



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Whatcom County Library System
March 21, 2023

Via Teams and Administrative Services
5205 Northwest Drive
Bellingham, WA 98226

WCLS Vision: *An engaged community where curiosity is cultivated, literacy flourishes and democratic ideals thrive.*

1. 9:00 a.m. **Call to Order.** Quorum determined. Land Acknowledgement.
We are on the ancestral homeland of the Nooksack and Lummi people. They have been its stewards since time immemorial, respecting the land, river and ocean with the understanding that everything is connected, related and alive. We acknowledge the elders and their collective and individual plights and achievements. We consider the legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together today. And we pursue ongoing action, to build lasting relationships and grow together so that all may prosper.
2. 9:05 a.m. **Open Public Comment Opportunity**
This period is set aside for persons wishing to address the Board. Each person may have up to three minutes for this purpose. Written comments may be submitted to Em.Olpinski@wcls.org prior to the meeting.
3. 9:15 a.m. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Meeting Minutes
 - b. Expenditures
4. 9:20 a.m. **Financial Report and Resolutions**
 - a. Finance Committee Report
 - b. Resolution 03/21/23-04 Amending the 2023 Capital Fund Budget
5. 9:30 a.m. **Trustee Education: LibCal Events Calendar and Meeting Room Use**
6. 10:00 a.m. **BREAK**
7. 10:10 a.m. **Staff Reports**
 - a. Executive Director
 - b. Deputy Director
 - c. Youth Services Manager
 - d. Community Relations Manager
8. 10:30 a.m. **Performance Measures and Committee Reports**
 - a. Performance Measures
 - b. Personnel Committee - Trustee Recruitment
 - c. Whatcom County Library Foundation
9. 10:45 a.m. **Announcements and Adjourn**

Board of Trustees Meetings are open to the public in accordance with RCW 42.30. The Board is currently holding meetings with options for in-person or remote participation. Persons wishing to be provided with an internet link or telephone number to access the meeting are asked to please email Em.Olpinski@wcls.org before 4:00 p.m. Monday, March 20, 2023. Written comments may be submitted to Em.Olpinski@wcls.org prior to the meeting.



Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	3/21/2023
Committee or Department:	Administration
Subject:	Consent Agenda – Board Meeting Minutes, Monthly Expenditures
Prepared By:	Jackie Saul
Impact upon Budget?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Supporting Documents:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Recommendation or Request: Approval of consent agenda items

Suggested Motion for Consideration: Move approval of consent agenda items as presented

Summary:

Meeting Minutes:

- February 21, 2023 Regular Board Meeting

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- February 1-15, 2023 payroll: check nos. 1033298744-1033298747 and voucher nos. 554139-554287 totaling \$220,107.57 and February 16-28, 2023 payroll: check nos. 554294-55442 and voucher nos. 1033418525-1033418528 totaling \$196,789.71.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits, telecommunication services and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$94,057.56; \$31,486.18 of this is for employee funded contributions to dental insurance premiums, PERS and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).
- Claim 2023-06G: warrant nos. 1162322-1162333 totaling \$12,497.16
- Claim 2023-07G: warrant nos. 1162505-1162530 totaling \$128,675.89
- Claim 2023-08G: warrant nos. 1162842-1162858 totaling \$40,572.24
- Claim 2023-09G: warrant nos. 1163903-1163919 totaling \$92,043.58

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2023-01C: warrant nos. 1162603-1162606 totaling \$4,794.19
- Claim 2023-02C: warrant nos. 1163087-1163090 totaling \$19,054.29
- Claim 2023-03C: warrant nos. 1164008-1164009 totaling \$67,779.54

Alternatives: N/A

Fiscal Impact: Expenditures for approval paid from available 2023 budgeted funds.

Comments: The Finance Committee has reviewed the General and Capital Fund claims listed above. They reviewed that there was one General Journal entry done in February.



UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

February 21, 2023

Location

This meeting was held in a hybrid manner, with remote attendance via Zoom and in-person attendance at Administrative Services, 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98225.

In Attendance

Trustees: Rodney Lofdahl, Chair; Erika Lautenbach, Secretary; Matthew Santos; and Holly Robinson. Absent: Lori Jump, Vice Chair.

Staff: Christine Perkins, Executive Director; Michael Cox, Deputy Director; Jackie Saul, Director of Finance and Administration; Thom Barthelmess, Youth Services Manager; Mary Vermillion, Community Relations Manager; Lisa Gresham, Collection Services Manager; Geoff Fitzpatrick, IT Services Manager; Beth Andrews, Human Resources Manager; Jennifer Rick, Foundation Development Director; Maggie Mae Nase, Learning Coordinator; Em Olpinski, Administrative Assistant.

Guests: Louise Granger, President of the Friends of Deming Library; Virginia Naeff; Vice President of the Friends of Deming Library.

Call to Order

In the absence of the Vice Chair and vacant Chair position, Erika determined quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m., followed by a reading of the WCLS Land Acknowledgement by Michael.

Open Public Comment

Virginia asked the group when the minutes from the January meeting will be available. Em responded that they will be available online at WCLS.org once they are approved, likely after today's meeting.

Annual General Meeting – Election of Officers and Committee Assignments

With Lori being absent from the meeting and Erika needing to leave early, Christine suggested amending the agenda to move the Annual General Meeting from item seven to item three, so the board Chair can be approved and run the meeting once Erika needs to leave. After the Annual General Meeting, the rest of the agenda can be followed as originally outlined.

Rod moved to amend the order of items on the agenda as discussed. Seconded. Approved unanimously.

The Annual General Meeting commenced. Erika asked Christine to go over the roles of the officer positions. Christine responded that the board Chair runs the monthly meeting and calls for special meetings when they are necessary. The Vice Chair serves as the second to the Chair and runs meetings in the Chair's absence. The board Secretary signs meeting minutes at board meetings and attends to any secretarial needs of the board, though

there are usually not many. The Whatcom County Library Foundation (WCLF) liaison works with the WCLF board and attends WCLF board meetings to help ensure the interests of WCLS and WCLF are aligned.

Christine also gave a summary of each committee the board members can participate in. The Finance Committee meets to discuss revenues, expenditures, claims, and the yearly budget. The Personnel Committee meets to discuss new board assignments when there is an opening on the board. The Technology (IT) Committee was created in response to the data breach WCLS experienced in 2022 and meets to discuss internet and network security and other technology issues. The Citizen's Advisory Committee will be introduced later in 2023 to help WCLS structure its levy lid lift efforts.

Holly suggested the following officer nominations:

Chair – Rodney
Vice Chair – Lori
Secretary – Erika
WCLF Liaison – Lori

Holly moved to approve the officer nominations. Seconded. Approved unanimously.

The trustees then discussed committee assignments for 2023 and decided on the following nominations:

Community Relations – Lori and Matthew
Finance – Rodney
Personnel – Rodney and Holly (Erika as alternate)
Technology – Lori and Matthew
Citizen's Advisory - Holly

Holly moved to approve the committee nominations as outlined in the discussion. Seconded. Approved unanimously.

Erika apologized for not actively participating in any of the committees. Her work commitments outside of the board have made scheduling difficult, but she is happy to keep serving as a trustee as long as the board continues to benefit from her presence.

As the new board Chair, Rodney began leading the meeting.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included minutes of the January 17, 2023 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as well as the following:

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- January 1-15, 2023 payroll: check nos. 1032923032-1032923034 and voucher nos. 553824-553973 totaling \$213,496.94 and January 16-31, 2023 payroll: check nos. 1033094273-1033094276 and voucher nos. 553981-554132 totaling \$224,644.30
- ACH transactions for flood insurance premiums, employee benefits and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$100,725.36; \$29,309.60 of this is for employee funded contributions to dental insurance premiums, PERS and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).
- Claim 2022-45G: warrant nos. 1160327-1160343 totaling \$48,535.91
- Claim 2022-46G: warrant nos. 1160678-1160702 totaling \$47,463.80
- Claim 2022-47G: warrant nos. 1160760-1160784 totaling \$65,509.36

- Claim 2022-48G: warrant nos. 1161374-1161383 totaling \$10,958.15
- Claim 2023-01G: warrant no. 1160344 totaling \$7,004.00
- Claim 2023-02G: warrant nos. 1160703-1160704 totaling \$101,345.73
- Claim 2023-03G: warrant nos. 1160785-1160793 totaling \$71,186.99
- Claim 2023-04G: warrant nos. 1161354-1161373 totaling \$98,837.36
- Claim 2023-05G: warrant nos. 1161651-1161667 totaling \$30,241.30

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2023-26C: warrant no. 1160930 totaling \$1,350.00

Matthew moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded. Unanimous board approval.

Financial Report and Resolutions: Finance Committee Report

Jackie reviewed her report, including a summary of the 2022 general fund. In 2022 we were \$10,823 shy of collecting our full budgeted levy, occurring as a result of property taxes not being paid. However, unpaid property taxes remain due with each property, so these funds will eventually be collected. There was also a delay in receiving American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds awarded in 2022. It is expected that these funds will be received in 2023. \$40,207 was received from FEMA for COVID and Sumas Flood Recovery. FEMA funds that were expected and not received in 2022 have already been included in the 2023 budget. Investment interest exceeded the amount initially budgeted by \$14,090. WCLS also received some unforeseen insurance recovery in 2022, primarily for flood damage at Sumas Library. We received less revenue than was budgeted from excise taxes on timber sales, which varies yearly based on timber market conditions.

