

AYER LIBRARY

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Summer's over. School's here. Fall is on the doorstep. The Ayer Library spent the last two months cruising through a successful Summer Reading season, training new staff, remodeling the Teen Room, and reflecting on our first year under new leadership. We've recovered from the spring's staffing vacancies, established a strong new sense of team spirit, and are heading into our second year together energized to build on our post-COVID growth. We're fueled in large part by what we've learned from this year's ARIS report, which showed significant increases in library use and outstanding growth in our programming. Going into the fall, we have significant facilities issues to address, and a host of important policy updates to wrap up. But we are excited to tackle what's ahead with the momentum we have built!

FACILITIES

- HVAC repairs continue as planned...but also as unplanned. FY24's capital fund appropriates \$25k to replace one of our two boiler pumps and repair a leaking pipe. However, we discovered significant damage to the boiler chambers. We have 3 options. We can replace a leaking gasket only, which has a 50% chance of solving the primary leaking issue, but will not resolve the deteriorated chambers, at the lowest cost of \$12K. We can replace all of the chambers of the boiler, which has a 95% chance of solving all of the issues, at a cost of around \$25K. Or we can replace the entire boiler, which has a 100% chance of solving all problems, but would cost somewhere around \$60K. We are awaiting official quotes for the latter two options.
- FY24's capital fund also appropriates \$15k to roof repairs. We continue to see noticeable leaks in the staff bathroom, staff office, and adult non-fiction stacks when it rains. Chuck has arranged for the necessary repairs to be completed, probably two days' work, hopefully in September.
- Ayer DPW filled several potholes in the parking lot. We still need to explore options for repairing the sidewalks, which suffer from a variety of trip hazards.
- In mid-August we reconfigured the Teen Room fiction shelves, which increased capacity by 33% without losing significant space; moved the non-fiction shelves to the west wall; and prepped the north wall for the new TV and PS5.
- We replaced the old upper book drop with a new one that matches the lower book drop.
- Our landscapers trimmed trees, hedges, and lawn edges, and added new mulch to the beds, along with regular mowing and maintenance.

ACTION PLAN

- I have been working with our Heads of Adult and Youth Services to plan out how to catch up on the Action Plan. On our tracking spreadsheet I have added the appropriate number/letter for each activity, and updates will appear below. We have re-thought some of the way we discuss status: sometimes items will be completed once and for all (Completed-Final), while others may be generally completed but will in reality be an ongoing practice (Completed-Ongoing).
- **4.2.a. Rescheduled.** After this year's experience with Summer Reading we will finalize a comprehensive Summer Reading coordination plan for next year in FY24 Q3.
- **3.3.b. Canceled.** As it turns out, this item was not actually focused on text-message marketing. This was intended to explore a text-message reference service called libraryH3lp offered by CW MARS as an add-on. We still do not feel like this is necessary.
- **4.2.b. In Progress.** With the Library and Senior Center more fully staffed, we have scheduled a brainstorming meeting to explore ways that we can collaborate to better serve our seniors.
- **2.4.a. Completed-Ongoing.** We have decided to clarify this item as being devoted to professional development. To support PD we have created a Professional Development Interest Form for staff that includes information about PD expectations and support available, and that will help us track staff PD activities over time. Staff are expected to pursue at least 1-4 professional development opportunities each year. When possible, staff are being encouraged to pursue one course each year, such as one through Library Juice Academy or ALA eCourse, which are both funded by MLS.
- **2.4.b. In Progress.** We have decided to clarify this item as being devoted to evaluations. We completed staff evaluations in June. We will kick off annual goal-setting with staff in September. We will be including these both, along with job description evaluation (2.3.b) in an annual HR schedule of performance evaluation metrics.
- **1.1.a. In Progress.** We have begun compiling information about our collection development and maintenance practices in order to create a comprehensive annual schedule of collection evaluation activities.
- **4.2.c. In Progress.** Upon learning that ASRHS would not be filling their recently vacated school librarian position, Children's Librarian Becca Kranz and I arranged a meeting with ASRHS Principal Spencer Christie and Assistant Principal Miriam Meyer on 8/9 to discuss ways we can collaborate to ensure quality school and public library services to Ayer's teens. That meeting resulted in three action items. First, we will meet with school counselors on 9/5 to explore the possibility of hosting one HS senior for an externship during the school year in the Library (this could tie into the internship programs discussed in 2.4.e). Second, Becca will be offering support via class visits to provide information literacy and research trainings in English and History classes. Thirdly, Becca will be launching a new monthly graphic novel and manga club on Thursday afternoons beginning 9/7. We are thrilled about this partnership and very much looking forward to the next steps.
- **2.3.c. In Progress.** This month I will be presenting for the Trustees' approval an updated and simplified holidays policy to offer clarification on how to treat several upcoming 2023 holidays.

