob Colligan, owner of Gentle Bee Honey, discuss the benefits of raw honey compared to highly-processed commercial honeys. The conversation will also cover the health and medicinal benefits of beeswax, pollen and propolis. Examples of salves will be shown that can easily be replicated right in your own kitchen. Also, the subject of native pollinators and how native plants can help increase their declining populations will be discussed.

**Summer Adventure Book Bag** - On Saturday, July 27, 2024, teens are invited to fill out a survey for surprise library books, a tasty snack and a fun craft challenge. Book bag pickup will begin on Thursday, August 1, 2024.

**My Person & Me** - On Thursday, July 11 @ 10:30 AM or Thursday, August 1 @ 10:30 a.m., children ages birth-3 years old and their adult caregivers are invited to make music in a safe, inclusive, and fun environment, led by a board-certified music therapist from Bloom Creative Arts.

**Staycation: Teen Spa Night at the Library** – On Tuesday, August 6, teens are invited to join us at the Aurora Town Public Library for a spa night. Come and enjoy light snacks while we make our own spa treatments and read and relax.

**Teen Self-Defense** – On Wednesday, August 7 at 2:00 p.m., teens 12-18 are invited to learn essential self-defense skills from karate master, Sensei Smith of Sumisu Dojo.

Agenda Item G – Report of the Foundation. Trustee El-Behairy informed the Board that the Foundation has started a strategic planning process. The Foundation's focus is on mission, vision, and values. They are working with City of Light Consulting. Trustee El-Behairy thanked committee members, Assistant Deputy Directors Dorinda Darden and Joy Testa Cinquino, for their participation. The Foundation is working on next steps.

Agenda Item H – The Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT)/Contracting Library Trustee Report. Martha Buyer shared that the ACT Board has established their three meetings for October, January, and March. She also stated that she has been working with ADD Darden to establish programs and content for the meetings. ACT is on a hiatus for the summer.

Agenda Item H.1 – Contracting Library Liaison Report(s). Trustee Kelly stated that she went to the Elma Public Library. She stated that they have robust programming and include every demographic from babies to seniors. Trustee Kelly also asked if the Elma Public Library had any teen issues, and the staff stated that they do not. Discussion ensued regarding maintenance requests at Elma and their municipality. Trustee Kelly asked if Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich can send out liaison information and meeting dates. Trustee Bucki attended the Amherst Board of Trustees meeting held at the Audubon Branch Library. It was mentioned that the B&ECPL Board of Trustees will meet at the library in September. Trustee Bucki went on to say that they have had successful book sales and that their End of Summer Reading Picnic is on Thursday, August 15, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Audubon Branch Library. The Amherst Library Staff also wanted to convey that they appreciate their allocation from the Library System.

Agenda Item I – Public Comment. None.

Agenda Item J – Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item K – New Business.

Agenda Item K.2 – Policy Review.

Agenda Item K.2.a – Review Cooperation with Organizations and Agencies Policy. Director Spears summarized the policy as presented below with no changes recommended.

#### **POLICY FOR COOPERATION WITH ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES**

*This policy applies to those libraries within the City of Buffalo (Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries) and to all Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System functions.*

The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) welcomes opportunities for cooperative ventures with business, professional, civic, cultural, educational and governmental organizations and agencies, when those ventures support programs, services, resources or facility enhancements that benefit the public.

1. Subject to the approval of the B&ECPL Board of Trustees or its designee, the B&ECPL may partner with other organizations or agencies to promote reading, literacy and other library services. The organization or agency may be acknowledged on library



related materials, print and broadcast media or electronic postings in exchange for monetary support, materials support and public relations or other professional services.

