

ARL Director of Libraries Report for November and December 2021
January 2022 Meeting
Draft 1-5-2022

Administration & Personnel

- Staffing: only **one position open** – Youth Services Manager in Ashe
- The **Ashe County Board of Commissioners** voted on 12/20 to **re-sign the Interlocal Agreement** with the addition of a clause specifying that Regional Board Members are chosen from the Local Advisory Boards (as the Watauga Commissioners did in September) but also added two additional revisions, both of which had been added to the Regional Board By-Laws in the past several years. The Watauga Commissioners will need to vote to approve those changes as well, but will do so only after the Wilkes County Commissioners have approved the revisions that the Ashe County Commissioners approved.
- A one-time extra \$10 million from ARPA is in the current state budget for **State Aid to Public Libraries**, but we do not yet know when or how that money will be distributed, nor any of the restrictions that may come with it.
- In an article in the Wilkes Journal Patriot, new Chair of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners Keith Elmore was quoted as saying that there are **no plans for further consideration of pulling the Wilkes County Public Library out** of the Appalachian Regional Library system.

Budgets & Finance

- Please see the regional and local budget reports for details for the period ending December 31 (not yet available). If we received funding and spent money equally month by month, we'd be at 50% for both revenues and expenditures at the end of December.

	<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
Ashe	45.54%	44.61%
Watauga	50.56%	46.68%
Wilkes	48.77%	44.46%
Regional	43%	48.66%
TOTAL	47.66%	46.83%

- We budgeted for less revenue from Fines/Fees for this FY, and so far these **revenues are still running ahead of budget.**
- On 12/22, we moved the **Watauga Building Fund money** out of the CD that was about to mature into a money market fund to provide ease of access, as funds may be needed in the coming year to pay for a feasibility study for fundraising for an expansion of the building in Boone.
- We are still waiting to hear how much of the \$10 million in one-time State Aid ARPA money we will get, and the details of when we'll get it and how we can spend it.

Grant Activities

- ARL was awarded a **\$40,000 LSTA Adapting Technology grant**, and Kilby has been on a buying rampage. This grant will provide firewall software for the region, new (refurbished) PCs for

public use in all libraries (total of 50), 5 new higher-tier refurbished PCs for Ashe and Watauga to run equipment, 3 new PCs for Watauga staff, 3 new PCs (one in each county library to run Envisionware software), 25 monitors to be used throughout the system, 1 laptop for Wilkes, keyboards and mice for children for Ashe, and a top-of-the-line microfilm reader/scanner/printer to be placed in Wilkes. The Wilkes Genealogical Society will provide \$5,000 toward the microfilm reader. Wilkes County Public Library also received an LSTA Literacy @ the Laundromat grant (\$3,500).

- We are **waiting to hear about several other grants**: a second round of Emergency Connectivity Fund money (E-rate grant) and an ALA ARP-funded humanities grant (\$10,000). Neither grant requires a match.

- **Grant \$** received for the region and for individual libraries so far (as of 1-5-22) in 21-22: **\$98,610**

Where We Are Now

- Staff are still required to wear masks; patrons are requested to wear masks.
- Some in-door programming being done, with masks required of attendees.
- We are watching the COVID19 stats closely, especially with the spread of the Omicron variant and the unknowns associated with it.