

**ARL Director of Libraries Report for May and June 2023
July 2023 Board Meetings**

Administration & Personnel

- The new ARL Regional Director Jacob Starks is scheduled to start Sept.1st. Thank you to the Search committee for their efforts to find us a new director.

The open fulltime Adult Services specialist position in Wilkes is now going to be 2 - part time Specialists. One new hire is starting July 12th and one circulation assistant is being promoted to AS specialist. That will leave an open circulation assistant position to be filled.

Budgets & Finance

- End of June 2023 budget %'s across the region:

	<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
Ashe	90.64%	92.26%
Watauga	94.21%	93.06%
Wilkes	94.29%	93.82%
Regional	96.58%	92.42%
LSTA	100%	100%
ARPA	100%	91.34%
TOTAL	94.29%	92.95%

- 2023-2024 Budgets have been set up.
- Auditors will be coming the end of July to start our 2022-2023 audit.

Grant Activities

- We have sent a letter to Senator Ralph Hise asking for his support of the NC House recommended budget increase to State Aid. **The NC Budget is still not approved at this time.**
- All three county libraries have been awarded an LSTA EZ grant for 2023-2024.
 - Watauga was awarded \$34,832 for a new van with which to continue and expand outreach services. A match of \$11,611 will be required since partnering with Community and State agencies, largest partner will be Watauga County Schools.
 - Ashe was awarded \$22,000 for a Mamava Lactation free standing Pod to support breastfeeding families. A match of \$2,500 will be required since partnering with AppHealthCare.
 - Wilkes was awarded \$35,272 for a Library Locker to be placed within the Town of Wilke giving 24/7 access to requested library materials and to further reach out to that side of the county. A match of \$3,900 will be required as we are partnering with the town.

Technology

- Work continues on application development and our website refresh.
- NC Live's Homegrown e-book collection will be accessible directly from our Libby app moving forward. This will save us money and will be a nice bonus for our patrons. The collection consists of books from a variety of North Carolina publisher, includes popular and scholarly nonfiction, novels by well-known NC authors, and award-winning short fiction and poetry.
- The FTC is discussing the possibility of adding permanent funding to the E-Rate program to cover hotspots for libraries and schools. This would be extremely helpful to ARL. We currently struggle to justify the payment per hotspot for service in Ashe and Watauga without pandemic-era grant and ECF funding.
- New timesheets were rolled out for funding year 2023-2024 on June 24th.