In 2022, operating expenditures were 7.7% below budget, primarily in Personnel, Collection Materials, and Professional Services. Unspent funds budgeted for Collection Materials will be added to the Collection Project reserve fund. Several projects were postponed in 2022 because of unforeseen complications; the 2023 budget amendment includes rolling forward some Professional Services expenses that were budgeted in 2022.

Several capital projects were also postponed in 2022, and the Capital fund was significantly underspent. Jackie noted that a Capital fund amendment will be presented to the board at the March meeting.

Despite the challenges WCLS faced in 2022, several capital projects were seen to completion (or almost to completion), including: the Everson McBeath Community Library remodel, repairs of the Sumas Library, and the installation of a monument sign at Island Library.

Jackie then presented Resolution 02/21/23-3 Amending the 2023 General Fund Budget to the board. The purpose of the amendment is to adjust the 2023 beginning fund balance to account for the final changes to the 2022 ending fund balance. The amendment also adjusts our 2023 levy amount based on final numbers from the County Assessor.

Total operating revenues for 2023 will be increasing by \$577 in the amended budget. We have been withholding Washington Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) premiums for fiscal years 2019 – 2022, but because of a PFML payment system issue, payments will be made in 2023 and have been included in the amendment. General fund expenses have also been updated to include payments for transactions that were pending at the end of 2022, in addition to the remaining amount to be paid for the ongoing cyber security audit.

The fiscal impact of the budget amendment is a net increase of \$96,341 to the 2023 ending fund balance. \$60,000 of these funds are earmarked for the Collections Project Fund.

Holly asked if we did not collect our full levy in 2022 because of unpaid property taxes. Jackie answered yes.

Holly moved to accept Resolution 02/21/23-3 Amending the 2023 General Fund Budget, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.

Erika exited the meeting.

Trustee Education: Processing Department Tour

Lisa led a tour of the Processing Department for the trustees, with assistance from Processing Specialists Suzanne Carney and April Prado.

The processing department used to be called the Mendery, but WCLS does not mend many books anymore. The primary role of the Processing Department is to get new items in the collection ready to enter circulation.

Suzanne gave a summary of how books are processed. After books are cataloged, they are pulled by the processing department. The specialists have to print and apply spine labels, bar codes, and genre labels; and add a property stamp to the bottom of each book. Selectors provide the specialists with work orders for each book, which include instructions with any special details on how the book needs to be processed.

April gave the group an overview of how physical media items, board games, theme kits, and curriculum kits are processed. Much planning goes into labelling and packaging these items so they are easy for patrons to transport, use, and return.

Mending books is very time and labor intensive so books are only mended if they are irreplaceable or have historical value. Lisa noted that large print books go out of print very quickly, so we aim to keep the copies we have as long as possible.

Suzanne shared that she does most of the mending on print items. This can include replacing the plastic cover on a book, re-taping the cover, repairing ripped pages, or repairing damage to the book's spine. Repairs can also be done on digital items. Damaged DVD and CDs can be resurfaced, and damaged or dirty cases and cover artwork can be replaced. Playaway items can also be repaired, which usually involves replacing their charging pieces.

Lisa commented that the Processing Department is a place of glue, tape, and scissors. The specialists' job duties can be energetically and physically taxing, so Lisa is constantly working with the specialists to find new ways to process materials in easier, more efficient ways.

Break

Rodney adjourned the meeting for a break from 10:15 a.m. to 10:24 a.m.

Staff Reports: Executive Director

Christine thanked Lisa for leading a tour of the processing department. She then gave a summary of her written report, highlighting the ribbon cutting held to celebrate the reopening of Sumas Library on February 15. More than 111 people attended the event throughout the evening. Christine thanked Michael for providing décor at the event and for emceeding, the Friends of Sumas Library for providing refreshments, and Paul Fullner and Cayla Samms for their work on the project committee. Thom Barthelmess and Lisa Gresham also served on the committee. Christine recognized Carol Oberton for her dedicated work throughout the repair process in Sumas and commented that IT Services has done a great job ensuring all technology at the library is running smoothly. The Sumas community is very pleased to be back at the library.

The work of Public Service Assistants Tashina Villaluz and Joshua Olsen as Cultural Liaisons to the Lummi and Nooksack tribes has gained notice across Washington State, and they have both been invited to a gathering of tribal library staff preceding the Washington Library Association conference in March. Tashina and Joshua, along with Christine and Theresa Morrison, were able to give a presentation to Cindy Aden's UW iSchool class on community building. WCLS is among the first library systems in our state to have employees tasked with serving tribal communities, and it is exciting that the work of Tashina and Joshua is attracting interest.

Christine shared that WCLS is continuing to communicate with state legislators about the Birch Bay library project scope change. She and Dianne Marrs-Smith, President of the Friends of Birch Bay Library, are travelling to Olympia on Thursday, February 24, to discuss the scope change request denial with legislators. Members of

the Birch Bay Chamber of Commerce and the Friends of Birch Bay Library will also be joining them. Christine hopes they will be able to show that there is widespread support for the amended library plan in Birch Bay.

Christine concluded by thanking Holly for sharing the *New York Times* article “A Love Letter to Libraries, Long Overdue” with her. A WCLS patron left a kind note on this article’s social media post about the many online services and resources WCLS offers. This article can be found in the February Agenda packet.

Staff Reports: Deputy Director

Michael shared that the Sumas library has reopened with the addition of Library Express services. From 6 a.m. to 11 a.m., patrons can scan their library cards to access the lobby and retrieve holds that are ready. At the touch of a button, patrons can get support from library staff at a phone located in the checkout kiosk.

Michael also commented that the ribbon-cutting event at Sumas Library was a great success, and that it reminded him of WCLS’s 75 Anniversary Celebration in 2019. Michael also shared that it may be awhile until the Sumas Community Center on the other side of the building opens to the public. On the night of the ribbon cutting we were able to use the space for Carl Crouse to discuss his book, [The Waters are Rising](#). Until the Sumas Community Center officially reopens, we may be able to keep utilizing this space.

Deming Library has invested in an Ottlite Therapy lamp, commonly known as a “happy” lamp. This lamp gives off light that is very similar to the sun’s natural light spectrum and can help alleviate the symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder.

Michael shared that he has been able to attend a few WCLS events in recent weeks, both online and in person. WCLS’s events and programs help cultivate lifelong learning and a strong sense of community for those in attendance. Michael is grateful that library programming is running again in full-force.

The Whatcom Asset Building Coalition is providing a free tax preparation and resource event at the Lynden Library. In the past, similar programming has been offered at Bellingham Public Library. Michael is happy the WCLS community will now have access to this helpful program. Holly asked Michael what the Whatcom Asset Building Coalition is. Michael responded that it is a community organization that helps support financial stability and self-sufficiency through education and advocacy work. Michael noted that their website, Whatcomabc.org, does a great job of connecting people with resources.

Staff Reports: Youth Services Manager

Thom shared that in recent months Youth Services has been working to provide American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation at some programs. While ASL interpretation is expensive, being able to offer it to patrons is extremely valuable. The average minimum rate for interpretation is about \$200 per hour, but we have been working with a private contractor who is a patron at Lynden Library and is offering interpretation services at a reduced rate. Thom thanked Dianne Marrs-Smith and Theresa Morrison for helping secure this arrangement and Jackie for making room in the budget for these expenses.

Youth Services is aiming to make the experience of families who need ASL interpretation at library events the same as for other families, meaning that they do not have to alert the library when they will not be attending a weekly event. Even when the family in need of ASL interpretation is not present, everyone benefits from exposure to ASL.

Holly pointed out that she believes WCLS is legally required to offer ASL interpretation. Jackie responded that WCLS is required to offer interpretation services when they are requested. Holly mentioned that many people going to school to learn ASL need a chance to practice. She suggested reaching out to local schools with ASL programs to see if students could offer interpretation at a reduced rate.

Thom mentioned the importance of providing a high level of interpretation to patrons in order for this service to be helpful.

Jennifer asked Thom how often ASL interpretation is currently being offered. Thom responded that it is offered weekly at one Library. Jennifer is curious if private funding could be pursued to help WCLS offer interpretation services.

Staff Reports: Community Relations Manager

Mary discussed her written report, sharing that Community Relations has launched a new quarterly “Friends Shipment” to the Friends of the Library groups to help keep them informed about library news and to show ways they can help support WCLS. The first shipment included information on Whatcom READS, Library Giving Day with WCLF, and news about the Sumas Library. Each shipment comes in an in-house designed package and will focus on different library initiatives and updates.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Performance Measures

In addition to his written report, Michael shared that physical circulation was down about 2% in January, as compared to January 2022. Blaine and Deming observed the largest decreases in physical circulation in January. Use of Northwest Drive Express was also down, possibly because people are returning to visiting full-service libraries in person.