OPERATIONS

- This year's ARIS (Annual Report Information Survey) was submitted to the Massachusetts Library Board of Commissioners in order to qualify for State Aid. When compared to FY22's figures, we are thrilled to see significant growth in the use of the Library over the last year. We're seeing clear increases in circulation; significant increases in visits, reference transactions, website visits, wireless use, computer use, and study room use; and outstanding increases in programs and program attendance. Since coming out of COVID it has been a collective goal to get people back in the building and engaged with their library. We are clearly succeeding. Many congratulations to the staff for these impressive outcomes! Detailed statistics are attached at the end of this document.
- I am working closely with the Children's Room as policies, procedures, and programming evolves. The Children's Room has established monthly department meetings to continue building on the successful growth of the last year. They are launching several new recurring programs in the fall.
- Our Social Media Committee met on 8/9 to discuss social media procedures and strategy.
- First Amendment Auditors visited the Library on 8/18. Head of Adult Services Barbara Cheeks did an excellent job interacting with them. They left with nothing but compliments to the Library.
- We are no longer charging fees for faxes.
- First drafts of a new Patron Conduct Policy and Reading Room Policy have been completed and are attached for Trustee consideration. The next most important policy in development is a Safe Youth Policy outlining a variety of issues related to minors in the Library.

PERSONNEL & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- In August I held one-to-one meetings with all staff. They were all extremely valuable. I plan to do this twice a year and fold it into the HR calendar that was discussed above.
- On 9/1 Isaiah Donovan ended his tenure as Library Clerk. He was a wonderful addition to the team at a critical moment. He will be missed!
- As mentioned above, we launched our new professional development initiative, and are excited to integrate support for learning opportunities into our habits and routines.
- I completed the Library Juice Academy course "Leadership Communication" Aug 7-Sept 3 and the MIIA training "Performance Management: Providing Feedback for Supervisors" on 8/10.
- On 8/8 Caleb Brown and Sue Hauk completed a ComCat training.
- Barbara completed the Library Juice Academy course "Excel for Librarians" Aug 7-Sept 3.
- Raye completed the Library Juice Academy course "Cultural Competence for Librarians" July 3-31.

FINANCES

The books are wrapped up for FY23. After the final tally, we came within \$4000 of our original budget. Our book drop was paid for out of State Aid funds to remain under budget.

ACCOUNT	LINE	DESC	APPROPRIATED	ADJUSTED	SPENT	AVAILABLE	% USED
LIBRARY FY23			\$657,380.00	\$658,112.58	\$654,562.24	\$3,550.34	99.46%
01610	51000	Salaries	\$79,900.00	\$79,900.00	\$81,795.42	-\$1,895.42	102.37%
01610	51100	Wages	\$343,175.00	\$343,175.00	\$267,795.59	\$75,379.41	78.03%
01610	52000	Services	\$95,403.00	\$95,403.00	\$122,494.68	-\$27,091.68	128.40%
01610	52100	Utilities	\$0.00	\$732.58	\$13,055.20	-\$12,322.62	1782.09%
01610	54000	Supplies	\$13,000.00	\$13,000.00	\$28,391.05	-\$15,391.05	218.39%
01610	54100	Materials	\$124,902.00	\$124,902.00	\$139,102.83	-\$14,200.83	111.37%
01610	57000	Expenses	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,927.47	-\$927.47	192.75%
CAPITAL FY23			\$47,614.29	\$47,614.29	\$44,695.00	\$2,919.29	93.87%
01999	52328	Ceiling Repair	\$47,614.29	\$47,614.29	\$44,695.00	\$2,919.29	93.87%
CPC FY23			\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$8,975.00	\$16,025.00	35.90%
23024	57001	Digitization	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$8,975.00	\$16,025.00	35.90%
STATE AID FY23			\$39,381.16	\$39,381.16	-\$8,261.87	\$47,643.03	-20.98%
26607	57000	State Aid	\$39,381.16	\$39,381.16	-\$8,261.87	\$47,643.03	-20.98%

FY24 sees increases to several lines thanks to the support of the Town and its residents. We have two capital lines this year, as discussed. We are 3/5 of the way through our CPC-funded digitization project.

