

## DRAFT MINUTES

Assistive Technology Advisory Council (ATAC)

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

R. Krollman

### Attending Members

Scott Higdon, Chair

Dr. Peggy Fields

Dr. Michael Behrmann

Tom Dowling

Ben Garrett

Dr. Tony Gentry

Kelly Lum

Dr. Joey Wallace

Brenda Wickard

Joann Willis

Pat Beattie (by Audio Conferencing)

### Members Absent:

John Eisenberg

Elizabeth Flaherty

Senator Yvonne Miller

Jason Neal

Sam Simon

### Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) Staff

Kathy Hayfield

Bob Krollman

Barclay Shepard

Janice Austin

Elin Glass

Emily McKeough, George Mason University (GMU), VATS North Regional Site

Joann Erving, Old Dominion University (ODU), VATS SE Regional Site

Rick Barrow, Virginia Tech, VATS SW Regional Site

### Welcome and Introduction of New Members

Peggy Fields, Secretary, brought the meeting to order and welcomed everyone, including new members. Ms. Fields recognized new Council members Joann Willis and Dr. Tony Gentry. All members of the Advisory Council and VATS staff introduced themselves.

### Approval of March 10, 2009 Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the March 10, 2009, Assistive Technology Advisory Council Meeting were approved as submitted.

### Public Comment

Ben Garrett commented that there are over 200 toll free phone numbers to provide services. The Department of Aging has a 211 statewide phone number, toll free. Mr. Garrett is concerned that the 211 Virginia area phone number is not known throughout the state and we need to make people aware of the 211 number to have access to services.

Mr. Garrett recommended the “Consumer Protection Handbook” as a reference with toll free phone numbers to contact companies and services needed by consumers.

Old Business:

No old business was brought forward.

AT Manager Report/Program Update:

Kathy Hayfield, AT Manager, welcomed Council members to the meeting and provided an update of the activities of VATS over the previous quarter. In addition to several training programs coordinated by VATS Central and the Regional Sites, she explained that all three Regional Sites are also involved in AT programs for youth and particularly youth in transition. She also stated that VATS has been increasing its’ emphasis on Device Demonstrations over the last few months.

Ms. Hayfield told the members that she and Dr. Wallace, NewWell Fund, had attended a national meeting of the AT Act Programs and Alternative Financing Programs in Philadelphia, PA in April. She explained that the federal AT Act, which funds VATS and 55 other State AT programs, is up for reauthorization in 2010. The Act was last reauthorized in 2004. Ms. Hayfield told the Council that she is on an AT Act Reauthorization workgroup for the Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP) to put together recommendations for possible amendments to the Act. She will keep the Council abreast of future developments.

Ms. Hayfield briefly reiterated that the purpose of the Advisory Council on Assistive Technology (ATAC) is to help VATS plan, implement, and evaluate activities of our state AT Act program. The Council is made up of people with disabilities or their family members and representatives of disability related agencies, organizations and advocacy groups. She stated that Council members have a wealth of experiences and expertise to help VATS better meet the AT needs of Virginians with disabilities.

Ms. Hayfield stated that the Council also may have a powerful opportunity to act as an educational or public awareness source about AT. She suggested the idea of establishing a VATS Electronic Newsletter where the Council could act as the Editorial Board.

Council members were very enthusiastic about this idea. Dr. Behrmann suggested a newsletter be tied to the VATS website. Dr. Gentry suggested that each Council member could post to the site and thought the Council could consider assistance of graduate students to help with a Council Newsletter. Ben Garrett stated that many people do not have access to electronic communication and it was suggested that printed copies of this newsletter be made available upon request.

A motion was made to produce a VATS Newsletter electronically and start a committee to focus on a design. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

Tom Dowling was interested in knowing how the numbers are changing for people using new AT equipment for the deaf and hard of hearing. The need of a representative from the Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on the AT Advisory Council would be helpful to provide input on that population.

Bob Krollman suggested Council members representing State Agencies consider sending a representative to the Council meetings if they are not able to attend.

### Review of Data Collection Process and Report

Emily McKeough, GMU VATS-North Regional Site, reported on the VATS data collection process and included the Rehabilitation Services Administration data requirements as well as a review of data collected by VATS, Virginia Assistive Technology Device Reutilization Network (VATNet) partners, and VATS Regional sites for the first two quarters of FFY 2009. Ms. McKeough defined Device Reutilization, Device Loans, Device Demonstration, Training, Technical Assistance, Public Awareness and Information and Assistance activities. VATS has instituted monthly conference calls to discuss Regional Site issues and data collection.

### Updates

Bob Krollman met with the Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging (V4A) at their quarterly meeting and presented a historical overview of collaborative efforts and explored how VATS can be involved in future program development.