Rodney asked if the decrease in circulation at the Blaine and Deming Library represents a trend. Michael responded that it is hard to tell because of the impact of the pandemic. However, this decrease in circulation could be a sign of decreasing engagement with physical media like CDs and DVDs. Holly noted that door counts at Blaine and Deming Library have increased from January 2022. Lisa believes that patrons are likely seeking out services at libraries more and are not always checking out materials during visits.

Rodney asked if there are other performance measures available that could supply some context surrounding the decrease in circulation. Holly commented that having more context behind this measure would be helpful.

Michael replied that there is a wealth of data that could be included in the performance measures report. The statistics that are included monthly are those that have proven to be consistently useful over the years. It could be investigated, though, if there are other measures that would be helpful to track.

Jennifer commented that the seasonal residents of Blaine can travel again, and she is curious if this could be a factor behind the decrease in circulation at this branch. Michael commented that he believes the pandemic has been the biggest factor behind shifts in circulation. Throughout the pandemic many people changed their habits and are likely still adjusting to using the library again.

Christine noted that circulation at Blaine and Deming Library has been consistently down throughout the past year. It could be helpful to further investigate patterns of behavior in these communities to understand why this is occurring.

Holly commented that the *New York Times* article Christine shared in her report focused on the services libraries offer and how they utilize their spaces, while less emphasis was placed on the circulation of materials. There may be a shift occurring at libraries of patrons seeking out services more than materials. Holly is also curious how patron engagement with libraries can be captured either statistically or anecdotally. Michael commented that value creation stories at branch libraries are shared at board meetings, just usually not in the form of performance measures.

Lisa shared that use of Overdrive increased significantly in January, and Kanopy was accessed by WCLS patrons in ten countries. As local cardholders travel the world, they are still able to benefit from WCLS’s resources. Lisa also noted that working closely with Community Relations helps increase database engagement—following a campaign that ran in December, we observed increased use of Creativebug.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Personnel Committee

No report.

Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Whatcom County Library Foundation

Jennifer reported that three new members joined the WCLF board in January, and the foundation is currently sending out grants for annual programs, such as Book for Babies and Books Unbound.

Planning is underway for an event in Ferndale to let potential donors know about planned giving opportunities. Library Giving Day will be held this year on April 4, and Branch Out will be held September 8 at the Bellwether Hotel. A ukulele concert in Joan Airoidi's Memory is planned for September 24 at the Deming Library and will benefit WCLF's Airoidi Innovation Fund. Joan founded WCLF with funds she was awarded for standing up to the FBI to protect patron privacy, which makes a concert benefitting WCLF a fitting way to celebrate her memory.

Announcements and Adjourn

No further announcements.

Rod adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be March 21, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. online via Microsoft Teams and at Administrative Services.

Address: 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham.

Rodney Lofdahl, Board Chair

03/21/2023

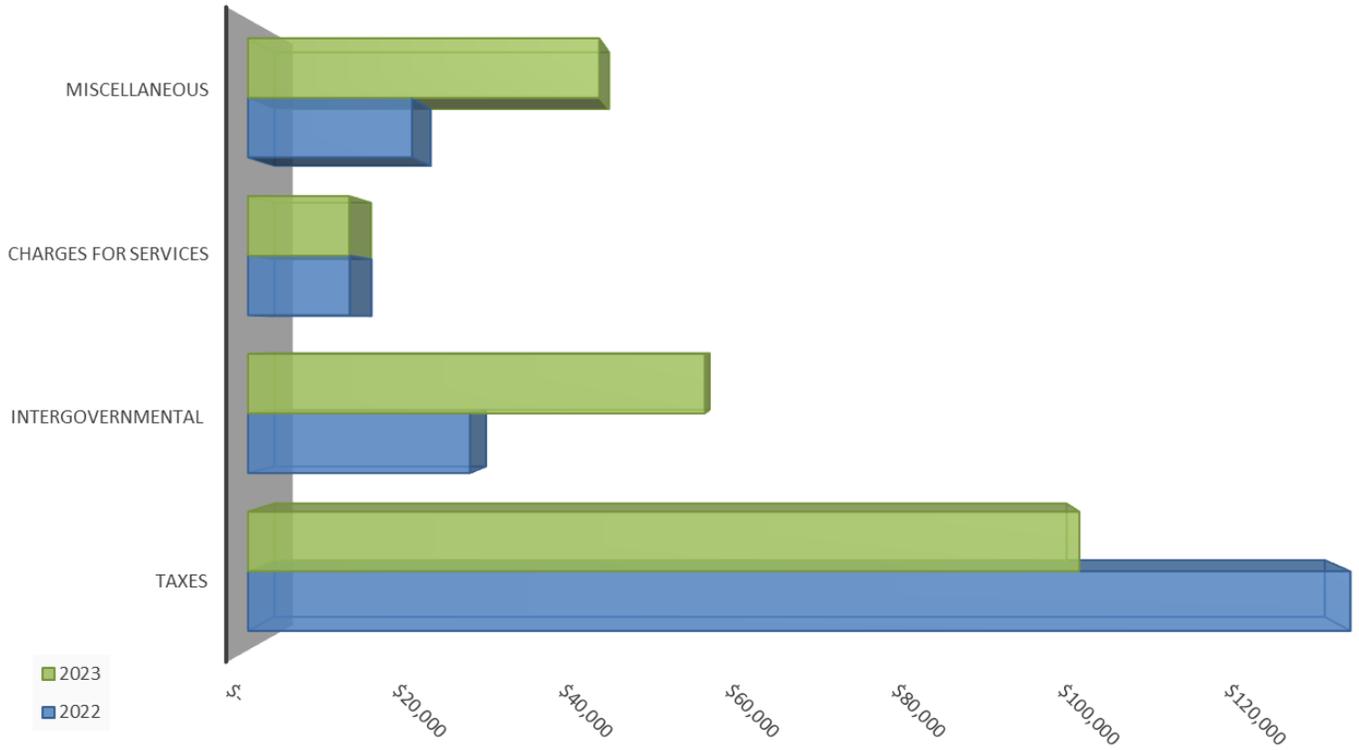
Date

Em Olpinski, Admin. Assistant

February Revenue

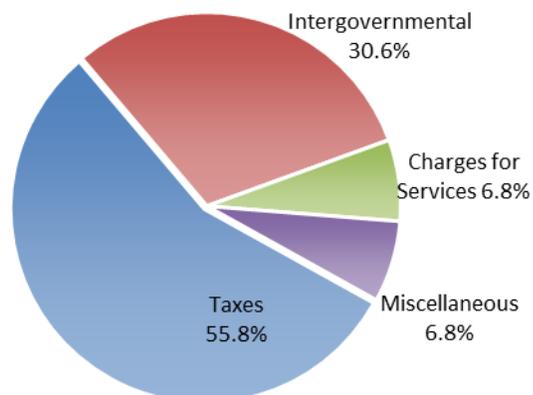
2023 Budget Revenues - Year-To-Date						
February 2023 (17% of FY)						
Acct No	Description	Budgeted Revenues*	Actual Revenues YTD	% of Actual Revenues YTD	% of Budgeted Revenues Received YTD	Budget Variance
310	TAXES					
311.10	General Property Taxes	\$ 9,660,921	\$ 103,684	47.76%	1.07%	\$ (9,557,236)
	TOTAL TAXES	\$ 9,660,921	\$ 103,684	47.76%	1.07%	\$ (9,557,236)
330	INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE					
333.4531	State Library Grant - LSTA	\$ 15,964	\$ 15,114	6.96%	94.68%	\$ (850)
333.9700	Fed Indirect Grant - DHS	45,542	27,046	12.46%	59.39%	(18,496)
337.10	Local Grants, Entitlements & Other	175,000	6,195	2.85%	3.54%	(168,805)
337.20	Leasehold Excise Tax	25,000	8,617	3.97%	34.47%	(16,383)
	TOTAL INTERGOV. REVENUE	\$ 261,506	\$ 56,971	26.24%	21.79%	\$ (204,535)
340	CHARGES FOR GOODS & SERVICES					
341.80	Printing & Duplication Services	\$ 4,000	\$ 582	0.27%	14.55%	\$ (3,418)
347.20	Library Use Fees	12,100	12,060	5.55%	99.67%	(40)
	TOTAL CHARGES FOR SERVICES	\$ 16,100	\$ 12,642	5.82%	78.52%	\$ (3,458)
360	MISCELLANEOUS REVENUES					
361.11	Investment Interest	\$ 105,000	\$ 28,215	13.00%	26.87%	\$ (76,785)
362.10	Rents & Leases	2,000	\$ 640	0.29%	32.00%	(1,360)
367.10	Contributions & Donations	34,000	\$ 9,916	4.57%	29.16%	(24,084)
369.10	Sale of Surplus	100	\$ 10	0.00%	10.00%	(90)
369.81	Cashier's Overages or Shortages	-	\$ 1	0.00%	0.00%	1
369.9101	Other Misc. Revenue	20,000	\$ 3,380	1.56%	16.90%	(16,620)
369.9102	Reimburse Lost/Damaged Books	10,000	\$ 1,284	0.59%	12.84%	(8,716)
369.9106	COBRA Reimbursement	541	\$ 364	0.17%	67.17%	(178)
	TOTAL MISC. REVENUES	\$ 171,641	\$ 43,809	20.18%	25.52%	\$ (127,833)
	TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	\$ 10,110,168	\$ 217,106	100.00%	2.15%	\$ (9,893,062)
390	OTHER FINANCING SOURCES					
395.10	Proceeds from Sales	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%	0.00%	\$ -
395.20	Insurance Recoveries	-	-	0.00%	0.00%	-
	TOTAL OTHER FINANCING SOURCES	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%	0.00%	\$ -
	TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 10,110,168	\$ 217,106	100.00%	2.15%	\$ (9,893,062)
	*As amended 2/21/23					