ACCOUNT	LINE	DESC	APPROPRIATED	ADJUSTED	SPENT	AVAILABLE	% USED
LIBRARY FY24			\$709,023.71	\$709,023.71	\$119,606.24	\$589,417.47	16.87%
01610	51000	Salaries	\$94,454.86	\$94,454.86	\$18,097.29	\$76,357.57	19.16%
01610	51100	Wages	\$367,954.35	\$367,954.35	\$50,882.74	\$317,071.61	13.83%
01610	52000	Services	\$76,900.00	\$76,900.00	\$29,383.87	\$47,516.13	38.21%
01610	52100	Utilities	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$658.02	\$19,341.98	3.29%
01610	54000	Supplies	\$14,000.00	\$14,000.00	\$3,045.35	\$10,954.65	21.75%

01610	54100	Materials	\$134,714.50	\$134,714.50	\$17,538.97	\$117,175.53	13.02%
01610	57000	Expenses	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	0.00%
CAPITAL FY24			\$25,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$0.00	\$40,000.00	0.00%
01999		HVAC	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$0.00	\$25,000.00	0.00%
01999		Roof	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	\$15,000.00	0.00%
CPC FY24			\$25,000.00	\$16,025.00	\$4,920.00	\$11,105.00	30.70%
23024	57001	Digitization	\$25,000.00	\$16,025.00	\$4,920.00	\$11,105.00	30.70%
STATE AID FY24			\$47,643.03	\$47,643.03	\$4,028.80	\$43,614.23	8.46%
26607	57000	State Aid	\$47,643.03	\$47,643.03	\$4,028.80	\$43,614.23	8.46%

USAGE, SOCIAL MEDIA, & PROGRAM STATISTICS

Adult Programs

7/5: Growing Places (34)
 7/7: Friday Flicks: Knives Out (0)
 7/12: Movie Night: Troop Beverly Hills (0)
 7/15: Book Group: When We Believed In Mermaids (9)
 7/19: Sound Bath Workshop (12)
 7/25: Stitch Circle (2)
 7/26: Nissitissit String Quartet (27)
 7/29: Mushroom Walk (20)
 8/2: 50+ Job Seekers (1)
 8/1: Growing Places Market (18)
 8/4: Friday Flicks: The Whale (0)
 8/9: 50+ Job Seekers (1)
 8/12: Book Group: Book Lovers (10)
 8/16: Energy Healing Workshop (12)
 8/16: 50+ Job Seekers (1)
 8/23: 50+ Job Seekers (1)
 8/26: Ayer Film Society: Down by Law (4)
 8/29: Stitch Circle (5)

Children's Programs

7/7: Improv (8)
 7/13: Rockabye Beats (94)
 7/15: Magic Mushrooms (Jonathan Kranz) (15)
 7/19: Lego Club (6)
 7/20: Kelly's Music & More (93)
 7/22: Morning Yoga w/Becca (2)
 7/26: Renaissance Faire (17)
 7/26: D&D
 7/27: Big Ryan's Tall Tales (16)
 7/28: Woo Sox Smiley Ball Mascot (13)
 7/28: Therapy Dog (13)
 7/29: D&D (3)
 8/2/23: Andromeda One Robot (6)
 8/3/23: Harvard Alpaca Ranch (65)
 8/5/23: Morning Yoga w/Becca (2)
 8/8/23: Fuse Bead (10)
 8/10/23: Empowerment Art (5)
 8/16/23: Lego Club (15)
 8/17/23: Amy Conley Concert (58)
 8/19/23: D&D (5)
 8/23/23: D&D (9)
 8/24/23: Hands On Nature (37)
 8/26/23: D&D (6)

Teen Programs

7/6: Teen D&D (3)
7/12: Ukulele Jam (5)
8/2/23: Teen Game Night (2)
8/3/23: Teen D&D (2)
8/16/23: Teen Improv (3)

Library

Total Circulations: 12817
Overdrive Checkouts: 2607
Total Patrons with Ayer as Home Library: 4152
Items Added: 1014
Total Museum Passes Checked Out: 102
Most Used Passes: New England Aquarium (19),
DCR (16), and Discovery Museum (13)

Takeaways

Kids Scavenger Hunt (120)
Kids Brain Bundle (30)
Adult Brain Bundle (285)
Adult Craft: Stitch-a-Day Summer (32)
Teas of the Month: Lemon Chamomile (21),
Constant Comment (25)

Displays

Kid/Teen Displays: Outside Activities, Find Your Voice, MTCBA, Telescope, Sharks, Robotics, Back to School, Cooking with Character, Shelving YA Move, D&D Display, Massachusetts Teen Choice Awards
Adult Displays: NASA Turns 65 , Read the Rainbow, Beach Reads, National Cowboy Day, 60th Anniversary of “I Have a Dream” Speech, Pack Your Bags, Read the Rainbow, Summer Reads

