

PROPOSED  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
January 16, 2025

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library was held on Thursday, January 16, 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\*  
Michael Amodeo, Esq.  
Nathaniel W. Barnes  
Prof. Christine P. Bartholomew, Esq.\*  
Kathleen Berens Bucki, MLS  
John D. Craik, Esq.  
Elaine Panty  
Christopher Sasiadek, Esq.

\*Trustees attended the meeting remotely due to extraordinary circumstances and were considered full participants.

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. A call of the roll was taken. A quorum was present.

Agenda Item B – Approval/Changes to the Agenda. None.

Agenda Item C – Minutes of the Meeting of December 19, 2024. Trustee Bucki remarked upon several grammatical errors and suggested corrections. Trustee Amodeo motioned for approval of the Minutes as amended, Trustee Craik seconded, and this was approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Nominating Committee. Trustee Panty summarized the report as presented below.

Agenda Item D.1 – Election of Officers and Executive Committee.

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library  
Board of Trustees – Nominating Committee  
January 6, 2025

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Present: Chair Elaine Panty and members Alan Bedenko, Christine Bartholomew, Lucy Candelario, and Christopher Sasiadek.

The meeting of the Nominating Committee began at 12:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

Following discussion, on a motion by Trustee Sasiadek seconded by Trustee Bartholomew the Committee unanimously approved the following trustees for nomination at the January 16, 2025 Board meeting:

**Chair:** Carima El-Behairy

**Vice Chair:** Christopher Sasiadek

**Secretary:** Christine Bartholomew

**Treasurer:** John Craik

**Executive Committee Members:** Lucy Candelario, Sharon Kelly, Elaine Panty

With no further business, the Nominating Committee adjourned at 12:35 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Bedenko and a second by Trustee Candelario.

There were no new nominations from the floor. On a motion by Trustee Panty, seconded by Trustee Amodeo, nominations were closed, and the slate was unanimously approved as presented.

Following that, Trustee Sasiadek suggested a round of applause for outgoing Chair Kimberly Johnson. Next, Director Spears presented former Chair Johnson with an Erie County Proclamation for her exemplary work as Chair of the Buffalo and Erie County Board of Trustees. Going forward, January 16, 2025 will be known as *Kimberly L. Johnson Day*.

Agenda Item E – Meeting Schedule for 2025. The 2025 meeting schedule was included in the board packet. The only change to the 2025 schedule is the Board meeting in June will be on Wednesday, June 18 at 4:00 p.m. due to the Juneteenth holiday.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Chair. Trustee K. Johnson invited the new Board Chair Carima El-Behairy to continue with the agenda. Chair El-Behairy provided flyers for the *Black Doll Exhibit* which opens February 1.

Agenda Item G – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item G.1 – Executive Committee. Trustee Sasiadek summarized the Executive Committee report as presented below. Trustee Sasiadek made a notable mention to Trustee Panty for her work in gathering the Nominating Committee and presenting the Board with an exceptional slate of nominees.

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Board of Trustees – Executive Committee  
January 9, 2025

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

\*Trustee Sasiadek attended the meeting remotely due to an extraordinary circumstance and was considered a full participant. ADD-Controller Patronik also attended the meeting virtually.

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 to the agenda. No changes were proposed at this time. Chair Johnson went through the proposed agenda. Discussion ensued about the process of the Nominating Committee and how the transfer of the Chair will happen. Further discussion ensued about terms. Assistant to the Director Goodrich stated that she will check on Trustee El-Beahiry's term. Later in the meeting, Trustee Panty shared the proposed slate for Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Executive Committee.

Next, Chair Johnson asked about the Board Meeting Schedule for 2025. The Board meetings will continue to be held on the third Thursday of every month at 4:00 p.m. with the exception of June 19. In observance of the Juneteenth holiday, the Library will be closed. It was agreed by the Executive Committee to hold the Board meeting on Wednesday, June 18, at 4:00 p.m. Following that, Trustee El-Beahiry proposed adding an agenda item under New Business. Trustee El-Beahiry stated that there needs to be two members of the Board on the Foundation Board, one appointed and one elected by the Foundation. She is recommending the nomination of Chair Johnson from the board and has recommended the election of Trustee Christine Bartholomew to the Foundation. It was agreed to add this under New Business. Discussion ensued about the resignations and appointments to the Foundation.

Next, Chair Johnson shared that she and Trustee El-Beahiry attended the swearing-in celebration for New York State Senator April McCants-Baskin. She stated that it was very nice and well represented by all demographics of Erie County. Discussion ensued about the celebration. Speakers included New York State Senator Sean Ryan, Erie County Democratic Committee Chairman Jeremy Zellner, and more.

Chair Johnson continued to move through the proposed agenda. She stated that Trustee Sasiadek will be reporting on the Executive Committee at the Board meeting.

Next, ADD-Controller went on to explain proposed Resolution 2025-1 - Amend 2024 Budget: New York State Legislature Grants-in-Aid. She stated that this resolution is recurring and that it ensures that the 2024 budget has accurate numbers. For the

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Monthly Financial Report ending in November 2024, the Library is still in good financial standing.

Following that, Trustee Panty briefly explained that the Board will review the policies and relevant, proposed resolutions. Discussion ensued regarding the policies and the Policy Review Schedule.

For the Report of the Director, Director Spears stated that he will be finalizing the attendees of Advocacy Day in Albany. This event will be held on Wednesday, February 5. Discussion ensued regarding Advocacy Day and people that volunteered to go.

Chair Johnson continued going through the proposed agenda. Chair Johnson asked for updated member library liaison lists. Discussion ensued regarding Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statements, Committee Volunteer Forms, and the Contact Information List.

There being no further business, Trustee Panty motioned to adjourn and Trustee Candelario seconded. The meeting ended at 4:24 p.m.

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

Agenda Item G.2.a – Resolution 2025-1 – Amend 2024 Budget: New York State Legislature Grants-in-Aid. Assistant Deputy Director – Controller Emily Patronik explained proposed Resolution 2025-1 as presented. She stated that the purpose of the proposed resolution is to update the 2024 budget with the below figures.