General Fund Operating Revenue to Date-Compared to Prior Year



Actual General Fund Revenue to Date				
	2022		2023	% Change
Taxes	\$	137,474	\$ 103,684	-24.58%
Intergovernmental		27,698	56,971	105.69%
Charges for Services		12,705	12,642	-0.49%
Miscellaneous		20,464	43,809	114.08%
Total Operating Revenue	\$	198,341	217,106	9.46%
Other Financing Sources	\$	-	-	0.00%
Total Revenue	\$	198,341	\$ 217,106	9.46%

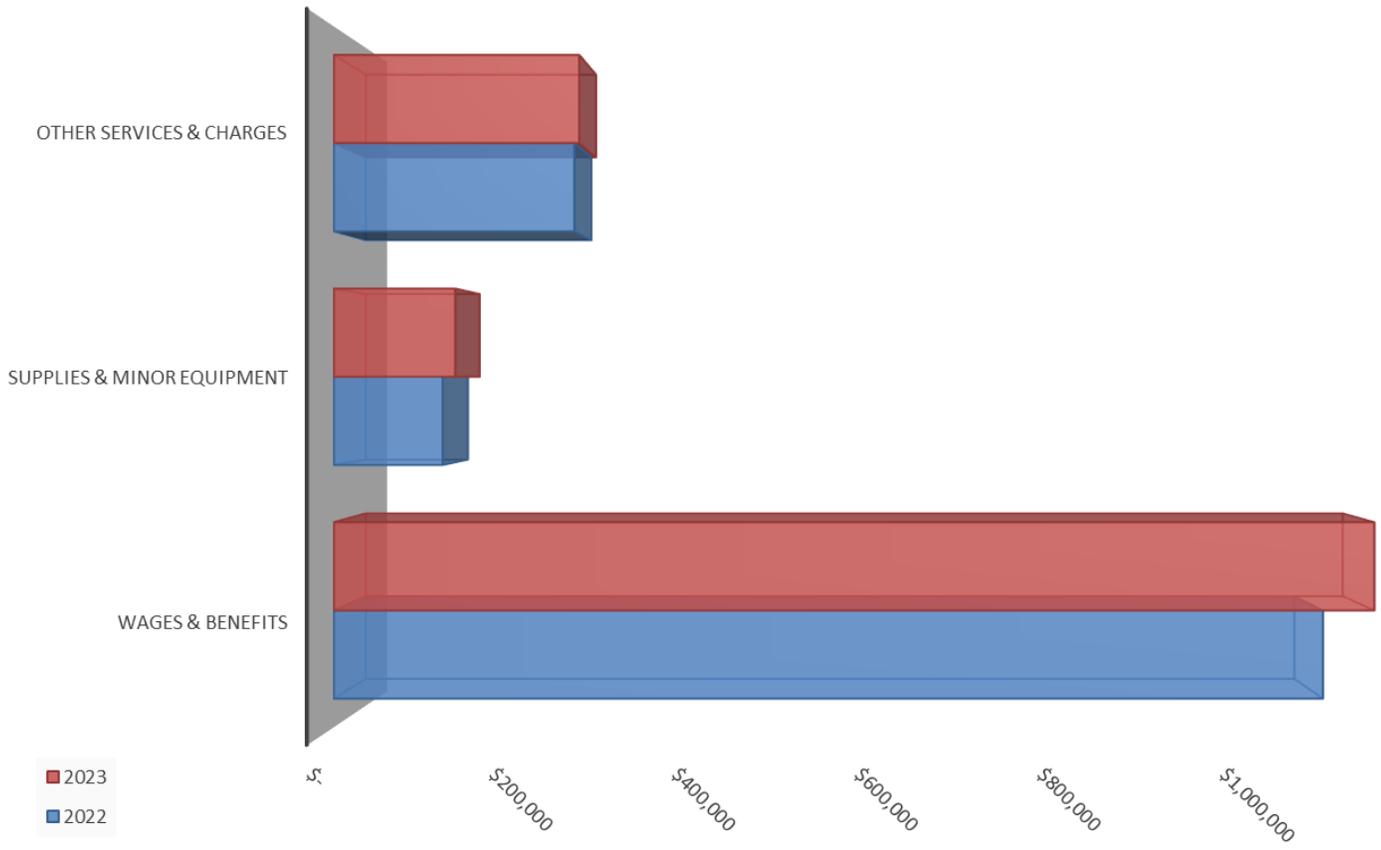
YTD Operating Revenue by Category



February Expenditures

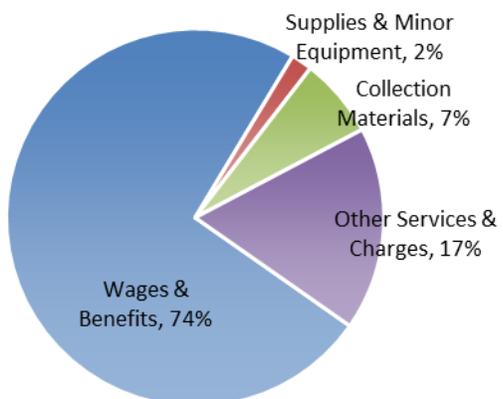
2023 Budget Expenditures - Year-To-Date						
February 2023 (17% of FY)						
Acct No	Description	Budgeted Expenditures*	Actual Expenditures YTD	% of Actual Expenditures YTD	% of Budgeted Expenditures Spent YTD	Budget Variance
572	SALARIES, WAGES, & BENEFITS					
572.10	Salaries and Wages	\$ 5,730,222	\$ 895,878	55.32%	15.63%	\$ (4,834,345)
572.20	Benefits	2,078,993	301,305	18.60%	14.49%	(1,777,688)
	TOTAL SALARIES, WAGES, & BENEFITS	\$ 7,809,215	\$ 1,197,182	73.92%	15.33%	\$ (6,612,033)
572.30	SUPPLIES & MINOR EQUIPMENT					
572.3031	Office & Operating Supplies	\$ 134,800	\$ 11,844	0.73%	8.79%	\$ (122,956)
572.3032	Fuel	28,900	120	0.01%	0.42%	(28,780)
572.3034	Collection Materials	1,250,000	110,350	6.81%	8.83%	(1,139,650)
572.3035	Small Tools & Minor Equipment	220,610	17,523	1.08%	7.94%	(203,087)
	TOTAL SUPPLIES & MINOR EQUIPMENT	\$ 1,634,310	\$ 139,837	8.63%	8.56%	\$ (1,494,473)
572.40	OTHER SERVICES & CHARGES					
572.4041	Professional Services	\$ 567,277	\$ 148,058	9.14%	26.10%	\$ (419,219)
572.4042	Communication	133,118	16,147	1.00%	12.13%	(116,971)
572.4043	Travel	32,600	684	0.04%	2.10%	(31,916)
572.4044	Taxes & Operating Assessments	500	44	0.00%	8.71%	(456)
572.4045	Operating Rentals & Leases	22,168	2,786	0.17%	12.57%	(19,382)
572.4046	Insurance	96,982	73,066	4.51%	75.34%	(23,916)
572.4047	Utilities	153,176	20,860	1.29%	13.62%	(132,316)
572.4048	Repair & Maintenance	149,780	11,551	0.71%	7.71%	(138,229)
572.4049	Miscellaneous	102,055	9,317	0.58%	9.13%	(92,738)
	TOTAL OTHER SERVICES & CHARGES	\$ 1,257,656	\$ 282,513	17.44%	22.46%	\$ (975,143)
	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	\$ 10,701,181	\$ 1,619,532	100.00%	15.13%	\$ (9,081,649)
590	OTHER FINANCING USES					
597.10	Transfers-Out to Capital	\$ 60,000	\$ -	0.00%	0.00%	\$ -
	TOTAL OTHER FINANCING USES	\$ 60,000	\$ -	0.00%	0.00%	\$ -
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 10,761,181	\$ 1,619,532	100.00%	15.05%	\$ (9,141,649)
	NET INCOME (LOSS)	\$ (651,013)	\$ (1,402,426)			\$ (751,413)
	FUND BALANCE SUMMARY					
	Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 10,630,324	\$ 10,630,324			
	Net Income	(651,013)	(1,402,426)			(751,413)
	Ending Fund Balance	\$ 9,979,311	\$ 9,227,898			\$ (751,413)
	*As amended 2/21/23					

