

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
April 16, 2020

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) was held on Thursday, April 16, 2020, remotely via GoToMeeting pursuant to due notice to trustees. The following members were present:

Kathleen Berens Bucki, Chair
Kimberly Johnson, Vice Chair
Alan Bedenko, Secretary
Joel Moore, Treasurer
Michael Amodeo
Sheldon M. Berlow
Katie Burd
Lucy Candelario
Carima El-Behairy
Frank Gist
Frank Housh
Theodore K. Johnson
Sharon M. Kelly
Elaine M. Panty

Chair Kathleen Berens Bucki called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

State of New York Executive Chamber Executive Order No. 202.14 issued April 7, 2020 extends Executive Order 202.1 issued March 7, 2020 - *Continuing Temporary Suspension and Modification of Laws Relating to the Disaster Emergency – Suspension of law allowing the attendance of meetings telephonically or other similar service*, permitting the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) Board of Trustees to hold this April 16th Board meeting remotely by conference call and constituted trustees as present, allowing them to be counted for quorum and voting. The public was provided GoToMeeting dial-in instructions with the ability to listen and comment at this proceeding.

A call of the roll was taken. A quorum was present.

Chair Bucki pointed out a verbatim transcript of this remote meeting as recorded by GoToMeeting will be kept on file by the B&ECPL.

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

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Chair Bucki announced any public present on the call would have the opportunity to speak during Agenda Item H – Public Comment. At that time, each speaker is to state and spell their name for the record and is limited to 3 minutes. The Board of Trustees will not comment.

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

Agenda Item C – Minutes of the Meeting of March 19, 2020. On motion by Trustee Panty, seconded by Trustee Candelario, the Minutes were approved as mailed.

Agenda Item D – Report of the Chair. Chair Bucki pointed out the next regularly scheduled Board meeting on May 21st was to take place at the Dudley Branch Library, however, the Governor’s Executive Orders in place at that time will dictate where and how this meeting will take place. Notification will be provided.

Agenda Item E – Committee Reports.

Agenda Item E.1 – Executive Committee. (March 26, 2020 Special Meeting & April 7, 2020). A Special Meeting of the Executive Committee was held on March 26, 2020; a copy of the written report was e-mailed to trustees, included in the Board packet, and posted on the B&ECPL’s website. At that meeting, due to timing, the Executive Committee took action and unanimously passed Resolution 2020-11 Approval of New State of Emergency/Quarantine Leave Policy & Compensation for B&ECPL Part-time and Non-represented Employees. Trustee Panty moved to have the written report of the March 26th Executive Committee meeting entered into the Minutes. Trustee Bedenko made a second, and this was approved unanimously.

Executive Committee Special Meeting Report March 26, 2020

Present via conference call: Executive Committee Chair Kathleen Berens Bucki; Vice Chair Kimberly Johnson; members Sheldon Berlow, Katie Burd and Elaine Panty; ex-officio members Frank Housh and Ted Johnson. Present in person were Library Director Mary Jean Jakubowski, Deputy Director - Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Doyle, Deputy Director - Chief Financial Officer Ken Stone, Assistant Deputy Directors Dorinda Darden, Maureen McLaughlin and Joy Testa Cinquino, Library Administrative Manager Tracy Palicki, and Human Resources Manager Judy Fachko. Assistant Deputy Director Dawn Peters and Secretary to the Director Maria Borowiak were present via conference call.

Per State of New York Executive Chamber Executive Order No. 202.1 issued March 7, 2020 - *Continuing Temporary Suspension and Modification of Laws Relating to the Disaster Emergency - Suspension of law allowing the attendance of meetings telephonically or other similar service*, Chair Bucki called a Special Meeting of the Executive Committee to order at 3:08 p.m. in the Joseph B. Rounds Conference Room at the Central Library to discuss the current status of library operations and next steps regarding the Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries in light of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). A quorum was present. No members of the public were present.

At the March 16, 2020 Special Meeting of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) Executive Committee, the Committee unanimously approved closing to the public the Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries beginning March 17, 2020 through March 31, 2020. At the March 19, 2020 B&ECPL Board of Trustees meeting, Chair Bucki called for this Special Meeting of the Executive Committee to occur to make decisions regarding extending the closure of the Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries beyond March 31, 2020 in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Director Jakubowski shared that as the COVID-19 pandemic progresses, the B&ECPL continues to monitor any new local, state and federal directives that are coming through. Because of this crisis, proposed Resolution 2020-11 - Approval of New State of Emergency/Quarantine Leave Policy & Compensation for B&ECPL Part-time Employees is being put before the Committee as an Action Item. This proposed resolution including the new policy was e-mailed to the full Board in advance, noting such action was on the agenda to be considered by the Executive Committee. As Trustee Panty does not have e-mail, this information was delivered to her in person.