#### RESOLUTION 2025-1

WHEREAS, on December 27th, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library received \$140,000 in grants-in-aid approved by the New York State Legislature for designated libraries, and

WHEREAS, this special aid was sponsored by New York State Assembly Members William Conrad (District 140), Michael J. Norris (District 144), Angelo Morinello (District 145) and David DiPietro (District 147), and

WHEREAS, private and public grants are regularly sought to augment library equipment, materials, programs, and other needs, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL gratefully accepts the award of \$140,000 in State Aid, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL will encourage the receiving libraries to promptly utilize these funds for purposes consistent with the sponsor's designation, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL approves amending the 2024 Operating Budget, increasing revenue and expense as follows:

2024 Operating Budget		SAP Commitment Item #	
Revenue and Expense Increase		Revenue #408160	Expense # 516010
		State Aid - Special	Contractual Payments
District/Library	Cost Center	Amount	Amount
Dist. 140, Town of Tonawanda Public Library	4205540	\$30,000	\$30,000
Dist. 140, City of Tonawanda Public Library	4204080	\$15,000	\$15,000
Dist. 144, Clarence Public Library	4204025	\$20,000	\$20,000
Dist. 145, Grand Island Memorial Library	4204050	\$20,000	\$20,000
Dist. 147, Marilla Free Library	4204060	\$20,000	\$20,000
Dist. 147, Hulbert Library of the Town of Concord	4204035	\$20,000	\$20,000
<b>Total Contract Libraries:</b>		<b>\$125,000</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>
		Revenue #408160	Expense # 530000
		State Aid - Special	Other Expense
District/Library	Cost Center	Amount	Amount
Dist. 140, North Park Branch	4203370	\$15,000	\$15,000
<b>Total Buffalo/System:</b>		<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL authorizes the B&ECPL and the above contracting libraries to retain these funds until such time as they can be used for purposes consistent with any sponsor designation, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the above libraries are authorized to transfer these funds to other expense accounts within their budget based upon the final determined use, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the above cited contracting libraries.

Trustee Sasiadek asked if the libraries receiving extra aid can use it at their discretion. ADD-Controller Patronik said yes. Trustee Bedenko motioned for approval of Resolution 2025-1, Trustee Panty seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item G.2.b - Monthly Financial Report. ADD-Controller Patronik reviewed the Library financials ending on November 30, 2024. She stated that the Library's budget is in good standing. She reminded the Board that the Budget and Finance Committee will be meeting at 4:30 p.m. or immediately following the Board meeting.

Agenda Item G.3. – Policy Committee. Trustee Panty summarized the Policy Committee report as presented below. Trustee Panty also prefaced the below proposed resolutions with the fact that they have been thoroughly reviewed by the Policy Committee and Library staff.

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library  
Board of Trustees – Policy Committee  
December 19, 2024

Present: Chair Elaine Panty and members Christine Bartholomew, Alan Bedenko, and Sharon Kelly. Also present were Director John Spears, Deputy Director – Public Services Dorinda Darden, Assistant Deputy Director – Controller Emily Patronik, Assistant Deputy Director Joy Testa Cinquino, and Assistant to the Director Caitlin Goodrich.

The meeting of the Policy Committee began at 4:57 p.m. A quorum was present.

Chair Panty started with the Volunteer Program Policy. ADD Testa Cinquino stated that there are no major substantive changes. She went on to review the changes that are being proposed. A motion to approve was made by Trustee Bedenko, Trustee Panty seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

The Policy Committee moved on to the State of Emergency Policy. Director Spears explained that these proposed amendments will eliminate references to quarantine procedures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Trustee Kelly motioned to approve, Trustee Bedenko seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Next, the Investment Policy was reviewed. ADD Patronik explained the proposed changes. Discussion ensued regarding liquidating stocks and following the rules and regulations of New York State when doing so. Trustee Bedenko asked if the Library has a broker to handle stock donations. ADD Patronik stated that she has to conduct research on how this process will be handled. Director Spears shared that a brokerage would be considered a service and that the Library would not have to do a RFP if the service is less than \$20,000. Further discussion ensued regarding resources to assist with the liquidation of stocks and how other organizations handle it. Trustee Bedenko motioned to approve, Trustee Bartholomew seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Chair Panty moved on to the EEO and Anti-Harassment Policy. Director Spears explained the proposed amendments, which includes removing language regarding a B&ECPL Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer. Discussion ensued regarding this change. Director Spears shared that there is an outside group that investigates claims of harassment, discrimination, etc. Trustee Bedenko motioned to approve, Trustee Kelly seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Next, the Confidentiality of Library Records Policy was reviewed. Deputy Director Darden explained the changes that are being proposed. Trustee Kelly motioned to approve, Trustee Bedenko seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

The Policy Committee moved on to the Accessibility of Library Services Policy. Deputy Director Darden explained the proposed amendments. She informed the Policy Committee that former Deputy Director Jeannine Purtell worked on these amendments before she left the Library. Deputy Director Darden also explained that the Accessibility Services Librarian Jacob Rachwal assisted with updating the Accessibility of Library Services Policy. She went on to explain the changes being proposed. Trustee Bartholomew suggested a grammatical change. This was agreed upon by all. Trustee Bedenko motioned to approve as amended, Trustee Kelly seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

With no further business, on a motion by Trustee Kelly, seconded by Trustee Bartholomew the Policy Committee adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Agenda Item G.3.a – Resolution 2025-2 – Amend Accessibility of Library Services Policy. Deputy Director – Public Services Dorinda Darden explained the proposed resolution as presented below. Deputy Director – Public Services Darden stated that Library staff, including Information Technology Administrator Stephen Hovey and Accessibility Librarian Jacob Rachwal, worked together to develop a plan for implementing website accessibility. This work is represented in the updated policy.