General Fund Operating Expenditures to Date-Compared to Prior Year

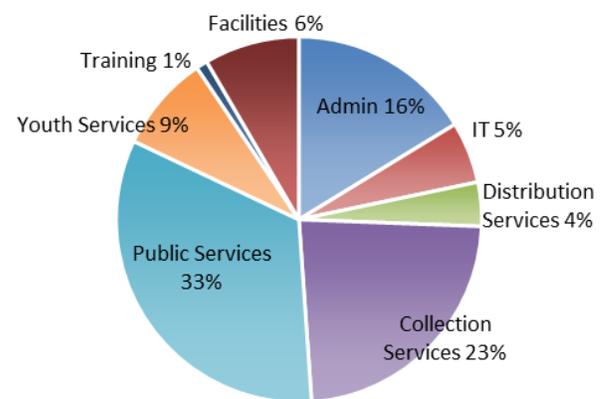


Actual General Fund Expenditures to Date Compared to Prior Year			
	2022	2023	% Change
Wages & Benefits	\$ 1,138,029	\$ 1,197,182	5.20%
Supplies & Minor Equipment	125,469	139,837	11.45%
Other Services & Charges	276,760	282,513	2.08%
Total Operating Expenditures	1,540,259	1,619,532	5.15%
Other Financing Uses	\$ -	-	0.00%
Total Expenditures	\$ 1,540,259	\$ 1,619,532	5.15%

YTD Expense by Category



YTD Expense by Department



Fund Balance Summary	2023		
	2022 Actual	2023 Budgeted	Actual to Date
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 10,583,985	10,630,324	\$ 10,630,324
Revenue	9,994,550	10,110,168	217,106
Expenditures	(9,948,211)	(10,761,181)	(1,619,532)
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 10,630,324	\$ 9,979,311	\$ 9,227,898
Ending Fund Balance Designation Detail	2023		
	2022 Actual	2023 Budgeted	Actual to Date
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Cash Flow	\$ 3,369,707	\$ 3,502,655	\$ 3,359,671
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Emergency	850,936	884,509	884,509
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Capital Transfer	172,000	60,000	60,000
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Unemployment Comp Reserve	13,599	14,403	14,403
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Birch Bay Operating Fund Reserve	600,000	600,000	600,000
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Facility Ownership & Library Svcs Fund Reserve	3,192,315	3,192,315	3,237,315
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Facility Maintenance Fund	650,000	650,000	650,000
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Operating Cost Stabilization Fund	250,000	250,000	250,000
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Collection Project Fund	112,000	172,000	172,000
Total Designated Ending Fund Balance	9,210,557	9,325,882	9,227,898
Beginning Fund Balance less designated funds	1,373,428	1,304,442	1,402,426
Net Income	46,339	(651,013)	(1,402,426)
Ending Unassigned Funds with no designation	1,419,767	653,429	-
Ending Designated Funds	9,210,557	9,325,882	9,227,898
Total Ending Fund Balance	\$ 10,630,324	\$ 9,979,311	\$ 9,227,898

February Summary

- Property tax revenue is lagging, as is typical this time of year. We have received \$103,684 as of the end of February. We have dipped into the Cash Flow reserve fund by \$143,000 and will likely do so again in March. These funds will be replenished in April, which is the first of two annual property tax payment deadlines.
- Revenue from annual funding sources, including a service contract with the Whatcom Co. Jail (\$12,000) and annual support from the Whatcom County Library Foundation (\$4,964), has been received. We also received a payment from the State Library for federal American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) reimbursement that was expected in 2022.
- Up front payments have also been made to certain vendors, including for annual property/liability/auto insurance premiums and IT and collection software maintenance contracts, including to Innovative Interfaces, Inc. for the Polaris ILS.
- The new Facilities Services Manager position has been posted and will close at the end of March. This position was approved by the Board of Trustees at the June 2022 Facilities Retreat with the aim of increasing leadership capacity for facilities projects and overall facilities maintenance.
- The Friends of Deming Library have approved installation of a new metal roof on the Deming Library Building. The work is anticipated to take place later this spring and summer. The LED lighting retrofit project is also moving forward, albeit slowly, as the vendor is working to procure the new fixtures through their supplier.

WCLS Account Summary

WCLS follows the Washington State Budgeting, Accounting and Reporting System (BARS). Below is a brief description of revenue and expense accounts.

Revenue Accounts:

Taxes: This section includes taxes on real and personal property, which are the primary revenue source for the library system, making up 95% of operating revenues received. The bulk of property tax revenue is received in April and October of each year.

Intergovernmental Revenue: Sources of intergovernmental revenue include grant revenues received from state and federal sources and revenues resulting from the leasing of, or sale of, timber and other products from state forest lands managed by the Department of Natural Resources. It also includes taxes from private harvest timber sales.

Charges for Goods and Services: This category includes fees received from library printing and copying services. It also includes use fees from the sale of library cards to non-residents and from contracted services with other entities, such as the Whatcom County Jail.

Miscellaneous Revenues: This source of revenue includes investment interest earned through participation in the Whatcom County Investment Fund. It also includes fees received for library meeting room use, private grants and donations, charges for lost or damaged library materials, and other miscellaneous revenue such as rebates and reimbursements.

Other Financing Sources: This category includes non-revenue items such as proceeds from the sale of capital assets and insurance recoveries.

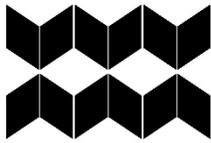
Expense Accounts:

Salaries, Wages, and Benefits: This expense category includes wages and fringe benefits for WCLS employees, including medical and dental insurance; contributions for employees enrolled in the State of Washington Public Employee Retirement System (PERS); contributions into the Social Security and Medicare systems; workers' compensation (Labor and Industries); state Paid Family and Medical Leave; long-term disability insurance; and unemployment compensation.

Supplies and Minor Equipment: This section includes office, program, maintenance, and custodial supplies, as well as fuel. It includes small tools and equipment items such as computer hardware, furnishing and fixtures, shelving, book returns and carts, etc. It also includes the collection materials budget that comprise WCLS's lending collection.

Other Services and Charges: This category includes costs for professional services, such as legal, payroll, programming, cataloging, and Interlibrary Loan services. It includes communication costs, such as postage, courier services, and phone and internet charges. Travel; use and excise taxes; auto, liability and property insurance; utilities; repairs and maintenance; and other miscellaneous expenses are also reported here.

Other Financing Uses: This category includes transfers to the WCLS Capital fund. This transfer is equal to the prior year's revenue received from certain intergovernmental sources, such as those resulting from the sale of timber and other products from state forest lands.



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Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	3/21/2023
Committee or Department:	Administration
Subject:	Resolution 03/21/23-04 Amending the 2023 Capital Fund Budget
Prepared By:	Jackie Saul
Impact upon Budget?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Supporting Documents:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Recommendation or Request: Approval of Resolution 03/21/23-04 amending the 2023 Capital Fund Budget.

Suggested Motion for Consideration: Move approval of Resolution 03/21/23-04 amending the 2023 Capital Fund Budget as presented.

Summary:

This resolution adjusts the Capital Fund Budget as follows:

- The beginning balance is updated to reflect the 2022 ending balance.
- Capital Fund revenue is updated to reflect a reduction to the anticipated reimbursement from the Friends of the Deming Library for the lighting retrofit project. The Friends will still be contributing to the project, although at a reduced rate, as they are also investing in a new metal roof for the Deming Library in 2023.
- Capital Fund expenditures are updated to include costs for projects that were not completed in 2022 and will continue into 2023.

Alternatives: N/A

Fiscal Impact: An increase of \$73,900 to the beginning fund balance, a decrease of \$4,360 in revenue, and an increase of \$51,287 in expenditures, resulting in a net increase of \$18,252 to the ending fund balance.

Comments: N/A

2023 Capital Budget Amendment

Project		2023 Budget Adopted	2023 Amended	Adjustment Amount
Building and Furnishings Enhancement and Replacement program				
Facilities	Everson Renovation	\$ -	\$ 2,260	\$ 2,260
Facilities	Sumas Refurbish & Reopen	122,108	134,108	12,000
Facilities	Birch Bay New Branch Furnishings	150,000	150,000	-
Facilities	Branch Renovations/Upgrades	67,000	87,248	20,248
Sub-Total Building and Furnishings Enhancement and Replacement Program		339,108	373,616	34,508
Building Repair and Maintenance Program				
Facilities	Admin Services Maintenance & Improvements	20,000	20,000	-
Facilities	Branch Lighting Retrofit Upgrades	85,000	89,729	4,729
Admin	Exterior Signage Updates	25,000	25,000	-
Sub-Total Building Repair and Maintenance Program		130,000	134,729	4,729
Equipment Replacement Program				
Admin	Vehicle Replacement	30,000	30,000	-
Sub-Total Equipment Replacement Program		30,000	30,000	-
Access Improvement Program				
Youth Svcs	School Book Returns	23,000	23,000	-
Public Svcs	Library Express	29,831	41,882	12,051
Subtotal Access Improvement Programs		52,831	64,882	12,051
Land Purchase/New Branch/Branch Upgrades				
Public Svcs	Birch Bay Library Design	-	-	-
Sub-total Land Purchase/New Branch/Branch Upgrades		-	-	-
Total Expenditures		\$ 551,939	\$ 603,226	\$ 51,287