Facebook

Facebook Followers: 1432 (+14)
Facebook Page Reach: 5309 (-57%)
Facebook Page Visits: 2307 (-62%)

Instagram

Instagram Followers: 1086 (+30)
Instagram Page Reach: 444 (-15.7%)
Instagram Profile Visits: 119 (-16.8%)

TOWN

- On July 12 and August 9 Luke attended the Town Department Heads meeting.
- Following the Master Plan status updates, the Town is prioritizing improved communications and outreach. The Library will be factoring this priority into its own outreach initiatives.
- The Town has been negotiating new insurance rates with our provider over the last year. A couple of municipalities left the insurance group, and there have been some other financial factors at play, but the result is that FY24 insurance rates are going up 13.5% for all Town employees. The Town is convening an Insurance Advisory Committee to research other options going forward. If Ayer decides to leave, we must notify Minuteman Nashoba Health Group by December 1.
- The Town hired a new social worker, Brittany Beaudry. We met on 7/28 to discuss opportunities to collaborate, including the possibility for weekly office hours in the Library study room.
- Fall Special Town Meeting to take place on Monday, October 23, 2023 at 7pm in the Auditorium of the Ayer Shirley Regional High School. Friday, September 29 is the deadline for all Warrant Articles.

FRIENDS

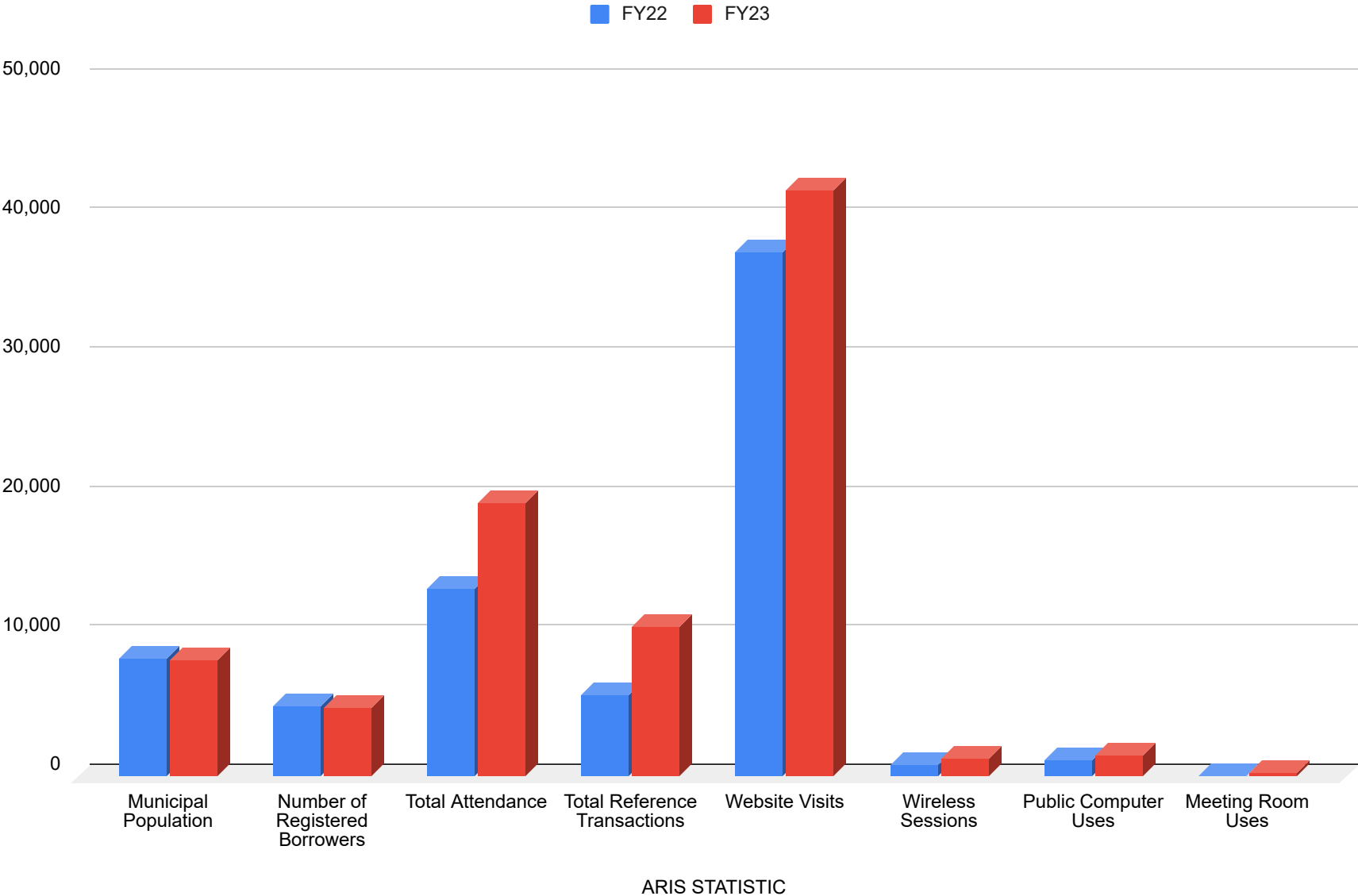
- The board of the Friends of the Ayer Library met on 7/19.
- The Friends of the Ayer Library have agreed to pay for two additional museum passes, as well as several current passes where payment is complicated because of the proximity of renewals to the close of the fiscal year. Thank you Friends! Those passes include:
 - Animal Adventures
 - American Heritage Museum
 - Boston Children's Museum
 - Davis Farmland
 - Museum of Fine Arts
 - New England Aquarium
 - Zoo New England
- The Friends also agreed to fund an exciting Children's Room initiative we are developing in collaboration with the Clerk's office. We are exploring assembling Baby Bags for every family of a new child born in Ayer that will provide a book bag, a selection of board books, information about Library programs and services, and information about area resources for families. We have a lot more to research to make this program a reality, but we are very excited at the possibility.
- Many thanks to a host of Friends who volunteered to weed several of our garden beds!
- The two Friends fundraisers are approaching. Trustees are encouraged to attend—and please help in promoting the events! Visit **bullrunrestaurant.com/speakersseries** to purchase tickets.
 - Emily Sweeney: Sunday, September 17
 - Sy Montgomery: Sunday, October 22
- To support use of the Library's telescope, we will be hosting an event with Aldrich Astronomical on Wednesday October 11, 2023 at 6:30 PM. They will introduce their telescope program, demonstrate how to use our telescope, update patrons about the latest breakthroughs in space exploration, answer questions from the audience, and take the telescope out for stargazing if weather permits.