#### RESOLUTION 2025-2

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) has a process to review and update standing policies to ensure that they remain timely and effective; and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee used this process to review and make recommendations which are reflected in the attached draft Accessibility of Library Services Policy which has been vetted by B&ECPL legal counsel; and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL recognizes that providing access to library services for all persons under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is an integral part of the B&ECPL's mission and the American Library Association's Bill of Rights; and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL is committed to ensuring accessibility of B&ECPL services, programs, and activities to B&ECPL patrons; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL amends the B&ECPL's Accessibility of Library Services Policy; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL authorizes policy distribution to all B&ECPL libraries, Contract Library Directors, Contract Library Trustees and authorizes public posting on the Library's website.

Trustee Bucki suggested editing the formatting on the policy regarding the ADA Coordinator's phone number beginning on a different line. It was agreed that this change will be made. Trustee Bedenko motioned for approval of Resolution 2025-2 as amended, Trustee K. Johnson seconded, and this was approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item G.3.b – Resolution 2025-3 – Amend Confidentiality of Library Records Policy. Deputy Director – Public Services Darden explained the proposed resolution as presented below. She explained that there will be one change to the policy, which will include adding the word “for” and removing “or” on page one, number two.

#### RESOLUTION 2025-3

WHEREAS, the Confidentiality of Library Records Policy was last amended in 2019; and

WHEREAS, the policy remains largely unchanged with the changes recommended for clarity and grammar; and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee recommends these revisions to update the wording for clarity; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library adopt the proposed revisions of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Confidentiality of Library Records Policy to supersede and replace the prevailing policy, last amended in 2019.

Trustee Bedenko motioned for approval of Resolution 2025-3 as amended, Trustee Sasiadek seconded, and this was approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item G.3.c – Resolution 2025-4 – Amend EEO and Anti-Harassment Policy. Director Spears explained the proposed resolution as presented below. Director Spears stated that previously in the policy there was mention of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer. The above stated officer would act as an alternative to going to the Human Resources Department. No staff members have utilized the option, and the Library now utilizes an outside firm that handles investigations. This is reflected in the changes proposed to the policy and presented to the Board. Director Spears also noted that staff have the option of coming to him if there is an allegation against Human Resources.



RESOLUTION 2025-4

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's (B&ECPL) Board of Trustees adopted an Anti-Harassment Policy on June 21, 2007. The policy was last amended by the B&ECPL Board of Trustees on January 19, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL adopted the B&ECPL Employee Handbook and Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual on December 18, 2014 which included the B&ECPL's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the importance of a diverse workforce and an organizational structure which supports the B&ECPL's service priorities, additional language and procedure was added to the EEO Policy to strengthen and clarify the B&ECPL's position on equal employment opportunity and discrimination in the workplace; and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee met on December 19, 2024 and recommends the attached proposed amended and consolidated Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Harassment Policy for approval by the full Board; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that copies of the approved Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Harassment Policy be included in future Contracting Library's annual agreements; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL authorizes this policy be transmitted to all B&ECPL libraries, Contract Library Directors, Contract Library Trustees and authorizes public posting on the Library's website.

Trustee Bucki noticed a grammatical error, it was agreed that it will be changed. Trustee Sasiadek motioned for approval of Resolution 2025-4 as amended, Trustee Panty seconded, and this was approved unanimously as amended.

Agenda Item G.3.d – Resolution 2025-5 – Amend Investment Policy. ADD-Controller Patronik explained the proposed resolution as presented below. She stated that this will give the Library the opportunity to accept stock donations. ADD-Controller Patronik will work with the appropriate parties to liquidate the assets immediately and transfer the proceeds to the System's Trust Account. The B&ECPL will provide the donor a written acknowledgement that complies with IRS requirements, if applicable. She noted that this process is still ongoing. Discussion ensued regarding donations and stocks. Further discussion ensued regarding wording in the policy.

RESOLUTION 2025-5

WHEREAS, as part of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's (B&ECPL) adopted Organizational Competencies, the Library has a process to review standing policies to ensure that they remain timely and effective; and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee used this process to review and make recommendations which are reflected in the attached draft of an Investment Policy which has been vetted by B&ECPL legal counsel; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library amends the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's Investment Policy; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that a copy of the approved Investment Policy be posted on the Library's website.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval of Resolution 2025-5, Trustee Amodeo seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item G.3.e – Resolution 2025-6 – Amend State of Emergency Policy. Director Spears explained the proposed resolution as presented below. Director Spears shared that the State of Emergency policy was also known as the Quarantine Leave policy. Since the New York State policy pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic has been rescinded by Governor Kathy Hochul, the Library would like to return to its original State of Emergency and Disaster Policy with a few other minor changes.

#### RESOLUTION 2025-6

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees adopted a State of Emergency/Quarantine Leave Policy on March 26, 2020, and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library has a process for review of standing policies to ensure that they remain timely and effective, and

WHEREAS, as part of this review, System Administration has recommended changes which include language updates for clarity and wording changes to reflect disasters generally rather than quarantine related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and

WHEREAS, System Administration has also recommended changing the name of the policy to "State of Emergency/Disaster Leave Policy" in order to reflect disasters generally rather than quarantine related to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the attached draft amended State of Emergency/Disaster Leave Policy has been vetted by B&ECPL legal counsel, and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee has reviewed and recommends the attached proposed amended State of Emergency/Disaster Leave Policy for approval by the full Board, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL adopts the proposed revisions to the B&ECPL's State of Emergency/Disaster Leave Policy to supersede and replace the prevailing policy adopted March 26, 2020, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the approved amended State of Emergency/Disaster Leave Policy replace the existing policy in the B&ECPL Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual as Chapter 7, Section 17, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL authorizes this policy be transmitted to all B&ECPL libraries, Contract Library Directors, and Contract Library Trustees and authorizes public posting on the Library's website.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval of Resolution 2025-6, Trustee K. Johnson seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item G.3.f – Resolution 2025-7 – Amend Volunteer Program Policy. Assistant Deputy Director Joy Testa Cinquino explained the proposed resolution as presented below. ADD Testa Cinquino shared that there will be one addition to the policy which states that submitting an application does not guarantee acceptance into the volunteer program.