2. With prior written approval of the B&ECPL, the B&ECPL name and/or logo and the name and/or logo of the organization or agency may be used on written or electronic materials generated for approved cooperative programs, and promotional materials, media releases or electronic postings for the purpose of advertising the cooperative program.
3. The B&ECPL's participation in any cooperative program with another organization or agency shall not constitute an endorsement by the B&ECPL on behalf of the organization or agency, or an endorsement of its goods, services, mission, or philosophy.
4. Subject to the terms of the Gift and Donor Recognition Policy, the B&ECPL may provide special acknowledgement of a substantial gift, bequest or sponsorship made in connection with a cooperative program.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval, Trustee Sasiadek seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item K.2.b – Review Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Harassment Policy. Director Spears summarized the policy as presented below with no changes recommended.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Harassment Policy**

*This policy is a system-wide policy for application to all libraries within the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System.*

*This policy is also part of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.*

#### **I. Statement of Policy**

The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) is committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination and unlawful harassment.

##### **A. Equal Employment Opportunity**

It is the policy of the B&ECPL to provide Equal Employment Opportunity in every aspect of employment to all applicants and employees without regard to gender, race, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, ancestry, religion, creed, age, disability, familial status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, genetic predisposition, arrest or conviction status,

domestic violence victim status, known relationship or association with member of a protected class, or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law.

The B&ECPL will take affirmative action as called for by all applicable federal, state and local laws and executive orders to ensure that underrepresented groups are introduced into the workforce and provided promotional opportunities. Employment decisions will be made without regard to unlawful considerations.

B. Unlawful Harassment

The B&ECPL will not tolerate unlawful harassment of its employees by any supervisor, coworker, volunteer, patron, or any other person with whom employees may come into contact during work. Similarly, the B&ECPL will not tolerate its employees engaging in unlawful harassment of co-workers or of non-employees with whom they come into contact during work, including but not limited to job applicants, vendors, contractors, patrons and volunteers.

1. The B&ECPL prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment. Generally, unlawful harassment includes any unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, written, physical or visual, that is based upon a person's gender, race, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, ancestry, religion, creed, age, disability, familial status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, genetic predisposition, arrest or conviction status, domestic violence victim status, or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law.

C. Examples of Harassment

1. Offensive comments such as racial or ethnic slurs, jokes, epithets and innuendo;
2. Verbal or physical kidding, teasing or practical jokes based on a person's gender, race, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, ancestry, religion, creed, age, disability, familial status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, genetic predisposition, arrest or conviction status, domestic violence victim status, or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law;
3. Harassing conduct based on gender, race, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, ancestry, religion, creed, age, disability, familial status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, genetic predisposition, arrest or conviction status, domestic violence victim status, or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law that unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or
4. Any action taken because of an individual's gender, race, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, ancestry, religion, creed, age, disability, familial

status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, genetic predisposition, arrest or conviction status, domestic violence victim status, or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law that alters the terms, conditions and/or privileges of employment.

D. Sexual Harassment – See Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy.

E. Applicability of Policy

1. The prohibition against discrimination and unlawful harassment applies to everyone: managers, supervisors, salaried and hourly employees, temporary employees, volunteers, contractors, trustees, public officials, appointed administrative officers, patrons or any other non-employee.
2. The B&ECPL will not allow unlawful harassment of any kind by anyone. This policy will be reviewed with all staff. It is the responsibility of each supervisor to ensure affirmative implementation of this policy to avoid discrimination, unlawful harassment or retaliation in employment and to report all violations they may become aware of. All employees are expected to be cognizant of this policy and cooperate with its implementation.
3. The B&ECPL has zero tolerance for the types of conduct described in this policy. The B&ECPL may treat instances of inappropriate conduct as a violation of this policy, regardless of the specific wording of this policy or technical definitions in the applicable laws; and the B&ECPL may deal with such conduct with disciplinary action or other forms of corrective action as deemed appropriate. Such conduct may also be treated as a violation of the applicable library's Rules of Conduct.
4. Any harassment based on a protected class violates this policy regardless of whether such harassment would be considered severe or pervasive under legal precedent applied to harassment claims.

## II. **Procedure**

A. Reporting Discrimination, Harassment or Other Violations of This Policy

All employees, volunteers, patrons and other persons utilizing or working in B&ECPL facilities and services are encouraged to promptly report any conduct that they are subject to, or that they witness, which may violate this policy. If the B&ECPL does not know about the discriminatory or harassing conduct, it cannot act.