TRUSTEES

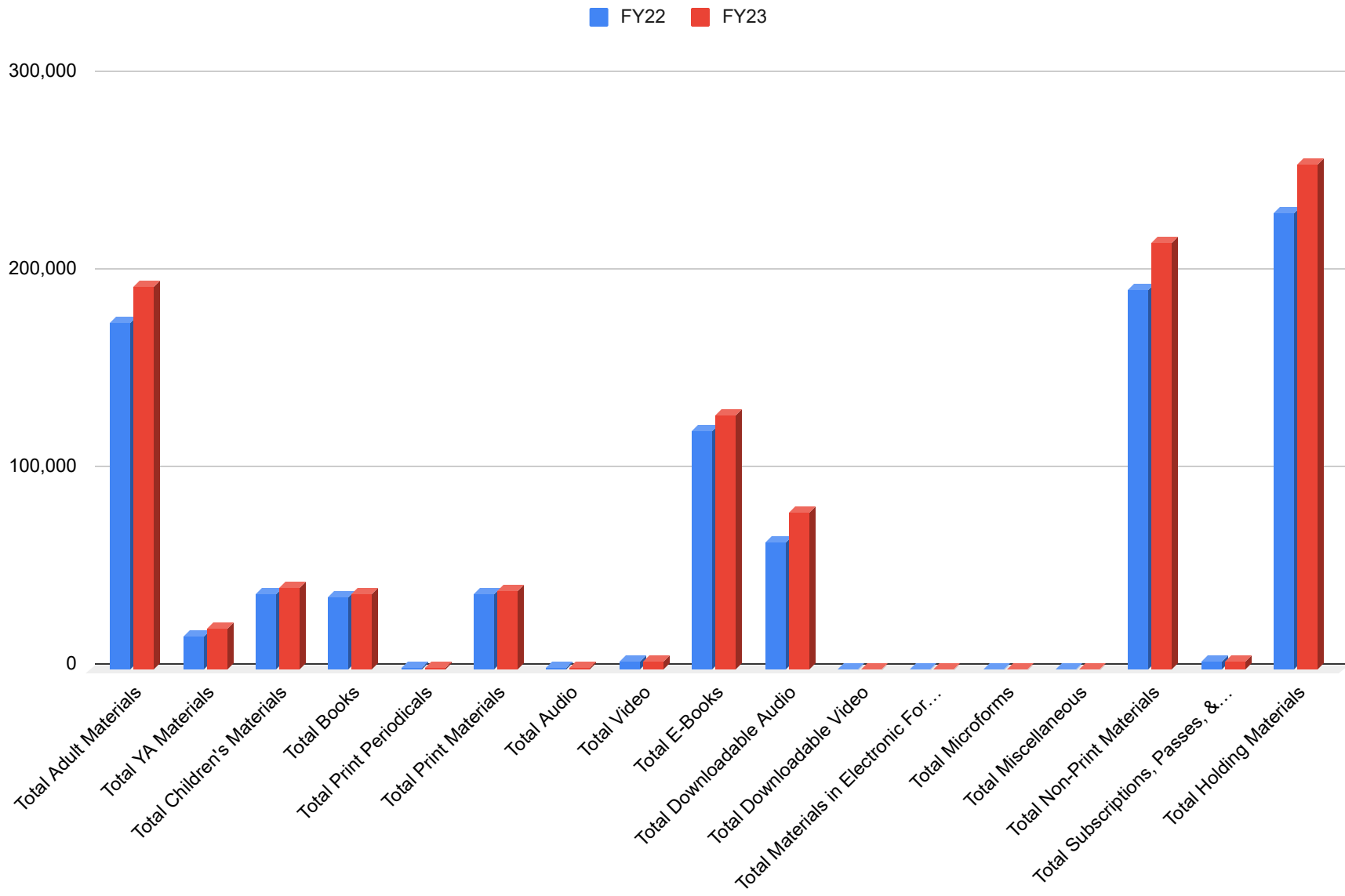
- The Massachusetts Library Trustees Association Annual Conference will occur Saturday, October 21 from 10AM-1PM at Shrewsbury Public Library. This year's theme is Finding Joy in Tumultuous Times. All Trustees are encouraged to attend. Visit mblc.libcal.com/event/10690959 to register.
- Following the MLTA Annual Conference, Trustees are encouraged to sign up for a Trustee Orientation with Maura Deedy and Rob Favini from MBLC from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. All Trustees are encouraged to attend. Visit mblc.libcal.com/event/11031624 to register.

ARIS STATISTIC	FY22	FY23	CHANGE	ARIS STATISTIC	FY22	FY23	CHANGE
Municipal Population	8,479	8,400	-0.93%				
Number of Registered Borrowers	5,121	4,979	-2.77%				
Total Attendance	13,564	19,714	45.34%				
Total Reference Transactions	5,837	10,738	83.96%				
Website Visits	37,667	42,193	12.02%				
Wireless Sessions	890	1,280	43.82%				
Public Computer Uses	1,196	1,560	30.43%				
Meeting Room Uses	45	274	508.89%				
Total Adult Materials	175,329	193,736	10.50%	Total Adult Circulation	30,693	33,117	7.90%
Total YA Materials	17,142	20,668	20.57%	Total YA Circulation	4,912	5,187	5.60%
Total Children's Materials	38,431	41,203	7.21%	Total Children's Circulation	31,846	34,083	7.02%
Total Books	37,073	38,563	4.02%	Total Books Circulation	44,528	47,890	7.55%
Total Print Periodicals	1,090	1,107	1.56%	Total Print Periodicals Circulation	398	600	50.75%
Total Print Materials	38,163	39,670	3.95%	Total Print Materials Circulation	44,926	48,490	7.93%
Total Audio	1,379	1,388	0.65%	Total Audio Circulation	1,013	648	-36.03%