#### RESOLUTION 2025-7

WHEREAS, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) has a structure for process and review of standing policies to ensure that they remain timely and effective; and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee used this process to review and make recommendations which are reflected in the attached draft amended Volunteer Program Policy which has been vetted by B&ECPL legal counsel; and

WHEREAS, input of proposed changes to the policy were provided by Library Administration; and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee recommends the attached proposed amended Volunteer Program Policy for approval by the full Board; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL adopts the proposed revisions to the B&ECPL's Volunteer Program Policy to supersede and replace the prevailing policy last amended November 21, 2019; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of the approved Volunteer Program Policy be transmitted to all B&ECPL Contract Libraries and Contract Library Boards of Trustees; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that a copy of the approved Volunteer Program Policy be distributed to all B&ECPL libraries as well as be posted on the B&ECPL's website.

Trustee Panty motioned for approval of Resolution 2025-7, Trustee K. Johnson seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Trustee Barnes arrived at 4:31 p.m. due to extreme weather.

Agenda Item H – Report of the Director. Director Spears began his report by informing the Board that Library Advocacy Day is on Wednesday, February 5, and the attendees have been finalized. Attendees include three members of the Board, three members of administration, two from the member libraries, and three staff members representing Central and system-wide services. Discussion ensued about Advocacy Day and the Governor releasing the Executive Budget. Further discussion ensued regarding participation at Advocacy Day.

Next, Director Spears shared the IFLA Trend report with the Board. Board members expressed interest in receiving the report to read in its entirety. Director Spears stated that he will share it with them. Discussion ensued about the IFLA Trend report, the impact of AI, the loneliness epidemic, and the need for connection.

Following that, Director Spears shared that the Library will be undertaking a rebranding effort. The Board should expect a formal presentation by the Development and Communications Department. Director Spears credited Marketing Manager Sean Piazza and Graphics Department Manager Dawn Stanton with leading this initiative, as well as the Development and Communications Department as a whole.

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

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

#### **1. Public Services**

##### **Central Library:**

Children's Librarian **Erin Burke** organized a *Noon Year's Eve* program with the help of the department. The room was decorated using special glow-in-the-dark markers, tape, and décor to transform it into a black light dance party venue. The program also featured crafts and a countdown at noon to 2025. The program had 52 attendees, many coming to the library specifically to attend this event.

Children's Librarian **Jennifer Lelinski** organized a holiday present giveaway in the Children's Room using donated and unused toys from the department. Children were allowed to pick out one present per visit, and a total of 60 toys and books found new homes with the Library's patrons.

**Buffalo Branches:**

**East Clinton Programming Highlights:**

- Senior Pages **Heather Bak** and **Laura Wood** created four Take and Make crafts kits for the month of December: Pull Sharks, Color-in Paddleball, Sledding Snowmen, and Colorable Winter Mugs. There were a total of 96 kits handed out to patrons.
- Branch Manager **Paul Guminski** hosted a Graham Cracker House craft, with 36 patrons constructing confectionaries. This was a fun, intergenerational program that allowed people to work together to let their creativity shine.
- Library Clerk **Mariam Yamin** created a *Patrons Favorite Reads* mini display, which involved creating tiny books based on patron suggestions, complete with a mini bookshelf.
- **Paul Guminski** held five one-on-one technology training classes throughout the month. Patrons had the opportunity to learn about and expand their knowledge of Microsoft Word, Hoopla, and searching the Internet.
- East Clinton had 35 kids participate in their monthly scavenger hunt created by staff. December's theme was winter movie characters.

**Merriweather Programming Highlights:**

- Kente Claus hosted programs at the library on December 1 and December 14.



- Children's Librarian **Heather Bermingham** hosted a Graham Cracker House building program. It was well-received by patrons, with 17 children and their families in attendance.



- The library partnered with Zawadi Books to host an Introduction to Kwanzaa program for all ages.
- **Heather Bermingham** provided story time programs to the neighboring Lighthouse UPK each Friday.
- The Western New York Law Center continued to offer the CLARO program on a weekly basis, giving patrons an opportunity to talk to lawyers free-of-charge.
- Back by popular demand, the library converted the children's area into a life-sized Candy Land game with added winter themed elements such as a giant gingerbread house and other holiday items.
- Local artist Ari Moore installed a painting exhibit consisting of seven panels depicting the seven principles of Kwanzaa in the adult reading room area of the branch.



#### **System Services:**

**Health and Wellness** – System Adult Outreach Services Librarian **Jacob Rachwal** coordinated the *Wellness @ Central* tabling event held at the Central Library on December 19. There were 20 organizations who provided health and wellness resources to patrons that included information on employment, housing, literacy, food assistance, mental health services, and other programs.

**Reading Club** – Special Collections Librarian **Elizabeth (Libby) Stengel** hosted the monthly meeting of the *Paging Through History: The Grosvenor Room Quiet Reading Club* on December 26.

**Winter Solstice** - Genealogy Specialist **Rhonda Hoffman** collaborated with Central Adult Services Librarian Trainee **Christina Lee** for a series of *Winter Solstice* programs with the theme *Celebrate Winter Solstice with the Discovery of Witches*. **Rhonda** presented the *Winter Solstice Craft: Manifest Your Intentions and Connect with Your Ancestors with Sigils* held virtually on December 4. **Christina** provided the *Winter Solstice Craft: Create Sigil Candles* program on December 4 at the Central Library. Debra Dudek, Head of Adult and Teen Services at the Fountaindale Public Library in Bolingbrook, Illinois,

presented *Discovering Witches: The Real Records and Manuscripts Seen in Movies, Books, and TV Shows* virtually on December 4. She also presented the *Maleficarum and Misfortune – Records and Resources for Tracing Accused Witches* as part of this series, held virtually and viewed in the Ring of Knowledge at the Central Library on December 11. Each program participant received an entry to win a blank antiqued journal. Lancaster resident Nancy Stonebreaker won the drawing. In addition, **Christina** created a witchcraft book display, and Rare Book Curator **Heather Gring** developed a display of historic books about the witchcraft trials to coincide with the programs.