Chair Bucki, having held discussion with Director Jakubowski regarding the advancement of the COVID-19 pandemic, asked the Executive Committee for their thoughts on how long the Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries should be closed beyond March 31, 2020. Committee members shared varied thoughts ranging from selecting a reopening date, to closing until further notice. Trustees noted the extent of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be undetermined, with the peak, according to health officials, not yet reached. There are many unknowns which makes it very difficult to choose a reopening date. Discussion ensued.

Director Jakubowski suggested the Committee follow suit with the Superintendents of local school districts who currently have indicated schools will reopen on April 20, 2020. It is recognized this date is subject to change. She further noted that the Executive Committee could subsequently change this

date – opening earlier or later depending on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic. Trustee Burd pointed out that a significant amount of time has passed since they originally chose this date, and we are now better informed as to the severity of this pandemic, suggesting a specific date not be assigned. Other Committee members felt piggybacking on this date may confuse the public.

After further discussion, the Committee assembled the following language to put forth:

The Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries shall remain closed until such time as the guidance of the Governor of the State of New York supports reopening. The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees and/or Executive Committee shall reconvene as necessary. Trustee Panty made a motion, Trustee Berlow made a second, and this was approved unanimously and assigned Resolution 2020-12.

Following approval of Resolution 2020-12, Trustee Berlow emphasized that in our message to the public we be straightforward, making the public aware we are doing the best we can. Trustees further discussed they felt it was important in our public message that we let them know the B&ECPL will continue to closely monitor the COVID-19 situation, noting that when State directives permit, the Committee will reconvene and reopen the libraries. It was also discussed and suggested that contract libraries be encouraged to follow the Executive Committee's Resolution for their respective libraries.

Chair Bucki entertained a motion to consider and approve Action Item Resolution 2020-11 - Approval of New State of Emergency/Quarantine Leave Policy & Compensation for B&ECPL Part-time Employees. Director Jakubowski noted she feels this action is best for this institution; our part-time employees make up over half of our employees, and if we would lose them over this timeframe, it would be very difficult to reopen libraries when the time comes to do so. She further noted, the funds have already been budgeted.

Director Jakubowski requested a change be made in the Policy Section 3.C to now read:

“Paid leave under this policy will not start until the first full pay period after the later of the declaration by the System Board described in II.B or the employee's first day of absence under III.A.” instead of “Paid leave under this policy will not start until one full pay period after the later of the declaration by the System Board described in II.B or the employee's first day of absence under III.A.” Trustee Kimberly Johnson moved, Trustee Panty seconded, and this amendment was approved unanimously.

Director Jakubowski requested a change be made in proposed Resolution 2020-11, in the second RESOLVE, to remove the words “who have been” as follows:

RESOLVED, that all non-represented staff and part-time represented staff who are not covered under the emergency closure provision of a collective bargaining agreement, ~~who have been~~ employed by the B&ECPL or any of its Contract Libraries, shall be compensated for pay period 7 at a rate equivalent to the average number of hours worked over the 3 previous pay periods not to exceed 19 hours/week, 38 hours/pay period; and be it further...

Trustee Berlow moved, Trustee Kimberly Johnson seconded, and approval of this amendment was unanimous.

Following additional discussion, on a motion by Trustee Berlow, second by Trustee Panty, Resolution 2020-11 as amended was passed unanimously by the Executive Committee. Pursuant to the B&ECPL Board of Trustee Bylaws, Article VI (1) gives the Executive Committee the powers and duties of the Board of Trustees.

Following approval of Resolution 2020-11, Trustee Ted Johnson led conversations about possible future federal funding/stimulus packages and unemployment. Director Jakubowski shared that the details of such programs are not yet known. As more details become available, Library Administration will review and keep the Board informed. B&ECPL is doing the best it can, given the circumstances put forth during this unprecedented situation. Deputy Director Stone also shared information with trustees regarding the B&ECPL being self-insured for unemployment, FMLA and disability. Deputy Director Doyle pointed out the state and federal programs are currently moving targets, with new laws and stimulus packages coming through. The B&ECPL worked hard to incorporate all current mandates into the resolution/policy to be sure we are not undercutting our part-time employees. Trustee Ted Johnson concluded this discussion, stating he appreciates everything that has been done and feels the passing of Resolution 2020-11 is the right thing to do as an institution.

