

***Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Watauga County Public Library (WCPL)
and the Watauga County Historical Society (WCHS)***

This agreement supersedes any and all previous Memoranda of Understanding among the parties hereto.

To support the continuing success of the Digital Watauga Project (DWP), the Watauga County Public Library, a member of the Appalachian Regional Library, and the Watauga County Historical Society, hereby agree to share the following responsibilities:

The Watauga County Public Library will:

- Provide payroll services for all DWP interns and technicians through the pay period ending June 23, 2026, at which time WCHS will take over responsibility for managing the DWP payroll. In addition, the WCPL will provide all required 2026 tax reporting documentation directly to any DWP interns and technicians employed by WCPL prior to the end of the pay period ending June 23, 2026;
- Following settlement of all DWP paychecks from the final payroll period ending June 23, 2026, return to the WCHS any remaining, unspent funds in the DWP Technician Fund, including any remaining, unspent funds from image use requests handled by the DWP and deposited with the WCPL. These excess funds will be returned through the issuance of a check made payable to "Watauga County Historical Society" and mailed to WCHS, PO Box 3453, Boone, NC 28607, no later than July 15, 2026, and the WCPL will provide the WCHS/DWP with a written accounting of how the amount of any remaining, unspent funds was determined;
- Continue to provide up to six active/valid laminated parking placards allowing DWP technicians, interns, and volunteers to park in the one-hour parking areas of the WCPL parking lot during normal library business hours, provided that these placards shall be used/displayed solely *while actively engaged in the work of the DWP and WCHS*. These placards should include a printed expiry date of December 31 for each calendar year and will be reissued in late December for each upcoming calendar year;
- Maintain and preserve the content on the current, off-site DWP backup servers (Digital Watauga servers in Ashe and Wilkes County) through December 31, 2026, and provide to DWP personnel within 7 days of any request a full copy of either of these backup servers, said backup to be stored on an external hard drive provided by the DWP at the DWP's sole cost;
- Notify the DWP immediately in writing (email to DigitalWatauga@gmail.com is sufficient) if any physical property of the WCHS/DWP is found on the WCPL premises following the DWP's scheduled move of its collections and equipment offsite on April 10, 2026;
- Continue to provide upon request meeting space in the WCPL Community Room or a similar future space at the WCPL for DWP Committee meetings, currently held bi-monthly, as well as WCHS Speaker Series and Annual Meetings, at dates and times mutually agreed upon by the WCHS/DWP and WCPL;
- Continue to provide library representation on an ex-officio basis for meetings of the DWP Committee that oversees the DWP;

- Refer donors to the DWP when a donor wants to give an item or collection permanently or on a digital use rights basis to the DWP and/or WCHS;
- Refer donors to the DWP when a donor wants to make a restricted financial donation to the DWP and/or WCHS;
- Co-sponsor programming with the WCHS on the collections of the DWP, the history of Watauga County, or related topics, as mutually agreed between the WCHS/DWP and WCPL;
- Provide free (online, social media, on-site posters, etc.) promotion of DWP and WCHS collections, programming, speaker events as mutually agreed between the WCHS/DWP and WCPL.

The Watauga County Historical Society/Digital Watauga Project will:


- Beginning June 24, 2026, be solely responsible for all matters related to employment or other staffing of DWP, including but not limited to recruiting, hiring, employing, and supervising all DWP technicians, interns, volunteers, and/or other paid staff, as well as (as applicable) any worker's compensation insurance, liability insurance, income tax withholding, unemployment taxes, any other payroll liabilities, and any other matters related to or arising from the employment or other staffing of DWP personnel. Beginning June 24, 2026, DWP staffers are not and shall not be held out as employees or contractors of the WCPL, and the WCPL shall have no responsibility or liability in any matter related to the employment or other staffing of DWP;
- Be solely responsible for backups of new DWP digital content created after April 10, 2026. In addition, the DWP/WCPL will be responsible for ensuring prior to December 31, 2026, that all DWP digital content created prior to April 10, 2026, has been appropriately backed up using a method other than the existing DWP backup servers currently provided by the WCPL;
- Ensure that all physical property of the WCHS/DWP has been removed from the WCPL premises no later than June 30, 2026;
- Co-sponsor programming with the WCPL on the collections of the DWP, the history of Watauga County, or related topics, as mutually agreed between the WCHS/DWP and WCPL;
- Provide WCHS representation for the DWP Committee that oversees the DWP, including an appointed or elected DWPC chairperson who is a dues-paying member of the WCHS.

Nothing contained in this MOU is intended to be or shall be construed as creating a joint venture, agency, partnership, or employment relationship between the parties hereto, nor will any party have the right, power, or authority to create any obligation or duty, express or implied, on behalf of the other. The relationship between the parties shall at all times be that of independent contractors.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is not permanently binding. Either party may propose modifications to the MOU at any time, which may be adopted by mutual agreement of the parties. In addition, either party may withdraw from this agreement with 60 days of written notice to the other party.


Russell Taylor, Director of Libraries
Appalachian Regional Library System

4-28-2026
Date


Bettie Bond, President
Watauga County Historical Society

17 April 2026
Date


Eric Plaag, Chairperson
Digital Watauga Project Committee

4/17/2026
Date