Total Video	4,675	4,607	-1.45%	Total Video Circulation	10,025	8,758	-12.64%
Total E-Books	121,003	129,132	6.72%	Total E-Books Circulation	6,040	6,642	9.97%
Total Downloadable Audio	64,827	80,058	23.49%	Total Downloadable Audio Circulation	4,750	6,486	36.55%
Total Downloadable Video	126	0	-100.00%	Total Downloadable Video Circulation	0	0	0.00%
Total Materials in Electronic Format	528	554	4.92%	Total Materials in Electronic Format Circulation	518	901	73.94%
Total Microforms	130	131	0.77%	Total Microforms Circulation	0	0	0.00%
Total Miscellaneous	71	67	-5.63%	Total Miscellaneous Circulation	179	462	158.10%
Total Non-Print Materials	192,739	215,937	12.04%	Total Non-Print Materials Circulation	22,525	23,897	6.09%
Total Subscriptions, Passes, & Databases	4,173	4,414	5.78%	Total Use of Electronic Collections	5,379	7,971	48.19%
Total Holding Materials	230,902	255,607	10.70%	Total Materials Circulation	67,451	72,387	7.32%
Total Live Adult Programs	20	69	245.00%	Total Live Adult Programs Attendance	145	404	178.62%
Total Live YA Programs	4	11	175.00%	Total Live YA Programs Attendance	34	136	300.00%
Total Live Programs for 6-11	5	37	640.00%	Total Live Programs for 6-11 Attendance	276	689	149.64%
Total Live Programs for 0-5	29	72	148.28%	Total Live Programs for 0-5 Attendance	1,006	2,814	179.72%
Total Live Programs for All Ages	1	24	2300.00%	Total Live Programs for All Ages	27	775	2770.37%
Total Live Programs	59	213	261.02%	Total Live Programs Attendance	1,488	4,828	224.46%
Total Live Virtual Programs	14	15	7.14%	Total Live Virtual Program Attendance	127	64	-49.61%
Total Passive Programs	82	49	-40.24%	Total Passive Participants	4,663	3,613	-22.52%