Funding Summary		2023 Budget Adopted	2023 Amended	Adjustment Amount
	Investment Interest	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000	-
	Grants/Reimbursements	10,000	5,640	(4,360)
	Transfers-In From General Fund and Reserves	60,000	60,000	-
	Prior Period Ending Fund Balance	1,555,677	1,629,577	73,900
Total Funding		\$ 1,639,677	\$ 1,709,216	69,539

Fund Balance Summary		2022 Projected	2023	Adjustment Amount
	Assigned Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 555,677	\$ 629,577	73,900
	Committed Beginning Fund Balance - Emergency	1,000,000	1,000,000	-
Total Beginning Fund Balance		\$ 1,555,677	\$ 1,629,577	73,900
	Revenues	24,000	19,640	(4,360)
	Transfers-In	60,000	60,000	-
	Expenditures	551,939	603,226	51,287
	Transfers-Out	-	-	-
	Net Income	(467,939)	(523,586)	(55,647)
Ending Fund Balance		\$ 1,087,738	\$ 1,105,990	18,252



RESOLUTION NO. 03/21/23-04

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
WHATCOM COUNTY RURAL LIBRARY DISTRICT AMENDING
THE 2023 CAPITAL FUND BUDGET**

WHEREAS, at the December 20, 2022 Board of Trustees meeting the Board approved the Final 2023 Capital Fund budget; and,

WHEREAS, the beginning fund balance needs to be adjusted to reflect the actual balance at the beginning of the 2023 budget year; and,

WHEREAS, Capital Fund revenues need to be adjusted to reflect a reduction in anticipated Grant/Reimbursement revenue; and,

WHEREAS, Capital Fund expenditures need to be adjusted to include additional funds for projects that were incomplete at the end of 2022 and will carry forward into 2023; and,

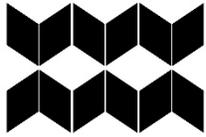
WHEREAS, an amendment to the 2023 Capital Fund budget is needed to reflect these adjustments and estimated fund balances;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that budget amendment Resolution No. 03/21/23-04 be adopted, amending the 2023 Capital Fund budget to \$1,709,217 as follows:

Capital Fund - Budgetary Accounts		
308 Beginning Fund Balance	\$1,629,577	
360 Miscellaneous Revenue	19,640	
397 Transfers In	60,000	
594 Capital Expenditures		\$603,227
508 Ending Fund Balance		1,105,990
Total	\$1,709,217	\$1,709,217

Approved by the Whatcom County Rural Library District Board of Trustees this 21st day of March, 2023

Board Chair



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Executive Director's Report

March 2023

COMMUNITY

I am sorry to report that Whatcom County Library Foundation board member Paul Steere passed away recently after a brief battle with pneumonia. Paul graduated with his Master's in Librarianship from University of Washington in 1969 and had a lengthy career running libraries for U.S. military families overseas before retiring to Semiahmoo.

ACCESS

Our colleagues at Bellingham Public Library are making progress on preparing their new branch at the Bellis Fair Mall. Everyone is invited to their ribbon cutting celebration, which will be held April 26 at 2 p.m. The library branch will be located in the mall near the Bellingham Makerspace.

RESOURCES

In light of the increased number of challenges to library materials nationwide and a recent First Amendment Audit at one of our branches, several of our librarians put together a project proposal to develop staff training called "The Right to Read". Modeled after our "Reading Conversations" workshops, these training opportunities will provide staff with the skills to support intellectual freedom and promote the idea that the library is for everyone.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Three cheers for our Public Services Assistants—Hispanic Focus Amelia Martinez and Diana Antaño and Youth Focus PSA Evie Harman, who will be receiving 2023 Merit Awards from the Washington Library Association for their outreach work to the migrant community.

STEWARDSHIP

It's hard to believe it, but the "new" Lynden Library is turning 25! Branch Manager Dianne Marrs-Smith and I will be meeting with Mayor Korthuis and City of Lynden staff to discuss extending our Interlocal Agreement for Library Services.

Christine Perkins

Executive Director

Gen Zers are bookworms but say they're shunning e-books because of eye strain, digital detoxing, and their love for libraries

[Kate Duffy](#)

Mar 10, 2023, 2:05 AM

Gen Z is choosing to read paperback books over e-books, data and interviews indicate. The phone-obsessed Gen Z is surprisingly a sucker for paperback books.

- **Three Gen Zers gave their reasons for preferring printed editions over e-books.**
- **One Oxford University student said real books strained his eyes less and allowed him to focus more.**

There's no doubt that Gen Z loves to read.

This generation, defined as people born between [1997 and 2015](#), is often considered [phone-obsessed](#) and addicted to technology. But when it comes to reading, Gen Zers say they prefer to pick up a printed book over an e-book.

Book sales in the US and the [UK](#) have boomed in the past two years, the management consultancy [McKinsey](#) found. Sales in the US hit a record of more than [843 million](#) units in 2021, while last year had the second-highest number sales, at almost [789 million](#). This increasing popularity was partly because of [Gen Z](#) and its social-media trends, including the hashtag #BookTok on TikTok, McKinsey said.

Perhaps the most surprising trend is not Gen Zers' love of books but the way they consume them. While their pastimes usually [involve a screen](#), data and interviews with Insider suggest this doesn't apply to books. They're choosing to ditch digital formats and opt for the timeless paperback book.

For UK book buyers ages 13 to 24, print books were the most popular way to read between November 2021 and November 2022, as they accounted for 80% of purchases, research from Nielsen BookData found. That's compared with e-books making up 14% of sales from this age group in the same period, according to the data.

"There is nothing like opening up a real book on a couch or beach," Madalyn Boyd, a 23-year-old from Michigan, told Insider. She said while e-books were affordable and great for traveling, her preference was printed books.

"The smell of real books is so personal," Boyd said, adding that she loved visiting libraries and shopping in bookstores.

Wang Sum Luk, a 21-year-old student studying English at Oxford University, said he'd used an e-book in the past but found it impractical. While e-books may seem more convenient, Luk prefers a print edition, he said.

"I don't feel as much eye strain reading them, and I find myself focusing more when reading from a printed book with my computer off," Luk, who reads at least half a dozen books a week, said.

He said he also liked using the university library for books.

In a [survey](#) of Americans by Pew Research between January 2021 and February 2021, almost 70% of respondents between the ages of 18 and 29 said they read print books, while 42% said they read e-books. Overall, more than 80% of them said they read a book in any format — the highest percentage out of all age groups surveyed, according to Pew Research.

Lili Dewrance, a 23-year-old in London, told Insider that reading an e-book didn't let her take a break from the screen, or "digitally detox."

"There's pleasure in treating myself to a new novel, and I enjoy supporting my local bookstore — it feels like a treat, and you can't replicate this experience by simply downloading it onto a digital device," Dewrance said.

COMMUNITY

Community organizations frequently request to partner with WCLS in order to connect their work with a broader audience. When proposed activities align with WCLS goals, staff work with the presenter to develop the program, schedule the space, coordinate with other branch locations as interested, and create marketing materials to generate interest. If a request is not accepted to be a library-sponsored event, individuals and groups may reserve a meeting space and lead the programming effort independently. During the month of February, some of the programs presented along with community partners included: Self-Defense Classes with Arc Tactical and the Columbia Valley Parks & Recreation District; Advanced Care Planning with PeaceHealth; Dementia Education Series with Silverado; College and Career Planning for Lummi Families with Futures Northwest; and Introduction to Seed Saving with the Salish Seed Guild. Together we amplify each organization's efforts, share important information with the community, and make good use of these shared community meeting spaces.

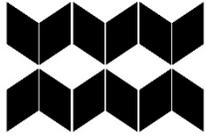
RESOURCES

Providing meeting spaces for individual study and group meetings is an important resource provided by WCLS. Currently there are ten reservable meeting room spaces across six branch locations ranging in capacity from 3 – 50 people. Additionally, an outdoor space is available at the North Fork Library. Over the past six months, about 130 unique groups reserved these spaces. In addition, an unquantified number of people reserved these spaces for individual use for purposes of studying, attending virtual meetings or undisclosed uses. Commercial use is allowed and requires a fee. Online reservation requests along with policy and procedure guidelines can be found at www.wcls.org/reserve-meeting-space/.

STEWARDSHIP

The Washington State Library awarded WCLS \$6,000 in professional development grants in support of staff attendance at the Washington Library Association's upcoming conference taking place in Wenatchee, WA at the end of March.

Michael Cox
Deputy Director



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Youth Services Report

March 2023

ACCESS / RESOURCES

In addition to the many public programs for littles, kids, and teens that we do in our libraries, the Youth Services staff spends a great deal of time reaching out into the community to connect to young people we may be missing in our locations and at the Bookmobile. There is a wide variety of places and contexts where we either promote or deliver library services to young people where they are.

This February and March, in addition to almost 200 in-branch programs for young people, the Youth Services Team planned and executed more than 100 inreach and outreach events.

