

**ARL Director of Libraries Report for January and February 2022
March 2022 Meeting**

Administration & Personnel

- Staffing: **one position open** – PT Adult Services Specialist, Ashe
- The **Wilkes County Board of Commissioners** voted on 2/22 to **re-sign the Interlocal Agreement**, with several small revisions that reflect how things have been done. Jane will now take this document back to Watauga County Commissioners for their approval.
- 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.
- Tammy Holston, the regional Finance and Personnel Manager, lost her mother last Thursday night. Tammy traveled out of state last week, took her laptop, and processed our payroll on Thursday while in her mother’s hospital room. We deeply appreciate Tammy’s dedication to her job during this time of personal difficulty and grief.

Budgets & Finance

- Please see the regional and local budget reports for details for the period ending February 28. If we received funding and spent money equally month by month, we’d be at 66.7% for both revenues and expenditures at the end of February.

| | <u>Revenues</u> | <u>Expenditures</u> |
|----------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Ashe | 67.94% | 58.48% |
| Watauga | 65.28% | 62.55% |
| Wilkes | 64.10% | 60.24% |
| Regional | 58.92% | 64.67% |
| TOTAL | 64.52% | 62.10% |

- We budgeted for less revenue from **Fines/Fees** for this FY, and so far these **revenues are still running ahead of budget**. At the end of February, when we’d like to see 66.67% of fine revenue collected, Ashe had collected 88.35%, Watauga 87.73%, and Wilkes 108.08%.
- 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. Public Library directors have begun pushing the State Library a bit to do whatever it needs to do to get this rolling.

Grant Activities

- Ashe County has received a **\$10,000 ALA ARP-funded humanities grant** to spend on re-invigorating and slightly re-vamping the On the Same Page Literary Festival.
- Grant \$** received for the region and for individual libraries so far (as of 1-5-22) in 21-22: **\$108,610**

Technology

- During this month, the following public labs were completely replaced using PCs purchased with grant funds. More installs will follow in March.

- Ashe's Adult Lab
 - Ashe's Teen Lab
 - Watauga's Adult Lab
 - Traphill's Public Lab
 - Wilkes's Youth Lab
- Kilby successfully completed a major hardware replacement and upgrade project involving all 4 of our servers, our firewall, and our disaster recovery system. This project was necessary due to the age of some of the hardware and the need for increased storage space on our servers and disaster recovery system.
 - Kilby successfully applied for and received approval for more funds from the Emergency Connectivity Funds Pool. These funds would cover for more costs for hotspots across all 3 counties. Many schools and libraries have had difficulty obtaining the reimbursements from the ECF thus far, so the deadline for reimbursement has been moved from June 30th, 2022 until June 30th, 2023.

COVID19: Where We Are Today:

- 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 have had staff out on Emergency Paid Sick Leave since our March meeting.
- We are watching the COVID19 stats closely, and seeing them go down.

The CDC is now tracking 3 metrics to identify the COVID county by county:

- # of COVID hospital admissions per 100,000 population
- % of hospital beds used for COVID patients
- # new COVID cases per 100,000 population

Ashe and Watauga Counties fall into the “high level” category using these categories; Wilkes is at the “medium level.”

Easing of restrictions across the region

Ashe County

3/20/2020 – State of Emergency declared, to end 5/8/2020

Schools -- masks optional

Watauga County

3-31-2020 – State of Emergency declared; ended 3/7/2022 (no masks required in county bldgs.)

Schools – 2/22/22 masks optional

Wilkes County

3/13/2020 – State of Emergency declared, to end 5/8/2020 (masks never required in county bldgs.)

5/8/20 – State of Emergency extended, but restrictions will follow the governor’s executive orders

Schools – 3/7/22 masks optional

ASU

Masks not required (some exceptions)