Engagement

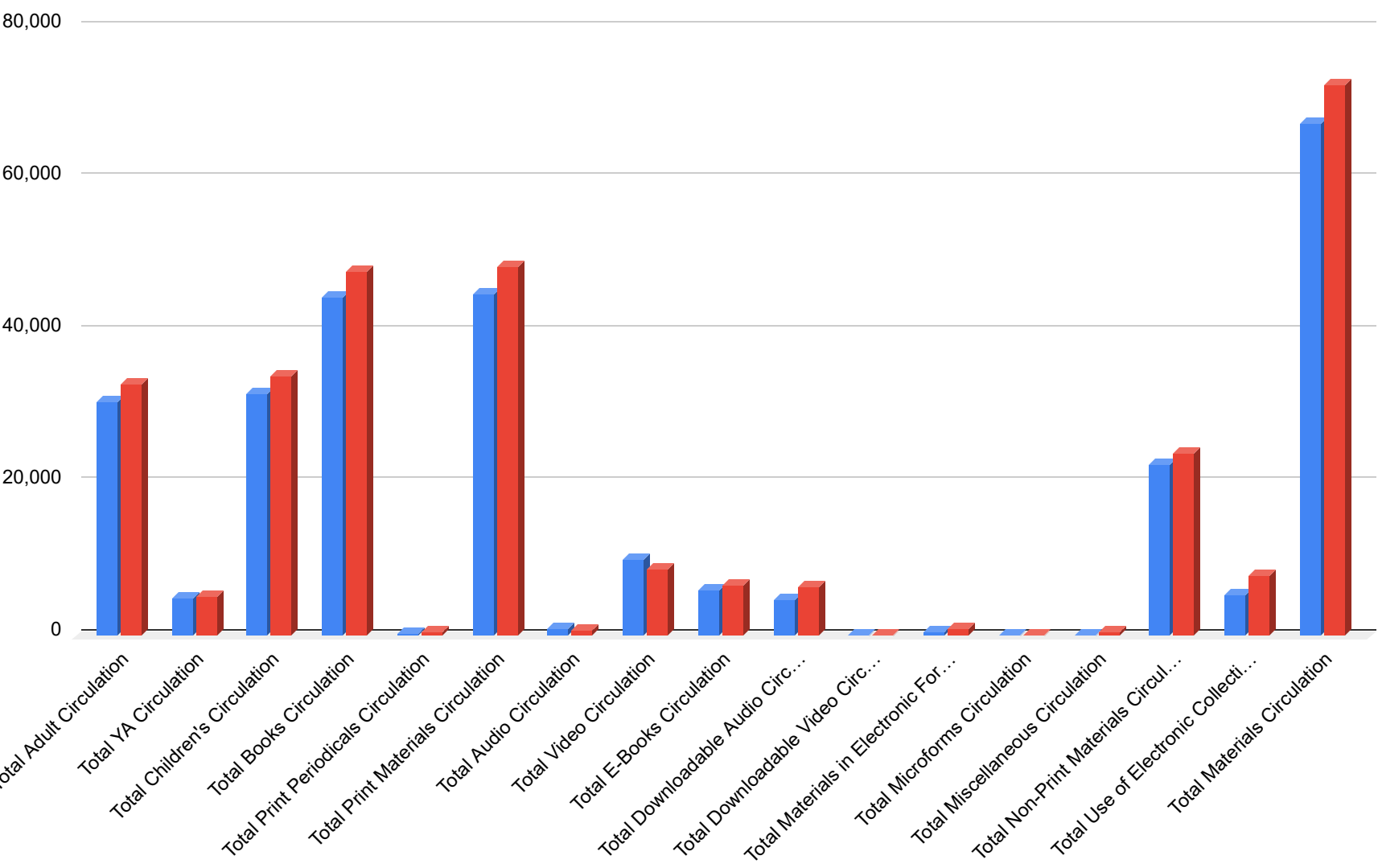


Collection