Prior to making a report, individuals who believe they have been discriminated against or harassed may choose to firmly and promptly notify the offender that his/her behavior is unwelcome. However, the B&ECPL recognizes that such a confrontation may be uncomfortable or even impossible. Therefore, notifying the offender is not required.

To make a report, individuals should follow the steps set forth below:

1. Notify Appropriate Staff

- a. Employees, supervisors and managers must report any incident of discrimination, retaliation, sexual harassment or other harassment.
- b. Employees who believe they have been subject to or witnessed conduct which violates this policy should immediately report the incident to their direct supervisor.
- c. If the supervisor is the alleged offender or the employee is uncomfortable reporting the incident of discrimination, harassment or retaliation to the supervisor, the incident should be reported directly to the Department Head or contract Library Director.
- d. In the event that the circumstances of the situation make it inappropriate to report the incident to the individual's supervisor or to their Department Head or contract Library Director, or in the event the individual is not an employee, the incident should be reported directly to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer at [eeo@buffalolib.org](mailto:eeo@buffalolib.org).
- e. Supervisors and managers must immediately report any incident or report of discrimination, retaliation, sexual harassment or unlawful harassment even if they are not the target or victim of such harassment to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer.
- f. In the event that the complaint is against a contract Library Director, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer will notify the applicable Board President.

2. Promptly Report Complaint

- a. B&ECPL encourages the prompt reporting of complaints so that a rapid response and appropriate action may be taken.
- b. Failure to promptly report a complaint can hinder an effective investigation.
- c. A prompt report not only aids the complainant but also helps to maintain an environment free from discrimination for all.
- d. Reports of harassment may be made verbally or in writing. A form for submission of a written complaint is attached to this policy, and all individuals are encouraged to use this complaint form. Individuals who are reporting harassment on behalf of another person should use the complaint form and note that it is on another person's behalf.

3. Prepare Written Report of Misconduct

- a. An accurate record of objectionable behavior or misconduct is needed to resolve a formal complaint of discrimination, retaliation and/or harassment.
- b. Any and all verbal and written reports must be submitted to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer for investigation.

- c. Upon receipt of a complaint under this policy, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer will complete a formal written report of the complaint, if not already done by the complainant or their supervisor.
- d. Individuals who believe they have been or are currently being subjected to discrimination, retaliation or harassment should maintain a record of objectionable conduct in order to prepare effectively for the investigation.

B. Investigating the Complaint

1. Confidentiality

Any allegation of discrimination, retaliation or unlawful harassment received by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer will be investigated promptly. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances.

2. Investigation Process

- a. The B&ECPL will investigate thoroughly and quickly any incident of discrimination, retaliation or harassment and will make every effort to take the wishes of the complainant into consideration, keeping the complainant informed as to the status of the investigation.
- b. Depending on the circumstances of the complaint, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer will determine if the investigation will be completed internally or if it is more appropriate to forward the complaint to a third party for investigation.

C. Corrective Action

1. Employees

The B&ECPL will impose appropriate discipline or other corrective action, depending on the nature and seriousness of the offense, up to and including termination, against any manager, supervisor or employee found to have violated this policy, regardless of whether such conduct is considered under the law to constitute unlawful discrimination or harassment or retaliation.

2. Non-employees

When a patron, volunteer or other person not employed by the B&ECPL is found to have engaged in unlawful harassment, discrimination or retaliation against a B&ECPL employee, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer will advise the person of the B&ECPL's policy against such conduct, and will take such other actions as are appropriate under the circumstances, up to and including suspension of library privileges.

III. **Protection Against Retaliation**

The B&ECPL will not, in any way, retaliate against an individual who makes a complaint of discrimination or harassment or against any participant in the investigation; nor will it permit any manager, supervisor or employee to do so. Retaliation is defined as discriminating against an individual because they opposed discrimination and/or harassment; made a charge, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to prohibited conduct under this policy; or exercised any other legal right protected by federal, state or local law requiring equal opportunity.