Bob Krollman reported that on June 8, he and Dr. Joey Wallace conducted a training entitled **“Assistive Technology: Low and High Tech Solutions for Independent Living”** at the Annual Conference for Community Supports: Caregivers and Consumers For Persons Growing Older with Lifelong Disabilities, sponsored by the Area Planning and Services Committee (APSC) on Aging with Lifelong Developmental Disabilities in Richmond.

Vendors want to get the word out to consumers on new AT devices. We are considering ways to market products such as bringing vendors to present their products, note new equipment in a newsletter or electronically provide information. Dr. Behrmann stated that there may need to be a funding stream for vendor marketing. Scott Higdon suggested arranging a subcommittee to check on new devices through the universities.

VATS coordinated the AT Training at Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) in April and will assume responsibilities for logistical support and coordination of this ongoing biannual agency training initiative.

Dr. Wallace suggested that the Council consider forming a sub-committee on leadership/marketing. Scott Higdon would like to see a subcommittee formed that would check on new devices being developed.

### VATNet Update

Barclay Shepard reviewed VATS' commitment and approach to the long term sustainability of Virginia's network of AT and durable medical equipment (DME) recycling programs. Mr. Shepard reported that in April 2009, VATS submitted a grant application in response to a Request For Proposals (RFP) from the Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative (CNI) Trust Fund Board. Mr. Shepard reported that VATS received word that the Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative Trust Fund Advisory Board anticipates awarding VATS \$416,220 over three years. The funding will allow Virginia's network of AT/DME recycling programs to expand further to meet the equipment needs of individuals with traumatic spinal cord injuries and traumatic brain

injuries, especially those who do not have access to necessary equipment. The funds will also allow the network to build the infrastructure to initiate a state-of-the-art sanitization and processing program for used AT/DME, which will bring Virginia to the forefront of AT/DME recycling programs nationally.

Mr. Shepard showed a promotional video from the HUBSCRUB company to highlight the capabilities of the company's portable automated cleaning and infection control systems for durable medical equipment.

Mr. Krollman discussed the need to find council members representing a diversity of consumers. It was suggested that current members submit names of potential new members to Bob. There is no limit to council size, but the percentage of members with a disability or having a family member with a disability must be correct in proportion to the overall council membership. Recruiting a member from the V.A. Medical System was recommended.

#### Comments from James Rothrock, DRS Commissioner

Commissioner Rothrock offered his appreciation and thanks to the ATAC for their work to provide oversight and assistance in identifying organizational direction. The Commissioner discussed how American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds will be applied to the area of assistive technology within the agency. Initiatives will be developed that will expand assistive technology equipment loan library and providing a very limited number of occupational therapist positions to develop regional assistive technology teams based on the model program available through the Center for Career and Business Development in Richmond..

#### Advisory Council Member Updates

Dr. Fields reported for the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI). Rehabilitation teaching was affected by the budget cuts; however, DBVI did receive stimulus funds. They plan to use this money to provide seniors with technology. Dr. Fields is working with desktop computers for people who have the capability of using a computer. This training will be used to address quality of life issues.

Dr. Wallace reported that the NewWell Fund was invited to meet with staff at the Veterans Administration Hospital. Dr. Wallace presented and gave out brochures. Dr. Wallace will contact Scott Higdon to get a military person on board to help work with connecting with the military for services available through the NewWell Fund and disability agencies. Joann Ervin, VATS SE, stated that she has done several presentations with the military, at the Naval Hospital and Naval Operations Station in the Tidewater/Hampton Roads area.

Ben Garrett reported on activities of the Department of Aging including 211 Virginia, the No Wrong Door Project and Project 2025.

#### New Business

Scott Higdon opened the floor for nominations of new officers.

Brenda Wickard was nominated for the position of Chairperson, Elizabeth Flaherty was nominated for the position of Vice Chair Chairperson and Dr. Peggy Fields was

nominated to serve another term as Secretary. A motion to accept the slate of officers as nominated was made and seconded. The slate was accepted by unanimous vote.

A motion was made to have a subcommittee provide a Newsletter. Dr. Wallace, Dr. Behrmann and Kelly Lum volunteered to be on the subcommittee. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

A second subcommittee was formed to research and report on new and/or emerging assistive technologies. Dr. Fields, Dr. Gentry, Joann Willis and Tom Dowling will serve on the subcommittee.

#### Next Council Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Assistive Technology Advisory Council is scheduled for Wednesday, September 9, 2009, at the Switzer Building, Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center in Fishersville, VA.

#### Adjournment

A motion for adjournment was made from the floor, seconded and vote was called. A unanimous vote was cast for adjournment. The Council meeting adjourned at 1:50pm.