IMAGINE BUFFALO, the virtual lecture series program, celebrated its 15 year anniversary on December 10 with a salute to the co-founder and host, and Dennis Galucki. Library Director **John Spears** hosted the special program by interviewing Mr. Galucki and presenting a proclamation from the County Executive and trophy from the Library. The weekly program is managed by the Development & Communication's Department.

#### **Tours and Visits:**

**Heather Gring**, Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio**, Special Collections Librarians **Adam Rubin**, and **Libby Stengel** worked with Central Children's Room Manager **Dan Lewandowski** to develop a research day at the Central Library for sixth grade students from the Elmwood Village Charter School. Over two days, students came to research the Blizzard of '77, learning about primary sources from **Dan**, viewing microfilm of local papers from 1977, and even listening to vinyl records from the era. In preparation, the teacher checked out the Special Collections Department's new Oral History kit to record elders talking about living through the Blizzard of '77.

#### **Outreach:**

Mobile Services Manager **Andrew Maines** and Mobile Services Librarian Trainee **Olivia Adams** attended the Say Yes Buffalo Saturday Academy at Buffalo Public School #97 Harvey Austin School on December 8. Say Yes Buffalo Saturday Academies are free, community-focused events that provide a safe space for educational, recreational, cultural, social, and wellness programs for the whole family. **Olivia** and **Andrew** spoke with many families about library services, provided library cards, and helped children with winter-themed crafts.

**Andrew Maines** and Mobile Services Senior Page **Loch McLaughlin** attended Buffalo Public School #3 D'Youville Porter Campus School's *Family Math & ELA Night* on December 10. Families visited the Library on Wheels Bookmobile, learning about library programs and services, and signing up for library cards. System Adult Outreach Services Manager **Carol Kowalik-Happy** provided a presentation focused on library resources tailored to support entrepreneurs held at the Canisius Women's Business Center on December 4. **Carol** also presented at SCORE's *Starting and Managing Your Own Business* event held at Daemen University on December 14.

Central Children’s Room Librarian **Jennifer Lelinski** and **Jacob Rachwal** participated in two Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra’s *Jingle Bell Jam* events on December 15. They distributed over 350 crafts and promoted library programs and services to nearly 700 attendees. In addition, events at various Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries were highlighted by a QR code on the back of coloring bookmarks.

TechKnow Lab Librarian **Jacqueline (Jackie) Hovey** attended an Allentown Connections meeting at the PAUSA art house in Buffalo on December 17. She distributed library materials and informed local businesses and residents about library services, in particular resources for the unhoused.

TechKnow Lab Librarian **Brendan Chella** provided technology training this month to several local senior and community centers on the topics of *Streaming Media, Internet Privacy and Safety, and Instacart*.

## 2. Collection Development

### Physical Collections:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
Juvenile Print	1,993	29,852	208	2,895	511,045
Young Adult Print	404	6,198	75	1,026	69,613
Adult Print	2,687	43,772	617	8,267	1,768,587
Media	1,659	26,162	101	2,623	517,689
Other*	1,565	20,624	2	292	172,324
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8,308</b>	<b>126,608</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>15,103</b>	<b>3,039,258</b>

\*Includes magazines, generic copies, and other.

### Electronic Collections\*:

	Item Adds		Title Adds		Collection Size
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	
eBooks	5,038	49,844	1,408	16,057	126,163
eAudiobooks	10,187	100,178	507	4,732	65,316
Digital Magazines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5,729
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>15,225</b>	<b>150,022</b>	<b>1,915</b>	<b>20,789</b>	<b>197,208</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>23,533</b>	<b>276,630</b>	<b>2,918</b>	<b>35,892</b>	<b>3,236,466</b>

**Digital Collections** – The *Diary of Mary F. Hamilton*, written by the author when she lived in Buffalo in the 1840s, and the *Directory of The Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian*



*Church* for the year 1900 were added to the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library’s Digital Collections. With these additions, 144 items have been added to the Digital Collections in 2024. The Digital Collections, managed by Special Collections Librarian **Adam Rubin**, garnered 3,372,920 page views in 2024 across three platforms: the Library’s in-house collection powered by Omeka (3,078,274); New York State Historic Newspapers (35,654); and New York Heritage (258,992). This does not include the statistics for New York Heritage for the month of December, as those statistics are not yet available.

**Rare Books and Special Collections - Heather Gring** facilitated the first archival donation of local musician and artist Mark Freeland. Freeland’s widow saw Mark’s art books included in the Rare Books 101 exhibition, which helped establish the relationship. **Libby Stengel** accepted numerous print donations, including *Emerald Threads*, a history of Irish American populations in Western New York by local author Timothy Bohen, *Mutata Re*, a student poetry collection published by Erie Community College, Yearbooks from Angola High School and South Park High School, and numerous playbills from Shea’s Performance Arts Center for productions held from 1984 to 1987.

### 3. Fundraising

**Fundraising:**

Campaign Name	Campaign Dates	Raised to Date
Annual Appeal Total	January 1 - December 31, 2024	\$437,566.22
Bucks for Books		\$65,136.00
Year End Appeal		\$100,873.01

**Highlights:**

*2024 Yearend Appeal* -1,153 donations were received in November and December 2024, raising \$100,873.01.

*Bucks for Books* - 504 donations were received in 2024, raising \$65,136.

*Giving Tuesday* - 96 donors supported the Library, raising \$5,065.00.

*Online Store* - 785 items were sold, with the Library receiving \$10,523.41.

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation Grant, which provided sports kits to children in select libraries, ended as of December 31. The program, which began in July 2019, circulated over 2,140 youth sports kits, including snow shoe, basketball, lacrosse, soccer, and badminton. The *Play Down Your Fines* portion removed fines, fees, and charges from approximately 1,000 children’s cards, giving them clean accounts and reinstating borrowing privileges from libraries.

#### 4. Funding/Facilities

##### **Funding:**

**On December 5, 2024 the Erie County 2025 Budget was adopted.** There is a county funding increase of \$1,271,947 (4.3%) for libraries. The additional funding will help offset inflation-related impacts on library operating costs, including contractually-obligated labor costs and the escalating cost of supplies in this challenging fiscal environment.