Retaliation is a serious violation of this policy and should be reported immediately by following the reporting procedure set forth above. Depending on the nature and seriousness of the offense, the B&ECPL will impose appropriate discipline, up to and including termination, against any manager, supervisor or employee found to have retaliated against another individual for reporting discrimination and/or harassment.

A. Examples of Retaliation:

1. Treating someone who has reported an incident of discrimination and/or harassment or participated in an investigation differently from other individuals (e.g. cold shoulder).
2. Making negative comments or unreasonably disciplining, reducing responsibility, denying a transfer, giving unfavorable evaluations, or scrutinizing the work, etc. of an individual because that individual has reported an incident of discrimination and/or harassment or participated in an investigation.
3. Subjecting an individual to any adverse employment action for reporting an incident of discrimination and/or harassment or participating in an investigation.
4. Encouraging or ordering other staff to retaliate against an individual who has reported an incident of discrimination and/or harassment or participated in an investigation.
5. Engaging in other behavior that can reasonably be construed to be retaliatory.
6. Disclosing an employee's personnel files because they have opposed any practices forbidden under the New York State Human Rights Law ("NYS HRL"), filed a complaint, testified or assisted in any proceeding under NYS HRL, except where the disclosure is made in the course of commencing or responding to a complaint in any proceeding under the NYS HRL or any other civil or criminal action or other judicial or administrative proceeding as permitted by applicable law.

**IV. Legal Remedies**

Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against, harassed or retaliated against in violation of this policy should first file an internal complaint with the B&ECPL's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, as described above. If an individual is dissatisfied with the response, they may file a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) at (716)551-4441 and/or the New York State Division of Human Rights at (716)847-7632, which are authorized to investigate

the allegations in the complaint. Individuals also may contact a private attorney or union representative should they believe they have been subjected to any form of discrimination, harassment or retaliation.

Trustee Sasiadek motioned for approval, Trustee Bucki seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item K.2.c – Review Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy. Director Spears summarized the policy as presented below with no changes recommended.

### **Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy**

*This policy is a system-wide policy for application to all libraries within the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System.*

*This policy is also part of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.*

#### **I. Statement of Policy**

The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) is committed to maintaining an environment free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination and it is against the law. This policy is one component of B&ECPL's commitment to a discrimination-free environment. Everyone has a legal right to a workplace free from sexual harassment. All employees working in B&ECPL locations are required to work in a manner that prevents sexual harassment and are urged to report sexual harassment by filing a complaint internally with the B&ECPL. Complaints may also be filed with a government agency or in court under federal, state or local antidiscrimination laws.

#### **A. Applicability**

1. This policy applies to all employees, applicants for employment, interns, whether paid or unpaid, contractors and persons conducting business with B&ECPL, without regard to immigration status.
2. All employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees are expected to follow and uphold this policy. This policy must be provided to all employees and should be posted prominently in all work locations to the extent practicable and be provided to employees upon hiring.
3. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Any employee or individual covered by this policy who engages in sexual harassment or retaliation will be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action (e.g., counseling, suspension, termination).

4. Employees of every level who engage in sexual harassment, including managers and supervisors who engage in sexual harassment or who allow such behavior to continue, will be penalized for such misconduct.
5. Patrons and other non-employees who engage in sexual harassment will be addressed in accordance with each library's Rules of Conduct and applicable laws.
6. Sexual harassment may subject B&ECPL to liability for harm to targets of sexual harassment; and harassers may also be individually subject to liability.
7. Harmless intent is not a defense for harassment or discrimination.

B. What Is "Sexual Harassment"?

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity and the status of being transgender.

1. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that individual's sex when:
  - a. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, even if the reporting individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;
  - b. Such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
  - c. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual's employment.
2. A sexually harassing hostile work environment includes, but is not limited to, words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation or physical violence which are of a sexual nature, or which are directed at an individual because of that individual's sex. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, or cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, or interfere with the recipient's job performance.
3. Sexual harassment also occurs when a person in authority tries to trade job benefits for sexual favors. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment or any other terms, conditions or privileges of employment. This is also called "quid pro quo" harassment.