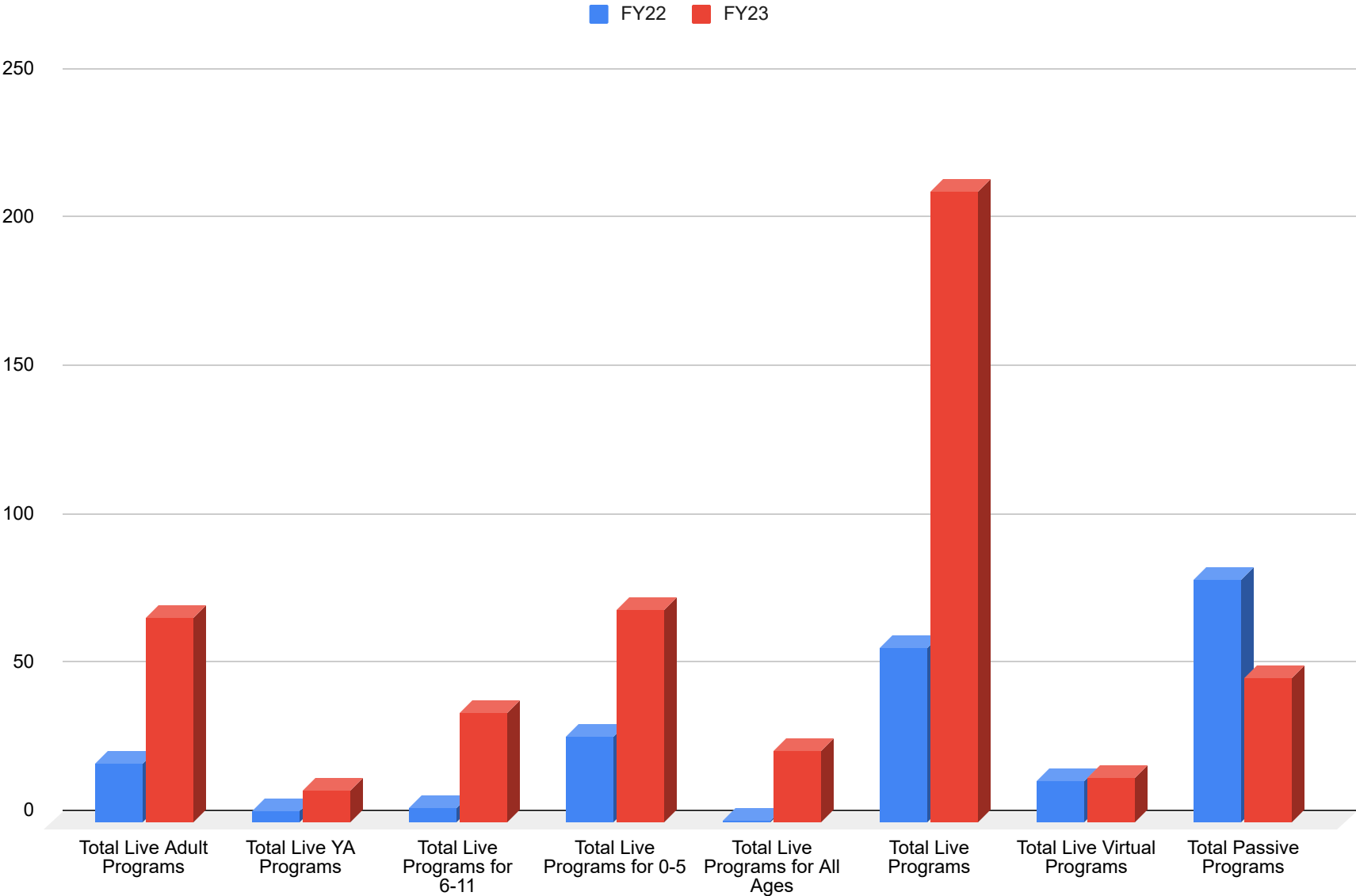


Circulation

FY22 FY23



Programs



Attendance

