

**RICAT Minutes**  
**Office of Rehabilitation Services**  
**40 Fountain Street ~ Providence, RI 02903**  
**December 1, 2005**

- Welcome: Meeting was called to order by Past Chairperson Waller-Blaney at 2:40 p.m.
- Members present: Flo Adeni-Awosika, Richard Gaffney, Charlie Pollock, James Litvack, Joe Murphy, Kathleen Samways, Margaret Hoye, Kevin Cronin, Adrienne Varner, Kim Wennermark, Patricia Feeley, Ron Racine, and Emily Lennon
- Guests: Carlos Garcia, James Bowden
- ATAP Partners: None
- ATAP Program Director: Regina Connor
- Acceptance of Minutes: Richard noted one correction to the Membership Committee Report which should have “added that he” deleted from the minutes. Richard G. then moved to accept minutes of 10/20/05 with change, seconded by Kathleen Samways. Motion was unanimously approved.
- Chairperson’s Report: Jill stated Chair Panarace did not leave a report due to the immediate circumstances of her leaving.
- Committee Reports:
  - Communications: Joe commented that the Communications Committee had asked for Council members to look at the beta version of the website located at [www.ele.uri.edu/~sun](http://www.ele.uri.edu/~sun) and make comments and recommendations to him - [josephm@ors.ri.gov](mailto:josephm@ors.ri.gov). Once they get ideas on how to organize they will have it uploaded at next meeting. Jill noted that it didn’t say who the partners are that they advise. Joe added they want to get the website up and running, and then get working on brochures. Kathleen stated no suggestions are too obvious, adding that any ideas are welcome. Joe also noted that Lezlee had looked at it and given him recommendations previously.
  - Legislative: Richard stated that not a lot has happened. He has tried to find out if the official voting equipment they will be using will be Automark. Regina added that the GCD held a meeting on October 31<sup>st</sup>, which was a combination of the Assistive Technology IT committee and voter access committee. They had the opportunity to hear a presentation by Automark and try the equipment. They were all very impressed with it and voted unanimously to recommend it to the Division of Elections. Richard commented that with that approval, Automark probably would have been locked it in. Emily asked about it’s features. Richard explained how it was a computer with 4 keys and a button in the center. The user is able to review and make changes. Kathleen added that the ballot was exactly like the ballots everyone uses. Headsets can be used because it does have voice output, and the screen can also be darkened so no one can see who

person voted for. There have been some questions with regards to people using it with <http://www.ririvers.org/funding.htm> dexterity problems, however, a sip and puff can also be used. Regina added that there was an issue regarding once a person has voted and the ballot is ejected from equipment, that for people who may have limited use of hands they can't grab the ballot. Automark said they would address that. Kevin commented that anyone can use that piece of equipment. Regina suggested a demonstration of equipment for Council members once they know that is definitely the piece of equipment. Richard will find out from Jan then contact Jeanne.