Anyone covered by this policy who feels harassed should report so that any violation of this policy can be corrected promptly. Any harassing conduct, even a single incident, can be addressed under this policy, regardless of whether such harassment would be considered severe or pervasive under precedent applied to harassment claims.

C. Examples of Sexual Harassment

The following describes some of the types of acts that may be unlawful sexual harassment and that are strictly prohibited:

1. Physical acts of a sexual nature, such as:
  - a. Touching, pinching, patting, kissing, hugging, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body or poking another employee's body;
  - b. Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.
2. Unwanted sexual advances or propositions, such as:
  - a. Requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the target's job performance evaluation, a promotion or other job benefits or detriments;
  - b. Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities.
3. Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks or jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience, which create a hostile work environment.
4. Sex stereotyping occurs when conduct or personality traits are considered inappropriate simply because they may not conform to other people's ideas or perceptions about how individuals of a particular sex should act or look.
5. Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as:
  - a. Displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic. This includes such sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing such displays while in the workplace.
6. Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender, such as:
  - a. Interfering with, destroying or damaging a person's workstation, tools or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual's ability to perform the job;

- b. Sabotaging an individual's work;
- c. Bullying, yelling, name-calling;
- d. Stereotyping or treating individuals differently because they identify as cisgender, transgender, or non-binary.

D. Who can be a target of sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex or gender. New York Law protects employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees, including independent contractors, and those employed by companies contracting to provide services in the workplace. Harassers can be a superior, a subordinate, a coworker or anyone in the workplace including an independent contractor, contract worker, vendor, client, customer or visitor.

E. Where can sexual harassment occur?

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace itself. It can occur while employees are traveling for business or at employer sponsored events or parties. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by employees can constitute unlawful workplace harassment, even if they occur away from the workplace premises, on personal devices or during non-work hours.

**II. Prohibition Against Retaliation**

No person covered by this Policy shall be subject to adverse action because the employee reports an incident of sexual harassment, provides information, or otherwise assists in any investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. B&ECPL will not tolerate such retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports or provides information about suspected sexual harassment. Any employee of B&ECPL who retaliates against anyone involved in a sexual harassment investigation will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. All employees, paid or unpaid interns, or non-employees working in the workplace who believe they have been subject to such retaliation should inform a supervisor, manager or the Human Resources Office. All employees, paid or unpaid interns, or non-employees who believe they have been a target of such retaliation may also seek relief in other available forums, as explained under Section 5 Legal Protections.

A. What is retaliation?

Unlawful retaliation can be any action that could discourage a worker from coming forward to make or support a sexual harassment claim. Adverse action need not be job-related or occur in the workplace to constitute unlawful retaliation (e.g., threats of physical violence outside of work hours). Retaliation may also include, but is not limited to, disclosing an employee's personnel files because they have opposed any practices forbidden under the New York State Human Rights Law ("NYS HRL"), filed a complaint, testified or assisted in any proceeding under NYS HRL, except where the

disclosure is made in the course of commencing or responding to a complaint in any proceeding under the NYS HRL or any other civil or criminal action or other judicial or administrative proceeding as permitted by applicable law.

Such retaliation is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. The NYS HRL protects any individual who has engaged in "protected activity." Protected activity occurs when a person has:

1. Made a complaint of sexual harassment, either internally or with any anti-discrimination agency;
2. Testified or assisted in a proceeding involving sexual harassment under the Human Rights Law or other anti-discrimination law;
3. Opposed sexual harassment by making a verbal or informal complaint to management, or by simply informing a supervisor or manager of harassment;
4. Reported that another employee has been sexually harassed; or
5. Encouraged a fellow employee to report harassment.