A memo from Chair Bucki has been prepared and will go out to all part-time employees notifying them of the passing of Resolution 2020-11 along with a copy of the new policy. Supervisors will be asked to contact employees affected.

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 3:56 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Panty, with a second by Trustee Kimberly Johnson.

The Executive Committee met on April 7, 2020; a copy of the written report was e-mailed to trustees, included in the board packet, and posted on the B&ECPL's

website. Committee Vice Chair Kimberly Johnson summarized the meeting. Trustee Berlow motioned to have the written report entered into the Minutes. Trustee Candelario made a second, and this was approved unanimously.

Executive Committee Meeting Report

April 7, 2020

Present via conference call: Executive Committee Chair Kathleen Berens Bucki; Vice Chair Kimberly Johnson; members Sheldon Berlow, Katie Burd and Elaine Panty; and ex-officio member Frank Housh. Also on the call were Library Director Mary Jean Jakubowski, Deputy Director - Chief Operating Officer Jeannine Doyle, and Deputy Director - Chief Financial Officer Ken Stone.

In keeping with State of New York Executive Chamber Executive Order 202.1 (regarding emergency adjustments to the Open Meetings Law in response to the COVID-19 pandemic), the meeting was held remotely via GoToMeeting. As required by the Governor's Order, the public was offered the ability to listen to such proceeding via the provided GoToMeeting call-in number, with the meeting being recorded, transcribed, and to be made available on the Library's website before May 1, 2020. This information was included in the meeting announcement.

Chair Bucki called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. A quorum was present.

The Committee reviewed the proposed agenda for the April 16, 2020 Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees meeting, which will be held remotely via a GoToMeeting conference call. Director Jakubowski noted the Gubernatorial Order modifying Open Meetings Law is expected to be extended. She will watch for updates and keep Chair Bucki apprised.

Trustee Berlow joined the meeting via telephone at 4:11 p.m.

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Panty, with a second by Trustee Berlow.

Agenda Item E.1.a - Information Item. Approval of New State of Emergency/ Quarantine Leave Policy & Compensation for B&ECPL Part-time and Non-represented Employees. Resolution 2020-11 passed unanimously by the Executive Committee on March 26, 2020. Pursuant to the Bylaws, Resolution 2020-11 was mailed to the full Board within 3 business days.

RESOLUTION 2020-11

WHEREAS, on March 7, 2020, the Governor of the State of New York issued Executive Order 202 declaring a state of emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for containment; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the underlying state of emergency, on March 16, 2020, the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System (Board) voted to close the Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries to the public effective March 17, 2020 through March 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the libraries that contract with the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System (B&ECPL), known as Contract Libraries, followed suit; and

WHEREAS, since March 17, 2020 the Governor has issued additional Executive Orders requiring non-essential staff to work remotely when possible and reducing the presence of non-essential staff in workplaces by 100% with certain exceptions; and

WHEREAS, the staff of the B&ECPL libraries reporting for duty has been reduced significantly due to the nature of work performed by the B&ECPL's non-essential staff and constraints in ability to work remotely; and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL Administration and the Board has continuously reviewed the orders of state, federal and local officials, in conjunction with the public safety and budget considerations of reducing operations and continuing regular pay during the state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, the principal funding sources for all Library operations, including personnel expenses, is the County levied Library Property Tax and New York State Aid, both of which flow through the B&ECPL for use by the Contract Libraries, Central Library, Buffalo Branches and System Services; and

WHEREAS, the personnel budgets for each library and department in the B&ECPL have been established for the fiscal year 2020, with appropriated funds therein for part-time employees' planned hours of work; and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL administers payroll and benefits for itself (Central Library, Buffalo Branch Libraries, and System Services) and Contract Library personnel; and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL Administration and the Board recognize that as a result of the reduction in work, a large number of part-time employees who are not represented by unions may not otherwise be paid during this state of emergency potentially resulting in a significant economic financial impact; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes that to best serve its area of service and protect the health of the community and its staff, employees may need to be directed to

report to work at the library(ies), to work remotely, or to be on-call but not report to work during routine hours; and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL is a community resource for critical information and must remain ready to respond to community needs as is within its capacity and budget; B&ECPL Administration, department heads and managers continue to assess the continuation of many library services to the public despite buildings being closed to the public; and

