

RI Council on Assistive Technology
April 15, 2010 ~ 2:30 – 4:00 pm
Warwick Public Library ~ Small Meeting Room
600 Sandy Lane ~ Warwick, RI

Minutes

Attendees: Kathleen Fresher-Samways, Margaret Hoye, Elizabeth Hubbard, Thomas Karweh, James Litvack, Michael Matraccia, Teresa O'Brien, Dan Pieroni, Bill Robinson Kim Wennermark.

Partners: Roberta Greene-Whittemore, ATAP Program Director; Kat Grygiel, former ATAP Program Director; Mike Montanaro, ATAP; Denise Corson, ATEL; Lezlee Shaffer, OSCIL; Allen Parent-Wetmore, PARI; Judi Carlson, TechACCESS.

Welcome: Meeting was called to order at 2:40 p.m. by Co-Chair Daniel Pieroni. Co-Chair Dusablon was involved in an accident on her way to meeting. Everyone was glad to hear she was okay.

Approval of Minutes from 2/25/10: Michael Matraccia made motion, seconded by Kim Wennermark to approve minutes. Motion unanimously passed.

New Business (Roundtable):

- Co-Chair Pieroni brought up that a new Membership Chair would need to be nominated as Susan Gnrke is resigning from Council. After discussion, Bill Robinson made motion to table nomination of

Membership Chair, 2nd by Kim Wennermark. Motion was tabled until next meeting.

- Kat Grygiel noted that having the Membership Committee convene at the end of the meeting was not working out well. She also discussed the number of members and the mandated members based on the new guidelines. Lorna Ricci, who represented the Workforce Investment Boards, has resigned from that committee. Her replacement will need to be recruited.

Co-Chair Report:

- Co-Chair Pieroni stated he did not have anything to report at this meeting.

ATAP Program Director's Report:

- Kat Grygiel introduced Roberta Greene-Whittemore as the new Assistant Administrator at ORS who will be the new ATAP Program Director. They are working on a transition plan. She added that Mike Montanaro will continue to be part of RICAT. Kat Grygiel shared with the council that on an annual basis there is an AT Conference which provides an opportunity to learn about data collection, the AT Act, what other states are doing, etc., however, the last 2 years, Rhode Island was not represented. As the new Assistant Administrator had not been chosen at the time, Kat will be attending conference at the end of April.
- Dan Pieroni, Carol Dusablon-Folan, Roberta Greene-Whittemore, Mike Montanaro, and Kat Grygiel will represent RICAT at a day-long training set up for advisory groups around the state. Denise Corson and James Litvack will also attend representing the ATEL Advisory Board.

- Kat Grygiel stated that she and Denise Corson, ATEL, had agreed to re-evaluate the need for additional help. They are looking at the ATEL budget. They had discussed having someone for 5-10 hours for 48 weeks per year to help deliver equipment. Judi and Denise have also been working together to provide additional services by utilizing that person for presentations at open forums.

ATAP Partners' Reports:

ATEL – Denise Corson stated that she is not able to provide much outreach right now. She is doing mostly home visits. She noted that 95% of the people are elderly. She also noted that the inventory is coming in full force.

EBEC –Lisa was unable to attend meeting today. Kat stated that Lisa's work plan involves more presence around the state with transition issues. She has been going to Transition Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings at Educational Collaboratives to let them know that she can be a resource when looking at AT and educational issues. She also has an appointment with transition counselors at ORS to educate them to some of the services she provides.

PARI – Allen Parent-Wetmore stated they had been very busy. Their tech person had been out and just came back this week. They have sold about 50 pieces this past month. This past Monday, he delivered an electric wheelchair to someone in Newport. Medicare wouldn't repair it, and he had been without a wheelchair for 6 months. Allen explained how they provide ramps, stair glides, vehicle modifications, etc. The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) developed guidelines for sanitation and cleanliness inspection of Durable Medical

Equipment (DME). They received a \$10,000 grant from the Champlin Foundation to purchase a heavy duty equipment washer. Allen also stated there is a fundraiser going on for the PAAT program that the OT's from Kent Hospital set up. It is a 50/50 raffle. This year they will give either money or equipment to the PAAT program. Kat added that there is an employee who is struggling with mobility issues. His scooter broke, and they are trying to resolve how it is going to be fixed/replaced. Allen brought in one that was on loan and was just returned for him to use until it is resolved.

OSCIL – Lezlee Shaffer stated they are re-applying for a new grant. They are now serving double the amount of individuals from prior year. She added she is starting to get more speaking requests. Lezlee recently did a program for the MS Society showing minor home modifications.

Lezlee stated they are now working with Mayor Avedisian's office and Warwick Police on "missingpatient.com", an Amber Alert for adults with memory impairments and cognitive brain disorders. OSCIL is promoting this in their newsletter.

TechACCESS – Judi Carlson stated they had been fairly successful in picking up devices on loan from various vendors. Device loan program is going pretty well. People are keeping equipment for longer than the 4 weeks loan period. They are going to be looking at that. They have developed a screening process for individuals who have MS, MD, ALS, etc. who need equipment for urgently. Judi also stated they are starting to plan for the AT conference and asked that anyone who would like to be involved should contact her. Judi discussed the law

brought up by the Governor's Commission on Disability (GCD) that says that public meeting arenas has to have public amplification systems available without requests. They went around to schools and town halls and told them they could get either an amplification system that attaches to their current system or a Pocket Talker. Those were the only 2 options given and there is a lot of controversy around this. Kathleen Samways questioned microphones. Judi stated that they purchased those pieces of equipment so that if someone calls they can see if those pieces are compatible with the venues system. Liz Hubbard asked if anyone had raised the issues of amplification systems not being appropriate for certain hearing aids. Judi responded that the GCD meant the intent of the law regarding amplification systems being available without a request. Bill Robinson added that in some instances people have a fear of speaking if there is a microphone.

Next Meeting: June 24, 2010 - Warwick Public Library – Large Meeting Room

Other meeting dates:

September 9, 2010 – PARI Independent Living Center, 500 Prospect Street, Pawtucket, RI

- November 4, 2010 – TechACCESS of RI, 110 Jefferson Blvd, Warwick, RI

Motion was made by Margaret Hoyer and seconded by Kathleen Samways to adjourn meeting at 3:40 pm. Motion passed.