B. Good Faith Claims

Even if the alleged harassment does not turn out to rise to the level of a violation of law, the individual is protected from retaliation if the person had a good faith belief that the practices were unlawful; however, the retaliation provision is not intended to protect persons making intentionally false charges of harassment.

**III. Reporting Sexual Harassment**

A. Who Should Report

Preventing sexual harassment is everyone's responsibility. B&ECPL cannot prevent or remedy sexual harassment unless it knows about it. Any employee, paid or unpaid intern, or non-employee who has been subjected to behavior that may constitute sexual harassment is encouraged to report such behavior to a supervisor, manager or the Human Resources Office. Anyone who witnesses or becomes aware of potential instances of sexual harassment should report such behavior to a supervisor, manager or the Human Resources Office.

Reports of sexual harassment may be made verbally or in writing. A form for submission of a written complaint is attached to this policy, and all employees are encouraged to use this complaint form. Employees who are reporting sexual harassment on behalf of another person should use the complaint form and note that it is on another person's behalf.

B. Supervisory Responsibilities

All supervisors and managers who receive a complaint or information about suspected sexual harassment, observe what may be sexually harassing behavior or for any reason suspect that sexual harassment is occurring, are required to report such suspected sexual harassment to the Human Resources Office.

In addition to being subject to discipline if they engaged in sexually harassing conduct themselves, supervisors and managers will be subject to discipline for failing to report suspected sexual harassment or otherwise knowingly allowing sexual harassment to continue.

Supervisors and managers will also be subject to discipline for engaging in any retaliation.

#### **IV. Complaint and Investigation of Sexual Harassment**

An investigation of any complaint, information or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment will be prompt and thorough, commenced immediately and completed as soon as possible. The investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. All persons involved, including complainants, witnesses and alleged harassers will be accorded due process, as outlined below, to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation.

##### **A. Complaint**

All complaints or information about sexual harassment will be investigated, whether that information was reported in verbal or written form.

##### **B. Witnesses**

All employees, including managers and supervisors, are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of sexual harassment. B&ECPL will not tolerate retaliation against employees who file complaints, support another's complaint or participate in an investigation regarding a violation of this Policy.

##### **C. Investigation Process**

While the process may vary from case to case, the following steps of the investigation process will ensure a thorough and complete investigation:

1. Upon receipt of complaint, the Human Resources Office will conduct an immediate review of the allegations, and take any interim actions, as appropriate.
2. If complaint is verbal, encourage the individual to complete the "Complaint Form" in writing. If they refuse, the Human Resources Office will prepare a Complaint Form based on the verbal complaint.
3. If documents, emails or phone records are relevant to the investigation, take steps to obtain and preserve them.
4. Request and review all relevant documents, including all electronic communications.

5. Interview all parties involved, including any relevant witnesses.
6. Create a written documentation of the investigation (such as a letter, memo or email), which contains the following:
  - a. A list of all documents reviewed, along with a detailed summary of relevant documents;
  - b. A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
  - c. A timeline of events;
  - d. A summary of prior relevant incidents, reported or unreported; and
  - e. The basis for the decision and final resolution of the complaint, together with any corrective action(s).
7. Keep the written documentation and associated documents in a secure and confidential location.
8. Promptly notify the individual who reported and the individual(s) about whom the complaint was made of the final determination and implement any corrective actions identified in the written document.
9. Inform the individual who reported of the right to file a complaint or charge externally as outlined in the next section.

## **V. Legal Protections and External Remedies**

Sexual harassment is not only prohibited by B&ECPL but is also prohibited by state, federal, and, where applicable, local law.

Aside from the internal process at B&ECPL, employees may also choose to pursue legal remedies with the following governmental entities. While a private attorney is not required to file a complaint with a governmental agency, you may seek the legal advice of an attorney.

### **A. State Human Rights Law (HRL)**

The Human Rights Law (HRL), codified as N.Y. Executive Law, Art. 15, § 290, et seq., applies to all employers in New York State with regard to sexual harassment, and protects employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees, regardless of immigration status. A complaint alleging violation of the Human Rights Law may be filed either with the Division of Human Rights (DHR) or in New York State Supreme Court.

