

RI Council on Assistive Technology
June 18, 2009 ~ 2:30 – 4:00 pm
TechACCESS of RI, Suite I
110 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, RI

Minutes

Present: Kerri Cicione, Denise Corson, Susan Gnrke, Judi Hammerlind-Carlson, Thomas Karweh, James Litvack, Phyllis Lynch, Mike Montanaro, Teresa O'Brien, Dan Pieroni, Colleen Polselli, Charles Pollock, Ying Sun, and Kim Wennermark

- **Welcome:**
Meeting was called to order by Chair Pollock at 2:35 pm.
- **Acceptance of Minutes:**
Approval of Minutes for 4/16/09 with one change suggested by Jeanne Panarace via email. Word "All" added in to ATEL Partner Report sentence "Jitterbug phone does not require a contract, however, does not work with all hearing aids." Motion made by Kim Wennermark, seconded by Sue Gnrke, to accept minutes with this change. Motion unanimously passed.
- **Chairpersons Report:** Chair Pollock stated he did not have anything to report on for this meeting. He asked if anyone had any items that they would like to bring to RICAT's attention. Susan Gnrke asked about his term ending which was brought up at the last meeting. Chair Pollock replied that he would stay if no one would like to replace him. However, they need to replace Jill Blaney on the Membership Committee and as Vice Chair.
- **Program Director's Report:** Mike Montanaro read report prepared by Kat Grygiel who was unable to attend meeting which discussed:
 - a. Proposed Revision to By-Laws:
 - Strive to structure Advisory Council with increased flexibility & closer alignment to ATAP mission
 - AD Hoc committee has met twice to formulate draft "guidelines"
 - Next meeting 7/9/09 @ 2:00 @ ORS
 - Plan to vote on @ RICAT meeting 8/27/09

- b. Data Collection (there was a lot of discussion from RICAT members on the need for data collection and impact it has on ATAP Partners and their funding):
- Continue to collect quarterly reports from partners
 - Performance measures & satisfaction surveys collected beginning with 1/09-3/09 Quarterly report
- c. Partner News:
- ATEL relocating to ORS as budget was decreased and they can not afford to be contracted out to non-profit sector
 - Exploring more formal partner reporting @ RICAT meetings. A discussion was held as to how to give RICAT members more of an opportunity to look at what each partners does and changes that have occurred within their programs. Kim Wennermark asked if the format of reporting follows what drives the partners. Sue Gnrke added that she had read the guidelines and understands that they need to see an increase in numbers for the accountability side of it. The council members also want to see what is going on and what they can do to assist the partners. Phyllis Lynch added that numbers paired with successes are needed for accountability to the federal government so that money can keep coming in. Everything is connected.

At the last ATAP partner meeting, they discussed having one partner per meeting discuss their objectives, how the Council helped them achieve their goals, suggestions made from last year to this year and if they helped, etc. Sue Gnrke stated it was nice to hear from partners on a regular basis, and asked if they would be limited if they came in with a report. Dan Pieroni questioned what happened if urgent matter came up that needed to be discussed. Mike Montanaro responded the partner would still be able to bring it up for discussion. Chair Pollock added that the RICAT members come to these meetings for information shared from ATAP Partners. Chair Pollock asked if members would like to vote on this format. Kim Wennermark commented that this seems like it is in primary stage and they should see what format the partners suggest and go from there.

- d. National Scene:
- Out-of-state travel restrictions prevented attendance at AT National Conference in April

- Peer Review monitoring being developed, so RI needs to begin preparations with more formal policies & procedures in service delivery

- **Partner Reports**
 - ATEL: Denise Corson explained how currently she is employed through Goodwill Industries, not as a state employee. However at the end of June, the new fiscal year begins and she will be moving to ORS where she will begin a contract position there. At this time the phone system is down and there is not a way to leave a message. Next week she will getting things worked out for the transition to ORS. At this time 15 people are on the waiting list. Within a 3-month period, she will try to get letters out to former customers regarding further information. There will also be a mass email sent out from the Director of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. James Litvak volunteered to send out to the IL living center contacts as well. Colleen Polselli mentioned The Point would be a good contact too.