- Membership/Outreach: Jill stated they have 4 members that are up for 2<sup>nd</sup> term – Kathleen, Richard, Margaret and Charlie. They all would like to continue on the council. Pat F. moved that the 4 members whose terms expire be elected again to serve on the committee for another 3 year term. Joe M. seconded. Motion was unanimously approved. Jill added that they interviewed 2 individuals for the last spot on the Council. Emily stated they do only have only one slot open and 2 candidates and gave brief histories of both. Margaret Dunning has juvenile arthritis and does public speaking for Arthritis Foundation and uses AT every day. James Bowden has Parkinson's and his wife has lupus. He is an electrical engineer and enjoys designing things that aren't out there yet. He also uses AT every day and found out about RICAT through our website and through ADA. Jill commented they have 2 strong candidates. Emily added they both would be a welcome addition. Pat F. asked if there is a limited number of people that can be on the Council. Jill responded there are only 25 spots on council with 51% being consumers. Since meetings are open to public, anyone can serve on committees, the just can't vote. Jill stated that personally Margaret is very young and good at public speaking and has a great personality, adding that James does not have the experience but he's into the creation of AT. Kim asked if they were are both employed. Jill responded they both are and stated that Margaret is probably more flexible time wise. Pat commented that the male/female ratio of Council members is 50/50%, then asked Jill and Emily if it came down to who was most passionate, who would they choose. Emily responded that Margaret would have an easier time getting here and doing committee work and is a more dynamic public speaker. Jill agreed adding that they both have different personalities. Kim made a motion to bring it to a hand vote. Pat F. added to the motion that whichever candidate is not voted in be invited to participate as a committee member. Jill stated they always make that offer. Jill asked all who voted for Margaret Dunning to raise their hand - 13 hands yes. They will also give Joe M. Jame's email address so he can contact him regarding committee dates. Pat asked if they will they still invite Beverly to participate as a committee member. Jill responded she will keep her posted on things going on and see what she wants to do.
- Program Director's Report: Regina stated that in terms of legislation, not much has been happening on national or state level. The budget for FY 2006 has not been adopted yet by Congress. We have our funds for this current fiscal year because it is forward funded. She was told by our program specialist from RSA that as soon as Congress approves the budget for 2006, RSA will allocate our funding. Regina also explained that we had received conditional approval for our AT State Plan. The reason for conditional approval was because at the time of submission the composition of RICAT didn't meet all their requirements. She has since submitted a response to RSA and indicated in her letter that we now meet the requirements of consumers being above 51% and now have representatives from RIDE, WIA. Regina wants to talk to Jeanne about ways for the Council to have a closer role in working with the ATAP partners as they are developing their new initiatives.

- ATAP Partners Report:
  - N/A
- Roundtable:
  - Annual AT Conference: Was held at the Crowne Plaza on November 17<sup>th</sup> and was well attended with 325 attendees and 40 exhibitors (a more diverse group of exhibitors). OSCIL had a wonderful exhibit – a simulated apartment that gave a hands-on opportunity to see how AT can help people in their own homes. There were a lot of good workshops, and they received good feedback from people. ATAP awarded their Annual Legislative Awards to Senator Stephen Alves and Representative Robert Jacquard for their mandated coverage of hearing aids which has been many years in the works. Kevin stated he had attended the conference and saw a lot of equipment that he didn't know even existed. Richard added that he drove a scooter around a year before. Kathleen commented that it was nice for presenters to have their exhibit there as well. Jill said that Beverly from TechACCESS will be leaving to go on to American Cancer Society. She is happy for her but sad for us. Richard added that she did a great job on the conference.
  - Richard & Margaret talked about one of the technologies that was shown at the conference - the Hand Held Kurzweil reader – which will read labels on cans, letter, and prices on store shelves. Its price is approximately \$300. It isn't available yet. Richard was supposed to go down for training in February. They will probably get 3 to test. Richard will do a presentation. Margaret stated she got to see a demonstration on that commenting that it said everything on a can of veggies - servings, nutritional value, including name of product. Margaret also discussed another scanner which is a Pill Bottle. The pharmacist would have to key something in to put on a device. For each prescription there is a separate disk. Pat F added in the late 90s Kurzweil converted progress notes from physicians. No modern hospital is without one today.
  - Kathleen S. stated that next week is National Schools Inclusion Week and added that the DD Council would like to hear from you. They are preparing a web-based photo collage showing people learning in an inclusive environment which will include text, poetry, and audio clips in addition to photos. Children who have disabilities are learning the same thing at the same time as children without disabilities. Charlie added that he teaches art for students in the 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Kevin said the student he helped design AT for is in class from 8 a.m.-12 noon.
- Next Meeting Dates: February 16, April 20, June 15, September 21, October 19, November 30.
- Adjournment: Motion was made by Margaret H. and seconded by Joe M. that the meeting be adjourned. Motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:00p.m.