Effective August 12, 2020, complaints may be filed with the DHR any time **within 3 years** of the harassment. If an individual did not file at DHR, they can sue directly in state court under the HRL, **within three years** of the alleged sexual harassment. An individual may not file with DHR if they have already filed a HRL complaint in state court.

Complaining internally to B&ECPL does not extend your time to file with DHR or in court. The one year or three years is counted from date of the most recent incident of harassment.

You do not need an attorney to file a complaint with DHR, and there is no cost to file with DHR.

DHR will investigate your complaint and determine whether there is probable cause to believe that sexual harassment has occurred. Probable cause cases are forwarded to a public hearing before an administrative law judge. If sexual harassment is found after a hearing, DHR has the power to award relief, which varies but may include requiring your employer to take action to stop the harassment, or redress the damage caused, including paying of monetary damages, attorney's fees and civil fines.

DHR's main office contact information is: NYS Division of Human Rights, Main Place Tower, 350 Main Street 10<sup>th</sup> Fl. Suite 1000B, Buffalo, New York 14202. You may call (716) 847-7632 or visit: [www.dhr.ny.gov](http://www.dhr.ny.gov) or you can call DHR's toll-free sexual harassment hotline at 1-800-HARASS-3 Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Contact DHR at (888) 392-3644 or visit [dhr.ny.gov/complaint](http://dhr.ny.gov/complaint) for more information about filing a complaint. The website has a complaint form that can be downloaded, filled out, notarized and mailed to DHR. The website also contains contact information for DHR's regional offices across New York State.

B. Civil Rights Act of 1964

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces federal anti-discrimination laws, including Title VII of the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act (codified as 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.). An individual can file a complaint with the EEOC anytime within 300 days from the harassment. There is no cost to file a complaint with the EEOC. The EEOC will investigate the complaint, and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred, at which point the EEOC will issue a Right to Sue letter permitting the individual to file a complaint in federal court.

The EEOC does not hold hearings or award relief, but may take other action including pursuing cases in federal court on behalf of complaining parties. Federal courts may award remedies if discrimination is found to have occurred. In general, private employers must have at least 15 employees to come within the jurisdiction of the EEOC.

An employee alleging discrimination at work can file a “Charge of Discrimination.” The EEOC has district, area, and field offices where complaints can be filed. Contact the EEOC by calling 1-800-669-4000 (TTY: 1-800-669-6820), visiting their website at [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov) or via email at [info@eeoc.gov](mailto:info@eeoc.gov).

If an individual filed an administrative complaint with DHR, DHR will file the complaint with the EEOC to preserve the right to proceed in federal court.

C. Local Protections

Many localities enforce laws protecting individuals from sexual harassment and discrimination. An individual should contact the county, city or town in which they live to find out if such a law exists.

D. Contact the Local Police Department

If the harassment involves unwanted physical touching, coerced physical confinement or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the local police department.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval, Trustee El-Behairy seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item K.2.d – Walk-on Resolution 2024-18. Approval of the Annual Report of the Director – 2023. Director Spears explained that this is an annual requirement. He went on to commend the Development and Communications Department for putting the report together. This report includes a brief overview of the Library’s statistics. ADD Testa Cinquino stated that the online version lists all of the Library donors for 2023.

RESOLUTION 2024-18

WHEREAS, all public and association libraries in New York State must meet minimum standards of service according to Section 90.2 of the *Regulations of the Commissioner of Education*, and

WHEREAS, to meet these minimum standards, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library must provide a board-approved written annual report to the community on the library’s progress in meeting its mission, goals and objectives, as outlined in the library’s long-range plan of service, and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL *Annual Report of the Director – 2023* has been prepared to fulfil this standard, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, the B&ECPL Board of Trustees approves the B&ECPL *Annual Report of the Director– 2023*.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval, Trustee Kelly seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item L - Adjournment. There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee Craik with a second by Trustee Bartholomew, the meeting was adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Moore  
Secretary