Most of those events are outreach events, where we travel to a school to talk about the library or offer library services to the kids and teens in attendance. Those outreach opportunities included:

- Storytimes at the Nooksack Tribal Head Start, Mount Baker Head Start, Ferndale Jumpstart, and Lynden ECEAP
- Storytimes for Beach, Cascadia, Central, Custer, Eagleridge, and Skyline Elementary Schools
- Kindergarten Registration Nights at Acme, Harmony, and Kendall Elementary Schools
- Booktalks at Acme, Harmony, and Kendall Elementary Schools
- Class Visits at Irene Reither and Kendall Elementary Schools
- Book Clubs at Vossbeck Elementary School and the Whatcom County Juvenile Detention Center
- Lunchtime Pop-Up Libraries at Horizon and Vista Middle Schools
- Lit Circles at Lynden Middle School
- ConnectED Presentations at Meridian Middle School and Meridian High School

In addition to these off-site events, we also provide inreach opportunities, inviting groups into our facilities for individualized programming and instruction. This March those opportunities included:

- Library Tours for the Lynden Co-Op Preschool, Kids Caboose Preschool, Kids of the Kingdom Preschool, and Redeemer Lutheran Church Preschool
- Field Trips for the Point Roberts School
- Volunteer Hours for Point Roberts teens
- A Visit from parents in the English Language Learning class at Bellingham Technical College
- A Visit from the East County Teen Program Provider group

Each of these events involves planning and preparation, and together they represent a large expense of departmental time and resources. These events also offer something special and unique to the young people in attendance. Hana Boxberger, Youth Services Assistant at the Lynden Library, shares these thoughts about some regular visits she has been making to a second-grade class in the Meridian School District.

Every other month or so, I visit a class of second graders at Irene Reither Elementary. When I walked in this past week, I was greeted with enthusiastic waves. One young girl ran up to me, threw her arms around me before I could even take my coat off, and would not let go. When we all sat down together, the first question I was asked was whether the class could keep one of the books I had brought on my last visit for a while longer. How could I say no? The book in question is *Not Quite Narwhal* by Jessie Sima. For the past several weeks they have been loving the story of Kelp, a unicorn who lives in the sea with narwhals and doesn't know what a unicorn is, let alone that he is one. When he meets a herd of unicorns on land ("Land narwhals!"), he starts to believe that he belongs on land with them and not in the sea with the narwhals. Kelp comes to realize that perhaps he doesn't have to choose at all.

Kelp's story resonated with this group of kids. Who knows exactly why? Most likely, it means something a little different to each of them. The stories we best connect to speak to us in a completely unique way. Regardless, imagine the joy on their faces when I pulled out a copy of a book called *Perfectly Pegasus* by Jessie Sima, the companion title to *Not Quite Narwhal*. Kelp the unicorn even makes an appearance. You would think it was all their birthdays at once for the thrill this gave them. We settled in together and read the story of Nimbus, a lonely winged horse who just wants to find herself a friend.

The visits I make to this classroom are experiences shared by myself, this group of second graders, and their teacher. While they are shared experiences, we are each getting something uniquely valuable out of them. Without ever leaving their class, the students have the public library brought right to them. We can read a story together, guess what will happen, and infer what the characters are feeling. We sit together and bond over stories. They can revisit these stories over and over until my next visit, when I will bring a whole new round for us to collectively experience and wonder at together.

As Hana says, each child gets something unique from their connection with us. Each could tell a different story. And those stories are multiplied by the number of events we coordinate. We do well to remember that for many of these young people, their only access to public library resources and public library magic comes when we arrange it for them.

Thom Barthelmess
Youth Services Manager



The 15th season of Whatcom READS was a rousing success. There was strong attendance at events with author Jess Walter, including two **sold-out** programs in support of the 2023 selection, *The Cold Millions*. Committee members are reading audience feedback and analyzing results. The 2024 Whatcom READS title was announced at the end of the Mount Baker Theatre author event. We are eager to read and discuss [Red Paint: The Ancestral Autobiography of a Coast Salish Punk](#) by Sasha taqʷsəblu LaPointe.

Whatcom READS is presented by all the public and academic libraries in Bellingham and Whatcom County and community partner Village Books.



Over the past few months, the Community Relations team has been evolving the Power of Sharing campaign based on WCLS's strategic plan, staff and patron feedback, and advertising results. We are moving toward a more specific call-to-action that highlights a particular service or benefit available at the library. The objective is to demonstrate the value of the library and encourage community members to get, and to use, their library card.



We will change our featured library resource every three months. From March-May, we are highlighting audiobooks and the Libby app with a very direct headline: Free Audiobooks! The integrated campaign includes: a web page (wcls.org/libby), branch slides and posters, social media posts, bus boards and digital advertising (in English and Spanish), and staff lanyards that invite

patrons to get started with audiobooks. In-branch patron engagement is a critical component of the campaign. Staff training on each featured resource will be offered, ensuring front-line representatives are ready to help patrons learn more about the power of their library card.

Save the date: Library Giving Day is April 4. Community Relations is working with the Whatcom County Library Foundation to engage patrons, Friends of the Library and staff.

News Releases

- [Whatcom READS announces 2024 selection](#)
- [Whatcom READS welcomes author Jess Walter](#)

Podcast: wcls.org/podcast or subscribe on your favorite podcast platform

- Jess Walter: Whatcom READS 2023 author (episode 33)
- An oral history of Whatcom READS (episode 32)

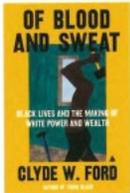
Book Reviews

- *Cascadia Daily News*, Feb. 11, 2023, [Branching Out for Whatcom READS](#)
- *Cascadia Daily News*, Feb. 18, 2023, [111 Places in Seattle that You Must Not Miss](#) by Harriet Baskas
- *Bellingham Alive*, February 2023, see clip below

10 New Books To Read During Black History Month (or Any Month)

COURTESY OF THE WHATCOM COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

THESE NEWLY PUBLISHED titles explore the struggle, joy, and complexity of Black history. Delve into a specific aspect of Black history, like women in pop music (“Shine Bright”) or a Black community who created their own ambulance service (“American Sirens”). For a more comprehensive view of history, read “Of Blood and Sweat” (by local author Clyde W. Ford) and learn how the uncompensated labor of Black people has impacted every facet of American life.



Of Blood and Sweat: Black Lives and the Making of White Power and Wealth
by Clyde W. Ford



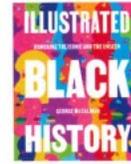
Shine Bright: A Very Personal History of Black Women in Pop
by Danyel Smith



The Come Up: An Oral History of the Rise of Hip Hop
by Jonathan Abrams



Half American: The Epic Story of African Americans Fighting WWII at Home and Abroad
by Matthew F. Delmont



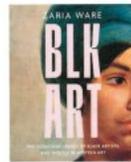
Illustrated Black History: Honoring the Iconic and the Unseen
by George McCalman



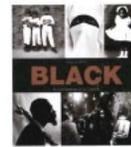
American Sirens: The Incredible Story of the Black Men Who Became America's First Paramedics
by Kevin Hazzard



Driving the Green Book: A Road Trip Through the Living History of Black Resistance
by Alvin Hall



BLK ART: The Audacious Legacy of Black Artists and Models in Western Art
by Zaria Ware



Black Archives: A Photographic Celebration of Black Life
by Renata Cherlise



Afrofuturism: A History of Black Futures
by the National Museum of African American History and Culture

Media Coverage

- *Lynden Tribune*, Feb. 1, 2023, [Briefly: Lynden and the surrounding areas in the news \(Sumas Library prepares to reopen\)](#)
- *Ferndale Record*, Feb. 1, 2023, [Briefly: Ferndale and the surrounding areas in the news](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, Feb. 1, 2023, [Community calendar for Feb. 1, 2023 |](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, Feb. 8, 2023, [Sumas Library announces Feb. 15 grand reopening |](#)
- *KGMI*, Feb. 7, 2023, [Sumas Library reopening after damage from 2021 November floods |](#)
- *KPUG*, Feb. 8, 2023 [Sumas Library reopening after damage from 2021 November floods |](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, Feb. 8, 2023, [Community calendar for Feb. 8, 2023 | Community |](#)
- *The Northern Light*, Feb. 8, 2023, [Blaine Library adding multi-interest clubs this month |](#)
- *KGMI*, Feb. 13, 2023, [The Whatcom Report 2/12/23 |](#) (Whatcom READS)
- *Cascadia Daily News*, Feb. 15, 2023, [Sumas Library reopens after 15 months of flood recovery efforts \(cascadiadaily.com\)](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, Feb. 22, 2023, [Photo Gallery: WCLS Reopens Sumas Library |](#)
- *Visit Bellingham*, Feb. 22, 2023, [Whatcom READS welcomes author Jess Walter](#)

Mary Vermillion

Community Relations Manager

Collection Size	February				
	Physical	Electronic	Total		
	312,229	258,967	571,196		
Circulation<	February		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Physical Circulation					
Blaine	13,215	11,332	27,878	23,848	-14.5%
Bookmobile & Outreach	4,434	4,398	8,856	8,894	0.4%
Deming	9,153	7,192	18,992	15,412	-18.9%
Everson	8,750	9,394	18,459	19,576	6.1%
Ferndale	31,507	29,744	64,429	61,742	-4.2%
Island	2,064	1,758	3,994	3,777	-5.4%
Lynden	35,950	36,368	74,271	75,289	1.4%
North Fork	4,509	4,047	8,782	8,594	-2.1%
NWIC	10	8	31	23	-25.8%
Point Roberts + PRX	1,703	2,019	3,716	4,490	20.8%
Sumas + SLX	221	963	450	1,198	166.2%
South Whatcom	6,587	7,309	13,528	14,753	9.1%
NDX	3,527	3,176	7,247	6,458	-10.9%
Total	121,630	117,708	250,633	244,054	-2.62%
Electronic Circulation					
eBooks/eAudiobooks	27,032	31,450	55,343	63,263	14.3%
eMusic	9,229	10,186	20,848	18,555	-11.0%
Streaming Video	870	794	1,910	1,694	-11.3%
eMagazines	1,368	1,561	3,081	3,308	7.4%
Total	38,499	43,991	81,182	86,820	6.94%
Total Circulation	160,129	161,699	331,815	330,874	-0.28%

< Sumas Library closed 11/20/21 to 2/11/23.