County funding of \$30,947,322, combined with New York State operating aid funding of \$2,460,929, use of \$839,804 in Library fund balance, and \$421,373 in other library revenue, brings the Library's 2025 Operating Budget to \$34,669,428; a 4.7% increase over the 2024 County Adopted Budget. In addition to the Operating Budget, \$601,418 in estimated state aid is included in the Library Grants Budget.

Erie County's 2025 Proposed Capital Budget supports improvements to the county-owned downtown Central Library and to system-related improvements, specifically:

- \$3,500,000 in bond funds for "Various Improvements & Upgrades"
- \$1,000,000 in bond funds for Central Building Envelope Improvements

##### **Facilities:**

On December 5, Library staff met with City of Buffalo DPW staff, Zaxis Architectural staff, and Goodwin Electric to restart the sound system and electrical component replacement project at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library auditorium. This project had been delayed due to supply chain issues surrounding the new equipment to be installed. The project is scheduled to begin in late January, with a duration of two to three weeks and be completed in mid-February.

On December 6, a progress meeting was held with Resetarits Construction Corp., Trautman Associates, Erie County DPW staff, and Library staff to review the Emergency Egress Project at the Central Library. Discussion topics included the scheduling of the installation of interior window security film, coordination of the delivery and storage of doors to be replaced, hazardous material removal, review of locations for floor coring with Goodwin Electric, and review of the routing of the electric for the addition of hold opens for several doors. The next meeting was scheduled for January 3, 2025.

On December 13, Library Finance and Facility staff met with the Concord Public Library to review its NYS Library Construction Aid Program application. The project included installation of LED lighting, parking lot repavement, and construction of an outdoor program/reading space. Discussion topics included review of the final budget, information on changes of scope to a project, and timeline of closing a project.

## 5. Staff Development

**New “Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace” Program Piloted by Technical Services Team** - Supporting emotional intelligence development in the workplace has become a common goal of many employers in today's professional landscape. In November, B&ECPL Staff Development launched a new program for the Technical Services Team to guide and encourage emotional intelligence development as it relates to the workplace and creating a positive team dynamic. To kick things off, the team watched a LibraryWorks.com webinar together on November 21, followed by an in-person hands-on work session in December, with materials created custom for the team. The department will continue to work in collaboration with B&ECPL Staff Development over the course of the New Year to regularly engage with emotional intelligence resources to enhance their ongoing personal and collective growth.

**“Words in the Workplace” Communication Wellness Series Concludes for All Staff** - In October, we launched an online training series for all employees that was facilitated by EviCore, Erie County's Employee Assistance Program partners. This six-part course included a variety of topics that aimed to help everyone in every role across the system improve their communication skills. Two sessions were held in December: *Conflict Management* and *Mindfulness in the Workplace*. Recordings of all six webinars in the series are now posted to the Staff Intranet for on-demand use. Anyone who attended all six dates (live or recorded) and completed a short reflection afterwards was entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of two \$50 gift cards from Target! Prizes are courtesy of our friends at EviCore.

**Webinars** - Staff attended a range of webinars and other virtual learning programs in December, with several employees attending these sessions that were promoted on the Staff Training Calendar: *Ask the Lawyer - Accommodations in the Library: Employee Edition* (from Empire State Library Network), *Dyslexia-Friendly Libraries* (from South Central Regional Library Council), and *The Marketing Funnel* (from Niche Academy).

## 6. Communications

### Media:

Type of Communication	Topic	Air Date/Publish Date
Media Alert & Earned Media	Isaías González-Soto Branch Library reopens	December 9, 2024, <a href="#">WIVB</a> TV story <a href="#">linked here</a> .
Media Alert	15th Anniversary of the IMAGINE Buffalo program honoring co-founder and host Dennis Galucki	December 10, 2024
Press Release & Earned Media	Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Unveils 2024 Circulation Highlights	December 20, 2024 Buffalo Rising – <a href="#">Unshelved Link</a> .

Every year, the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library shares its 2024 circulation highlights -- celebrating the titles our community enjoyed over the year. In a new approach, the Marketing and Graphics departments teamed on a designed report- *Unshelved* - in the style of Spotify's *Wrapped*. View it here: <https://tinyurl.com/2s3h3hbm>.

**Social Media:**

	Staff Activity		Public Activity		Followers	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month (New)	Total
<b>Facebook</b>	87	1,313	2,073	35,889	59	14,034
<b>Flickr</b>	55	243	2,789	42,435	-	59
<b>Google Ads</b> <sup>1</sup>	N/A	N/A	2,328	31,676	N/A	N/A
<b>Instagram</b>	26	255	4,333	49,838	138	7,065
<b>Pinterest</b>	8	368	96	1,067	-	2,051
<b>X(formerly Twitter)</b> <sup>2</sup>	42	727	77	2,785	22	10,662
<b>Bluesky</b> <sup>3</sup>	14	49	35	246	165	549
<b>YouTube</b>	5	99	2,596	29,486	28	735
<b>TikTok</b>	-	5	276	8,481	-4	1,003
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>3,059</b>	<b>14,603</b>	<b>201,903</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>36,158</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.

<sup>3</sup> BlueSky - our account was started in November 2024.

**7. Partnerships**

**Buffalo African American Museum - Carol Kowalik-Happy** and Community Engagement Manager **Anne Conable** attended the *Together As One* meeting held at the Buffalo History Museum on December 30. *Together As One* was started by the Buffalo African American Museum in an effort to centralize information about Black History Month programs and events being offered by Western New York cultural organizations. Plans for the upcoming Black History Month bus tours have been finalized. **Carol** will be a tour guide on Saturday, February 8, 2025, when the bus tour visits the Black Achievers Museum and the Central Library. At the Central Library, participants will be able to view the different displays about Black History in the city as well as the Black Doll exhibit. The Special Collections staff will present a compilation from *The Buffalo History Channel* by Doug Ruffin.