 - EBEC: Lisa Labitt was unable to attend today's meeting, but forwarded a copy of her report for the Council's review. A copy is attached. Dan Pieroni commented that the "Dare to Dream" conference, which was mentioned in Lisa's report, was a huge success. He added he hopes to be involved again next year with the conference.

 - OSCIL: N/A

 - PARI: N/A

 - TECHACCESS: Judi Hammerlind-Carlson noted she had been out on medical leave. She noted that her report was similar to Lisa's as far as the information discussed. TechACCESS helps clients decided whether they want a certain piece of assistive technology. They set up demonstrations on the 4 Tuesdays in the afternoon. James Litvack and Tina from TechACCESS have been doing demonstrations on AT related to hearing. She added they are running out of current technologies, and are working with vendors to get long-term loans of new equipment. Judi added that equipment loans are going out daily. Blind/low vision/software go out the most. Judi asked the Council members what their thoughts were regarding charging for this service as it probably takes 1- 1/1/2 hours to clean, reprogram, etc., items when they come back before they can be loaned again. Kim Wennermark asked if they were having a

problem getting items returned. Judi responded that sometimes people actually bring back others items as well that they can't use anymore. Kim W. suggested partnering with someone like NE Institute of Technology on an internship to assist with this. James Litvack added that at PARI they also have the problem there is sometimes a need for the item that is out on loan. Judi C. responded that they have the rule that if only one item, it stays at TechACCESS, and if there are 2 of the same item, one can be loaned out but the other needs to stay at the center. Phyllis Lynch asked if there was a time frame for loans. Judi responded usually 4-6 weeks. Sue Gnrke asked if there was a way to put together an album with digital photographs of all items they have with an in-depth description of what item does. Phyllis Lynch asked if there were any hot items that they were looking at. Judi responded that book readers are huge. A lot of their vision items are older but still usable. Also hearing and speech items.

Judi also discussed the training portion of the grant and how they meet at TechACCESS instead of at colleges. As part of the Technical Assistance portion, Judi stated she sits on different boards and workgroups making sure AT included. Currently, she is working with RIVESP (RI Vision Education Services and Program), and PAHI (Peer Assisted Health Initiative). Gloria Stuart of TechACCESS also works with RIMAC (RI Materials Access Center). Judi stated that this year they will not be holding an AT Conference. This past year they ran into a lot of problems and want to try to get some fresh ideas to bring to the next conference. Judi discussed the Open Labs Day they hold at TechACCESS, which includes a Cybervision Lab which is held on Saturdays and is open from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Kids, peers, mentors get to dabble with technology and gain mentoring skills. They usually have 16-18 kids and adults mentors and are able to use Pacmate and Skype.

Judi also distributed a copy of her report which is attached.

- **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- **Executive Committee:**
N/A

- **Membership/Outreach**
N/A

- **By-Laws:**
N/A

- **Alternative Finance:**
N/A
- **Legislative**
N/A
- **Communications**
N/A
- **Partner Support**
N/A
- **Roundtable:**
 - Ying Sun commented that they are writing a grant proposal through National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), and TechACCESS has been a major collaborator. Another activity he is involved with is working on innovative AT. One current item is using Wii remotes to send a signal using Bluetooth to a playstation. They are developing software to slow down the speed, and are looking for ideas on how to use this for rehabilitation purposes. Teresa O'Brien asked if he would be able to do a demonstration at the August meeting.
 - Letter read that was submitted from Michael Matraccia regarding curb cuts I by the construction project taking place at the Dean Street ramps of Route 10 in the City of Providence. An inquiry into the project revealed there was curb replacement scheduled with no designated curb cuts for wheelchair access. This letter was written to formally request curb cuts for wheelchair accessibility at the Dean Street/Rte 10 Project. He added that he sent the letter out Friday and went by the intersection in question yesterday and had seen that the crews were working on putting in handicap ramps in.

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, August 27, 2009. **PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN DATE FROM AUGUST 20TH TO AUGUST 27TH!**

- Motion made to adjourn by Susan Gnrke, seconded by Kim Wennermark. Motion approved. Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.
- **Reminder:** contact Sharon (sharond@ors.ri.gov or 421-7005 ext. 318) if you will or will not attend. Also – any question of where the meeting will be held or date, you can always check the website, www.atap.ri.gov/ricat2.htm.