WHEREAS, ensuring payroll continuity for part-time employees under these exigent circumstances requires immediate actions; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board shall continue to compensate full and part-time staff as allowed by law and negotiated collective bargaining agreements; and be it further

RESOLVED, that all non-represented staff and part-time represented staff who are not covered under the emergency closure provision of a collective bargaining agreement, employed by the B&ECPL or any of its Contract Libraries, shall be compensated for pay period 7 at a rate equivalent to the average number of hours worked over the 3 previous pay periods not to exceed 19 hours/week, 38 hours/pay period; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board adopts the attached "State of Emergency/Quarantine Leave Policy" and declares this policy effective March 17, 2020 for the instant situation related to COVID-19 and until further determined by the Board; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the "State of Emergency/Quarantine Leave Policy" be incorporated in the B&ECPL Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Director and the Executive Committee of the Board shall maintain ongoing communication and monitor the best approach to address safety and operational concerns, and shall inform the full Board of same; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Board shall reconvene on April 16, 2020, or the Executive Committee, during its regularly scheduled April 7, 2020 or any emergency special meeting of the Executive Committee convened prior to said Board meeting, to reconsider the continuation of compensation in light of what may be needed for the community and the B&ECPL to recover from the state of emergency and return to normal operations, the B&ECPL's fiscal ability to pay, and/or anticipated date for employees to return to work and/or libraries to reopen.

Agenda Item E.2 – Budget and Finance Committee.

Agenda Item E.2.a – Approve New York State Annual Reports. Deputy Director Chief Operating Officer (C.O.O.) Jeannine Doyle explained this Resolution would authorize filing the System’s New York State Annual Reports for 2019. Copies of both reports were sent to System Trustees via e-mail, with hard copies mailed to those System trustees without an e-mail address on file. C.O.O. Doyle thanked the team for their work on this report specifically mentioning Angela Pierpaoli, Tracy Palicki and Kelly Donovan. She shared some of B&ECPL’s statistics and highlights from 2019, noting the eMaterials collection has increased significantly between 2018 and 2019, and there has been an increase in borrowers, programs and attendance. The number of Teen/Young Adult programs along with attendance have also increased by more than 50%. Trustee Panty motioned, Trustee Kimberly Johnson seconded and approval of Resolution 2020-13 as presented was unanimous. Chair Bucki expressed thanks to the many people who worked on these reports.

RESOLUTION 2020-13

WHEREAS, the Library System Basic Aid, Local Library Services Aid (LLSA), Local Services Support Aid (LSSA), Central Library Book Aid (CLBA), Central Library Development Aid (CLDA), Coordinated Outreach Library Services Aid, State Correctional Facilities Aid and Services to County Jails (Interinstitutional) Aid are annual New York State statutory aid programs aimed at assisting library systems, central libraries and local libraries in developing collections and providing services to their constituents, and have provided significant funding for many years, and

WHEREAS, in order to maintain the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library’s (B&ECPL) charter as well as qualify for State Aid funds, each library files reports annually with New York State Library’s Division of Library Development (DLD) summarizing achievements, activity and financial performance, and

WHEREAS, the B&ECPL files both a Public Library Report and a Library System Report, while each contract library also files a Public Library Report, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Board of Trustees assures that the B&ECPL “*Annual Report for Public and Association Libraries – 2019*” has been reviewed and accepted and that the Library operated under its Plan of Service in accordance with the provisions of Education Law and the Regulations of the Commissioner, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Board of Trustees assures that the Library System operated under its approved Plan of Service in accordance with the provisions of Education Law and the Regulations of the Commissioner, and assures that this

“Annual Report for Library Systems – 2019” has been reviewed and accepted, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the B&ECPL Board of Trustees assures that the B&ECPL System will be operating under its approved Plan of Service in accordance with the provisions of Education Law and the Regulations of the Commissioner and assures that the “Budget Summary” has been reviewed and accepted.

Agenda Item F – Report of the Director. Director Jakubowski reported the B&ECPL continues to monitor Governor Andrew Cuomo’s Executive Orders and shared that, during his daily press conference earlier that day, he extended *New York State on PAUSE* until May 15, 2020. Subsequently, the B&ECPL will stay the course and remain closed to the public until additional guidance is received from the Governor which would allow reopening. Trustees will be kept apprised.