**Buffalo Center for Health Equity** - Special Collections Manager **Susan Buttaccio** and **Jacob Rachwal** met with Ebony White, a consultant for the Buffalo Center for Health Equity, on December 9. They discussed the grant that the Buffalo Center for Health

Equity received from the American Heart Association to place blood pressure kiosks throughout the community. Plans are underway for the Central Library to serve as one of the sites for the blood pressure kiosk, which includes a blood pressure machine and literature.

**Buffalo History Channel - Susan Buttaccio** and **Heather Gring** met with Doug Ruffin to plan for a year of programs featuring content from Doug's *Buffalo History Channel* on YouTube. Doug plans to assemble four videos to show around the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System in 2025.

**Coordinated Outreach Advisory Committee - Andrew Maines** facilitated the biannual meeting of the *Coordinated Outreach Advisory Committee* held virtually on December 13. **Carol Kowalik-Happy** and **Jacob Rachwal** attended the meeting, as well as Frank Cammarata, Executive Director of the Erie County Office for People with Disabilities, and Katie Earl, Erie County Project Administrator.

**Explore & More - The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Children's Museum** - System Youth Outreach Services Manager **Chelsey Lonberger** met virtually on December 12 with Will Kawalec, Cultural & Community Manager at Explore & More. They discussed tabling opportunities for the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library and an idea of creating book lists for Explore & More to distribute to families. The books would express different themes and encourage children to visit their local library.

**Lupus Foundation of America - Jacob Rachwal** coordinated with Eric D. Johnson, Public Health Consultant for the Lupus Foundation of America, to help establish a *Lupus Awareness* display at the Central Library through the end of January 2025. The Aurora Town Public Library, Angola Public Library, Hamburg Public Library, and Anna Reinstein Memorial Library will also host the *Lupus Awareness* display in the coming months.

**University at Buffalo - Chelsey Lonberger** presented on *Story Times* to students from the University at Buffalo on December 10. This is a part of a partnership with UB to have students provide a *Bilingual Story time* for children at three Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries.

**University at Buffalo Department of Romance Languages and Literatures - Susan Buttaccio** and **Heather Gring** are collaborating with professors from the University at Buffalo Department of Romance Languages and Literatures to set up a series of lectures at the Central Library on Friday afternoons starting in January 2025. The lectures will focus on books in the Rare Book collection.

**Veterans one-stop Center - Brendan Chella** established a partnership with the local Veterans One-stop Center to provide technology classes. The first class begins at the end of January 2025.

**Youth Services Consultants in New York's Public Library Systems - Chelsey Lonberger** attended Youth Services Consultants in New York's Public Library Systems

meeting held virtually on December 11. The major topic was that the New York State Library has designed a Moodle course on Youth Librarianship. This will be live in the near future and able to be utilized by Buffalo & Erie County Public Library staff members.

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

- **Just for Kids**
- **Live Well Erie Working Groups**
- **Outreach Coordinators in New York's Public Library Systems**
- **Uncrowned Queens Institute**
- **Western New York Library Resources Council (WNYLRC) Committees**
- **Erie County Department of Social Services - Youth Employment Program (YEP)**

## 8. Planning for the Future

**Susan Buttaccio** and **Rhonda Hoffman** have been working with Deputy Director **Dorinda Darden** to develop a partnership with the New York Genealogy and Biographical Society (NYG&B) to join their *Digitize New York* initiative. NYG&B volunteers will gather and scan items from around the Western New York area to preserve historical records for future generations. If agreed to, the Grosvenor Room will serve as a site to set up operations.

The Isaías Gonzales-Soto library has three public art projects in the works, each in different phases, with two in partnership with Assemblymember Jonathan Rivera's office and one that involves both the Assemblymember's office and the Burchfield Penny Art Gallery.

- The proposal of artist Tiffany Gaines was chosen to create a mural for a public art installation at the Isaías Gonzales-Soto library. This project was initiated by Assemblymember Jonathan Rivera's Office through Arts Services, Inc. The panel which chose the winning proposal from fifteen submissions was comprised of staff from both John Rivera's office and the library, as well as Susan Gonzales-Colón, daughter of Isaías Gonzales-Soto. The mural will be installed on the east wall, south soffit, and west wall on the first floor.
- As part of the Phase II construction for the of Isaías Gonzales-Soto library, Executive Director of the Buffalo Arts Commission Emerson Barr visited the library. He assessed the space on the lower level of the library designated for a future public art installation. His office will put out a call for proposals.
- Burchfield Penney Curator Tiffany Gaines visited the branch with Assemblymember Jonathan Rivera to discuss the location of a temporary exhibit that will be on loan from the Burchfield Penney Art Gallery. This exhibit will contain photographs of people who have lived on the Lower West Side over an expanse of time. The

Assemblymember hopes the photographs can be exhibited during the grand re-opening to coincide with the unveiling of the finished mural on the first floor.

The 45<sup>th</sup> Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration takes place at the Frank E. Meriwether, Jr. Branch Library on Thursday, January 16, at 6 p.m. All are invited to what is expected to be an uplifting program featuring local artists performing their music, poetry, dance, and more.

**9. Director Activities**

**Meetings/Events Attended by Director  
December 2024**

Date	Meeting/Event
December 2, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
December 3, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
December 5, 2024	Virtual Meeting - Buffalo Cultural Leaders
December 9, 2024	Event - Reopening of the Isaiás González-Soto Branch Library
December 9, 2024	Event - Advocacy Meeting at Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library with Representatives from Assemblymember Crystal Peoples-Stokes
December 10, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
December 10, 2024	Meeting - In-House Tenants with Anne Conable
December 10, 2024	Virtual Event - IMAGINE Buffalo honoring Dennis Galucki
December 10, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
December 11, 2024	Meeting - Managers/Directors
December 11, 2024	Event - Advocacy Meeting at Grand Island Public Library with Assemblymember Angelo Morinello
December 11, 2024	Virtual Meeting - NYLA Legislative Committee
December 12, 2024	Virtual Meeting - WNYLRC Committee Chairs
December 12, 2024	Meeting - Erin Vest
December 13, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
December 13, 2024	Event - Advocacy Meeting at University at Buffalo with Representatives of Senator Sean Ryan and Assemblymember Karen McMahan
December 13, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
December 16, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
December 16, 2024	Event - Advocacy Meeting at Trocaire College with Representative of Assemblymember Pat Burke
December 17, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
December 17, 2024	Meeting - Erin Vest
December 17, 2024	Meeting - WNYLRC Board Leadership