< Sumas Library Express opened 2/11/23.

Visitors (Door Counts)*	February			Year to Date		% Chg
	2019	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Blaine	7,112	5,635	6,235	10,835	12,070	11.4%
Deming	3,157	2,072	2,359	4,250	4,703	10.7%
Everson	4,276	2,165	2,888	4,361	5,648	29.5%
Ferndale	14,833	9,468	10,654	18,146	20,748	14.3%
Island	737	987	750	2,056	1,501	-27.0%
Lynden	13,791	9,877	9,699	19,348	18,061	-6.7%
Northwest Drive Express		306	283	646	582	-9.9%
North Fork	2,321	1,312	1,229	2,534	2,588	2.1%
Point Roberts + PRX	1,180	973	1,009	1,917	2,090	9.0%
Sumas + SLX	1,478	0	25	0	25	#DIV/0!
South Whatcom	1,583	2,031	1,675	4,061	3,424	-15.7%
Total	50,468	34,826	36,806	68,154	71,440	4.82%

* Awaiting parts to install door counter at Sumas - Count reflects SLX only.

Visitors (Door Counts)*	February			Year to Date		% Chg
	2019	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Blaine	7,112	5,635	6,235	10,835	12,070	11.4%
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Total	50,468	34,826	36,806	68,154	71,440	4.82%

* Awaiting parts to install door counter at Sumas - Count reflects SLX only.

New Borrowers	February		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Registered	313	593	624	1,273	104.01%

Patron Service	February		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Interlibrary Loan					
Borrowed from BPL	11,754	10,930	24,754	23,313	-5.8%
Lent to BPL	24,043	21,004	49,887	43,740	-12.3%
Borrowed from other libraries	547	510	1,575	935	-40.6%
Lent to other libraries	470	517	981	1,016	3.6%

Electronic Resources	February		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
WCLS.org Entrances	39,002	35,933	79,271	74,396	-6.1%
Bibliocommons Entrances	50,346	50,060	105,002	105,980	0.9%
Internet Sessions	2,625	2,682	4,899	5,544	13.2%
Wifi Clients / Sessions	5,588	6,718	10,794	12,777	18.4%

Volunteers	February		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Volunteer Hours	559.75	757.00	1,184.75	1,386.50	17.0%

Activities	February		Year to Date		% Chg
	2022	2023	2022	2023	
Programs					
Adults	16	44	27	88	225.9%
Teens	24	25	37	45	21.6%
Children	31	98	64	150	134.4%
Total	71	167	128	283	121.1%

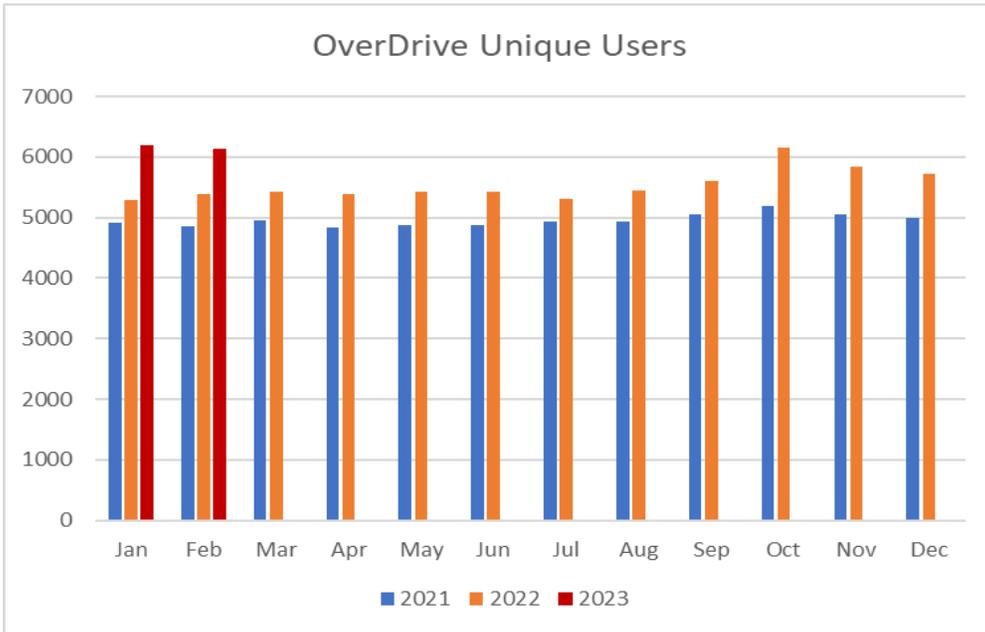
Attendance					
Adults	328	637	492	1111	125.8%
Teens	683	731	842	1452	72.4%
Children	870	2,099	1291	3801	194.4%
Total	1,881	3,467	2,625	6,364	142.4%

Corrections:

Electronic Resources	June		Year to Date		% Chg	Spreadsheet Error - Reduction of 25 (Removed SU Estimate)
	2021	2022	2021	2022		
Internet Sessions	1,773	1,709	5,217	14,910	185.8%	

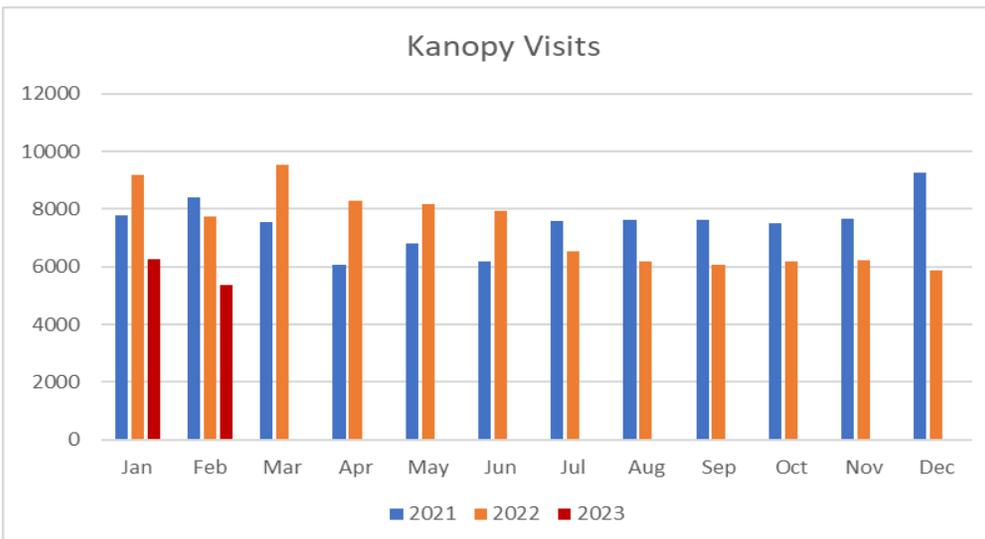
OVERDRIVE UNIQUE USERS

The new Power of Sharing campaign that was introduced on March 1 focuses on eAudiobooks, so it will be interesting to see how this impacts new and unique users next month. Top circulating titles in February were *Us Weekly* magazine (#1), *The Cold Millions* eAudio (#2 - Whatcom READS selection), and *Where the Crawdads Sing* eAudio (#3). The most popular lists from the dozens on Libby were two eAudio lists and "Try a Magazine," so it seems clear that Libby lists drive checkouts.



KANOPY VISITS - JANUARY TO DECEMBER COMPARISON

Kanopy visits remain in the low range we saw in 2019 and 2020 when the service was relatively new to WCLS. 60 new WCLS Kanopy accounts were created in February, so the platform is finding new users, but apparently not retaining them well for return visits. The BBC *Inspector Lynley* mystery series, the kid's show *T Rex Ranch*, and A&E's series *Hoarders*, which profiles adults who suffer from extreme hoarding, were the most popular content viewed in February.



DATABASE USAGE

Aggregated database use in February mirrored January/February 2021 levels. School use bumped up slightly in February over January with Britannica and the Gale resources package experiencing slight increases in use. At the same time, Newsbank and Value Line use decreased, which is interesting as the stock market was pretty volatile in February. Creativebug didn't account for a huge number of visits, and use fell by 75% when we stopped talking about it in a direct promotion.