She reminded trustees that at the March 26th Special Meeting of the Executive Committee, the State of Emergency/Quarantine Leave Policy was approved with a continuance of compensation to part-time and non-represented employees through pay period 9, which ends April 24th. Given *New York State on PAUSE* has been extended through May 15, 2020, the Director recommended that effective April 25th, all part-time and non-represented employees be, for lack of a better term, “furloughed.” She explained we have verified eligibility of part-time employees to receive New York State unemployment as well as their eligibility to receive the \$600 federally funded unemployment benefit through the *CARES Act*. This being said, part-time employees may receive more money on the unemployment program than if they continued to receive compensation through the B&ECPL. The Director asked trustees if they had any opposition to this. She explained, the plan is to send a detailed letter to all affected staff explaining that compensation per the State of Emergency/Quarantine Leave Policy will conclude at pay period 9, they will continue to be employees of the B&ECPL, they will not need to reapply for their position once libraries reopen or work becomes available, and they are eligible to apply for unemployment benefits which include an additional \$600 per week in federal monies. Filing instructions for unemployment will be included.

Trustee El-Behairy remarked she has no objection to this. She recently attended a Hamburg Public Library board meeting whereat they inquired about this. Director Jakubowski confirmed that all Contract Library Directors, Central Library Supervisors/Managers, and Buffalo Branch Managers would be informed of this in the morning. A message will also be sent to all trustees.

Director Jakubowski repeated the plan at Trustee Panty’s request due to background noise on her phone. Director Jakubowski confirmed that part-time workers who are deemed essential or who work remotely will be paid by the B&ECPL for hours worked.

She reiterated, we are not removing anyone from the payroll. Part-time employees will, after pay period 9, no longer be paid under the auspices of the B&ECPL's State of Emergency/Quarantine Leave Policy.

Discussion took place in response to Trustee Housh's question as to why the B&ECPL is "furloughing" these employees; he expressed "it is important that the Library act responsibly as we have asked other employers to do so by keeping people on the payroll and by all accounts we are not doing this." Responses from Director Jakubowski, C.O.O. Doyle and C.F.O. Stone included reiterating that affected part-time employees will remain on the payroll; however, they are not working and are eligible to make more money through the unemployment package being offered with the additional federal supplement of \$600 per week. This provides them with the opportunity for compensation under these programs. Director Jakubowski noted there is the concern of part-time employee morale that is associated with this; many calls have been received from part-time employees saying they can earn more money through unemployment. C.F.O. Stone noted the B&ECPL is not eligible for the government programs that were incentivizing employers to keep their employees on the payroll, which compensate the employer in the form of a forgivable loan. C.F.O. Stone further added, there is a financial implication for the Library when paying out salaries while some of our revenues are declining and there is a potential \$70,000 to \$100,000 loss of revenue from the State, which could be even larger because of a built-in capability to cut the budget further. As we are "self-insured," the B&ECPL will still pay unemployment, but it would be the amount based upon what the individual would be entitled to, plus they get the \$600 federal supplement. The cost to the Library and the local taxpayer would be higher if we continued to pay compensation to part-time workers who are not working. Part-time employees will remain employees and as soon as we restart operations, it will be easier to call them back. Director Jakubowski expressed in good faith to the taxpayers of Erie County as well as for the morale of our part-time staff, we should provide the part-time employees the opportunity to receive the highest compensation allowable. Trustee Housh remarked that he "said his piece."

Trustee Gist asked if this could be extended to full-time, lower level employees at some point. Director Jakubowski explained all represented full-time employees are covered under emergency closure clauses in their bargaining agreements, so they will continue to receive compensation through the B&ECPL; C.O.O. Doyle concurred with this statement.

Trustees Berlow and Candelario recommended Director Jakubowski proceed with the suggested "furlough" plan as discussed. Director Jakubowski inquired if there were any other trustees in opposition; there was no response. Letters will be sent out to affected employees.

The extent of the COVID-19 pandemic's unknown financial impact on future funding for the B&ECPL was discussed along with potential loss of revenue and the need for this to be offset by federal action. The Director will be sending an e-mail after this meeting encouraging all staff and trustees to reach out to their federal representatives encouraging significant and flexible stimulus packages (including the replacement of lost revenues) be made available for and be sent directly to Erie County; template letters will be provided that can be printed, signed and submitted to federal representatives.