December 17, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik and Judy Fachko
December 17, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik
December 19, 2024	Virtual Meeting - MetLib Standing Committee
December 19, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik and Judy Fachko
December 19, 2024	Virtual Meeting - PLS Directors
December 19, 2024	Meeting - B&ECPL Board of Trustees
December 20, 2024	Phone Meeting - Library Counsel
December 20, 2024	Meeting - Dorinda Darden
December 20, 2024	Meeting - Joy Testa Cinquino
December 23, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
December 30, 2024	Meeting - Administrative Team
December 31, 2024	Meeting - Samantha Purpora
December 31, 2024	Meeting - Emily Patronik

**Appendices**

**A. Monthly Statistics**

**System Programming Statistics:**

Regular/Virtual	Number of Programs		Total Attendance	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
<b>Regular*</b>				
Adults	1242	12299	2387	40716
Children 5 and under	715	16257	2667	60132
Children 6-11	1800	21896	3054	47296
Intergenerational/Combined	3774	54172	11987	136458
Teens	225	4140	381	7930
<b>Regular Total</b>	<b>7756</b>	<b>108764</b>	<b>20476</b>	<b>292532</b>
<b>Regular Total</b>	<b>7756</b>	<b>108764</b>	<b>20476</b>	<b>292532</b>
<b>Virtual</b>				
<b>Live Virtual</b>				
Adults	6	186	135	2131
Children 5 and under	0	3	0	48
Children 6-11	0	5	0	186
Intergenerational/Combined	5	66	43	1194
Teens	14	89	13	189
<b>Live Virtual Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>3748</b>
<b>Recorded Virtual</b>				
Adults	3	51	263	1471
Children 5 and under	0	0	0	0
Children 6-11	2	23	276	3119
Intergenerational/Combined	8	111	621	9571
Teens	0	0	0	0
<b>Recorded Virtual Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>1160</b>	<b>14161</b>



<b>Virtual Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>1351</b>	<b>17909</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>7794</b>	<b>109298</b>	<b>21827</b>	<b>310441</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, Wi-Fi 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, Wi-Fi 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**

**Amherst Public Library (Audubon, Clearfield, Eggertsville-Snyder, Williamsville)** – submitted by **Kristi Dougherty**, Director

**Seasonal Program Highlights:**

- Santa Story times & Visits,
- Hanukah Story time
- Diwali Story time
- Cookie Decorating
- Flute Performance by Lake Effect Winds Flute Choir
- Holiday Bow Making with the Smallwood Garden Club
- Gingerbread Houses
- Pokémon Holiday Party
- Christmas Family Rave
- Noon Year’s Eve Party
- Various Drop-In winter break activities, such as jewelry making, collage art, watercolor & snow painting

Librarian **Beth Staebell** attended the Town of Amherst’s Holiday Happening at the Senior Center, providing stories and crafts for attendees on December 20. The Library also partnered with the Amherst Community Diversity Commission for Stories Around the World at the Audubon Library on Saturday, December 28.

Other programs included:

- Technology training
- Chair Yoga
- Adult Craft Club
- Mahjong Club
- Monthly Book Clubs

- English Conversation Group

**Staff Highlights:** Librarian Trainee **Katherine Pizzuto** was accepted into the New York Library Association (NYLA) Developing Leaders Program. The program consists of two in-person sessions and 11 live virtual sessions via Zoom. The Kick-off and Capstone sessions were held in-person in Albany, NY on January 7, 2025.

Director **Kristi Dougherty** and Librarian **Joan Stoltman** presented at the Buffalo & Erie County Library's Youth Services Group Meeting about Baby Raves – updating a presentation that was given at the 2024 New York Library Association Youth Services Conference. Librarian **Joan Stoltman** received a Library All Star Award from the Western New York Library Resources Council.

Agenda Item I – Report of the Foundation. Chair El-Behairy shared that this will be her last time sharing the Report of the Foundation. She stated that at the Foundation meeting on January 15 they were given a preview of the Library's rebranding effort. Chair El-Behairy went on to share that the Community Engagement Manager Anne Conable, who has been the administrator for the Foundation, is retiring as of January 30, 2025.

Following that, Director Spears wanted to introduce the new Deputy Director – Chief Operating Officer Angela Marinucci to the Board. Deputy Director – COO Marinucci thanked the Board for their support, and shared her excitement about being a part of the Library.

Next, Chair El-Behairy shared that the Foundation voted to elect Trustee Christine P. Bartholomew to replace Chair El-Behairy as a member.

Agenda Item J – The Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT)/Contracting Library Trustee Report. Deputy Director – Public Services Darden informed the Board that the ACT annual workshop will be at the Central Library on Saturday, March 22. She shared that details are forthcoming. Chair El-Behairy took this opportunity to inform the Board that attending the ACT annual workshop is a good way of fulfilling their annual Trustee Education requirement.

Agenda Item J.1 – Contracting Library Liaison Report(s). None.

Agenda Item K – Public Comment. None.

Agenda Item L – Unfinished Business. None.

Agenda Item M – New Business.

Agenda Item M.1 - Election to the Foundation. Chair El-Behairy proposed electing Trustee K. Johnson to the Foundation Board. Chair El-Behairy asked if anyone else on the Board would be interested. Trustee Bucki stated that she might be interested in the future. Trustee Panty made the motion to approve the recommendation of Trustee K. Johnson to the Foundation Board. Trustee Sasiadek seconded and this was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item N - Adjournment. There being no further business, on a motion by Trustee Panty with a second by Trustee Amodeo, the meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine P.  
Bartholomew  
Secretary