Director Jakubowski informed trustees that the planned April 27th celebration of the Elaine M. Panty Branch Library has been postponed, given the current status of events.

Trustee Panty inquired about the status of the fundraising deadline to acquire the Jordan Collection; Director Jakubowski conveyed the timeframe is through September, the planned fundraiser/friendraiser planned for May has been postponed, and we will continue to fundraise. Staff is in contact with Mr. Jordan who is committed to working with the B&ECPL on acquiring this collection.

In light of the pandemic, Director Jakubowski shared some highlights. The Collection Development Team continues to work hard to increase the B&ECPL's eBook and eAudio collections and is regularly monitoring the amount of holds on such items and purchasing copies as needed. The B&ECPL is conducting a multitude of virtual programs. As of yesterday, over 310 virtual programs are scheduled for the month of April, including children's story times, technology training, LEGO Clubs, cooking programs, book clubs, etc. She commended staff. Since March 27th, 768 eLibrary cards have been issued thanks to a new online library card created by Assistant Deputy Director Maureen McLaughlin. People are taking advantage of the Library's downloadable resources. The use of juvenile eBooks has risen over 149%; eBook usage in general is up over 33%. The Library is working with members of the Erie County Legislature, whereby they will read children's books remotely and we will post these readings online. We are also collaborating with Legislators Lisa Chimera and Kevin Hardwick to provide reading materials, such as coffee table books, through Project Flight to shut-ins and seniors in the Village of Kenmore, Town of Tonawanda, as well as the City of Tonawanda. We hope to grow this program, as we are able. The Library donated 10,000 non-sterile gloves to Erie County Emergency Services, who were extremely appreciative. These were gloves the Library had in stock; additional gloves remain in stock available for use when the Library reopens.

For the record, Director Jakubowski wished to commend staff from the Business Office, Collection Development Department, Human Resources Department, Maintenance Department, Network Support Department, Public Services Department, Security Department, Shipping and Receiving Department, as well as members of Library Administration, for all they are doing to keep System services running. The B&ECPL is

seeing many positive responses to all the activities the Library is providing during these unprecedented times.

Trustee Berlow commented, "that was a pretty terrific report" and extended credit to the Director and staff for making all this happen. Trustee Panty expressed the staff has been doing a wonderful job; she has seen Director Jakubowski on television several times and hopes this is aiding in the bump in online library cards. Trustee Gist commented the Facebook story times being provided are very innovative. Trustee Kimberly Johnson shared she has been taking advantage of B&ECPL's eAudiobooks and appreciates what the Library is doing.

Director Jakubowski noted that virtual programming statistics will be reported in next month's Report of the Director. She was also pleased to report that staff is remotely manning the B&ECPL's reference telephone lines as well as managing the online eReference program. The staff is doing a tremendous job!

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

B&ECPL Monthly Report March 2020

The expression "March came in like a lion and went out like a lamb" most certainly took a one hundred and eighty degree turn this year, given the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and its overt effect on our communities, state and country.

The Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries remained open through March 16th with library services adapting to the rapidly changing situation with program cancelations, closure of meeting rooms, social distancing being employed, hand sanitizer, tissues, hospital grade cleaning products being distributed to all libraries, and staff being instructed on disinfecting returned books and materials. Notification of these changes was made to patrons, staff and trustees.

On March 16, 2020, at a Special Meeting of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) Board of Trustees Executive Committee, it was decided to close the Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries to the public beginning March 17, 2020 through March 31, 2020. At a Special Meeting of the Executive Committee on March 26, 2020, the Executive Committee determined, following discussion and review of workforce reduction Executive Orders by New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo, to keep these locations closed until such time guidance by the Governor supports reopening. This directive was assigned Resolution 2020-12. This writer notified contract library directors and board presidents, encouraging each to follow suit. It is noted 21/22

contract libraries adopted the language set forth by the Committee and will remain closed until such time as guidance from the Governor of the State of New York supports reopening. The 22nd library adopted a resolution to remain closed until April 20th, when the local school district is slated to open.

Library Administration also brought forth to the Executive Committee on March 26, 2020 Resolution 2020-11, which included a new State of Emergency/Quarantine Leave Policy as well as a compensation package for part-time and non-represented employees. This package, per the State of Emergency/Quarantine Leave Policy, will allow part-time and non-represented employees to be compensated for 2 pay periods following the declaration of the State of Emergency. Part-time employees make up over half of the employees throughout the System. Following discussion, the Committee approved Resolution 2020-11. All part-time and non-represented staff were notified they would be paid through pay period 9.

In addition, all full-time, regular part-time and part-time staff being compensated were notified of the expectation of working remotely, where practicable, and being on-call and willing to report to work, should it be deemed necessary.

The Central Library and the Buffalo Branch Libraries have been thoroughly cleaned with hospital grade disinfectant cleaners. Through cooperative measures between the County of Erie and the B&ECPL, B&ECPL cleaning and maintenance staff have been engaged to clean County facilities. Library security, business office, network support, human resources, and shipping and receiving staff, stationary engineers, as well as Library Administration, have been designated "essential employees." Work associated under these designations are critical to the function of the B&ECPL and meet the requirements set forth by gubernatorial orders and guidance by the Empire State Development Corporation.

Library employees and Library Administration are also working remotely, conducting virtual programs, maintaining network operations including but not limited to the website, databases, borrower accounts and collections. Staff are completing online training and required state reporting. They are developing programs, purchasing eMaterials, updating the website and subject guides, posting to social media, etc. Library Administration is also providing guidance to contract library directors and trustees. Virtual meetings via GoToMeeting and/or Zoom are being employed.

A new online library card application has been created by Assistant Deputy Director Maureen McLaughlin. In the first week of access, over 300 new library cards have been issued. Under Ms. McLaughlin's direction, the System Collection Development Team is quickly working to expand the eBook and eAudio collections. The eBook holdings are now nearly 91,000, having added 1,186 books to the collection since March 17th. Three hundred sixteen (316) eAudiobooks have been added bringing eAudio holdings to

19,024. In the first week of closure, a 33% increase was noted in the use of downloadable books/materials. Assistant Deputy Director Joy Testa Cinquino is actively informing media outlets of Library happenings, securing interviews and distributing pertinent operational information to staff, trustees, elected officials, library partners and patrons. Assistant Deputy Directors Dorinda Darden and Dawn Peters are regularly connected with public service staff as well as overseeing virtual programming, eReference tasks, eTraining, etc. being performed remotely by Central Library and Buffalo Branch employees. Deputy Director Jeannine Doyle is actively monitoring the ever-changing horizon of federal programs and benefits for employees as well as maintaining public, network and technical service oversight. Deputy Director Ken Stone is monitoring the Library's financials, following the unfolding saga of the New York State budget as well as reviewing federal stimulus packages and associated guidelines as they are posted. Maria Borowiak is critical to keeping us all together and organized, particularly with all things Board-related.

COVID-19 has brought our community together in a way none of us could have expected. The B&ECPL will continue to play an integral role in providing information services and educational support to the residents of Erie County through resources that enrich, enlighten and entertain. Our doors may be closed but our libraries are and will remain open, virtually. Library staff is working hard, despite the challenges brought forth by this unprecedented situation. I am proud of each and every staff member for their dedication, loyalty and support of library patrons in Erie County and beyond.

Agenda Item G - Report of the Association of Contracting Library Trustees (ACT)/Contracting Library Trustee Report. There was no representation from ACT. Director Jakubowski shared the ACT Board is looking to reschedule the cancelled annual ACT Workshop for some time in the fall.

Agenda Item H - Public Comment.

Nancy DiStasio, Librarian at Central Library - offered thanks for everything being done to support staff noting it has been a real challenge, but feels so supported by Administration and the Board. This has been difficult for everyone and it is appreciated.

Nicole Brown, Town of Tonawanda Public Library - Kenmore Branch - asked if there was any way to let being "furloughed" be a choice of the part-time worker.

Roseanne Butler-Smith, Director at Amherst Public Library - thanked the Board for considering the part-timers to be "furloughed"; she noted her staff has been talking with her and they feel they did not have the option to get the \$600/week from the federal government through unemployment and that it was unfair to them. Her part-

time staff was hoping to get this opportunity. She thanked the Board and indicated she was happy for her staff.

Director Jakubowski thanked everyone who participated in public comment, reiterating part-time staff will remain employees, and some are currently working and being paid for their hours.

Agenda Item I - Unfinished Business. There was no unfinished business.

Agenda Item J - New Business. None.

There being no further business, on motion by Trustee Berlow with a second by Trustee Panty, the meeting was adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Bedenko
Secretary