

Assistive Technology Advisory Council Meeting
May 15, 2014
Draft Minutes

Members Present: Elizabeth Flaherty, Chair; Joann Willis, Vice-Chair; Clayton Bowen; Melanie Brunson; DeWanna Christian, Christy Crowther; Tony Gentry; Kelvin Harris, Clay Huie; Anthony Lineberry; William Mann, Erin Smydra; Betti Thompson

Members Present by Conference Call: Mary Mathena

Members Absent: Margaret (Peggy) Fields, Council Secretary; Michael M. Behrmann; Melissa Oliver; Michele Samoy

Guests:

James A. Rothrock, Commissioner
Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
Angie Phelon, Senior Connections
Barbara Seymour, Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS)
Mary Nunnally, Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services
Julio Rodriguez, sComm (Guest Presenter)

Staff Present:

Barclay Shepard, Director, VATS
Robert Krollman, VATS
Elin Glass, VATS
Emily Fallings, George Mason University (GMU), VATS North Regional Site
Joann Ervin, Old Dominion University (ODU), VATS SE Regional Site (by Conference Call)

Interpreters: Catherine Clough and Elizabeth Leach

Call to Order:

Elizabeth Flaherty, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. All members of the Advisory Council, VATS staff and guests introduced themselves.

Approval of 1/16/14 Minutes:

The January 16, 2014, ATAC Meeting Minutes, as is, stand approved.

Public Comment: There were no comments from the public.

Welcome New Members:

Ms. Flaherty welcomed four recent appointments to the ATAC. New members include “At Large” and “Mandated” members of the Council. New members include: DeWanna Christian, Kelvin W. Harris, and William H. Mann and Mary Mathena.

Old Business:

Mr. Shepard reported last meeting that it has been several years since the ATAC and VATS staff reviewed the ATAC By-Laws to ensure meeting requirements, membership and term limits are appropriate and in accordance with the federal AT Act in supporting VATS mission. Melissa Oliver, Melanie Brunson, and Erin Smydra volunteered to work with Mr. Shepard to review ATAC By-Laws and make recommendations at the next ATAC meeting. The By-Laws subcommittee met by conference call on 5/14/14. Discussion included an in-depth review of how the By-Laws were developed as well as discrepancies in the language used in By-Laws due to changes in membership and meeting dates implemented over the past several years. Mr. Shepard reviewed the recommendations of the subcommittee which included: Bringing term limits up for open discussion at the May 15, 2014 meeting; changing the language in the By-Laws / New ATAC Member Orientation Manual to be in-line with current practice; reviewing membership requirements to ensure VATS is meeting the intent of the AT Act in terms of member composition. Discussion ensued. *A motion was made by Erin Smydra and Seconded by Clay Huie to remove the term limits in the ATAC By-Laws & discuss with Council member(s) if they prefer to stay or rotate off as ATAC members.* After six years, the ATAC Chair and VATS staff will meet with Council Members individually to discuss the need to replace this position with another At Large or Mandated Member depending on the needs of the Council. Mr. Shepard will make changes to the By-Laws / New ATAC Member Orientation Manual and distribute to Council members who have not received the Manual.

New Business:

No Report.

Commissioner's Update, DARS:

James A. Rothrock, Commissioner, DARS, provided an update for the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services.

DRS Director's Update:

Mr. Shepard reported on program updates from the Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS). Updates included assistive technology initiatives to improve services for vocational rehabilitation consumers.

VATS Program Update:

Barclay Shepard and Bob Krollman provided program updates for VATS. Updates included the following:

- Mr. Shepard reported on VATS collaboration with the Division of Rehabilitative Services to expand the Handheld Technology Program for vocational rehabilitation client's with autism;
- Mr. Krollman reported on VATS AT and Aging transition initiatives to date. Mr. Krollman also included information and solicited input on VATS direction for these

initiatives for 2014. Mr. Krollman provided detailed information regarding VATS assistive technology (AT) and Aging Initiatives to ATAC members in the ATAC Update prior to the meeting.

RESNA Catalyst Project AT Connects Employer Portal:

Paul Galonsky from the RESNA Catalyst Project provided presentation to ATAC members using GoToMeeting. The presentation focused on one of the Catalyst Project hubs, a web-based portal for employers. This portal includes a large number of resources to accommodate employees with disabilities. The presentation included a PowerPoint presentation and a virtual tour of the employer web portal. This portal is housed on the AT Connects worksite. The RESNA Catalyst Project is a sponsored project of the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA). The RESNA Catalyst Project is funded to provide technical assistance to the AT Act Grantees for all 56 AT Act Programs, 57 Protection and Advocacy Programs, and 36 Alternative Financing Programs.

Working Lunch: Technology Demonstrations:

- Mr. Rodriguez from sComm provided a demonstration of the UbiDuo. The UbiDuo is a communication device for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, and or speech disabled. Key features of the device(s) were discussed as well as a demonstration.

ATAC Member Updates:

Several ATAC members reported updates from their organizations or constituent groups. Below is a list of some of those reports that were significant to ATAC:

- Ms. Smydra reported ongoing collaborations with George Mason University to increase usage of services through AIM Virginia;
- Ms. Smydra reported that the Virginia Department of Education is collaborating with the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired for training on the new Braille code;
- Ms. Mathena reported on the Vision Loss Symposium which provides outreach to people in the community who are losing their vision;
- Ms. Thompson will be providing a presentation on deaf apps at the Virginia Association for the Deaf mini-conference;
- Ms. Crowther reported on the Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority's loan volume since the beginning of the federal fiscal year;
- Ms. Brunson reported on a lawsuit by the American Council for the Blind regarding the lack of website accessibility for federal grant contractors.

VATS Contractor Updates:

Ms. Fallings provided a program update for the VATS-North regional site at George Mason University (GMU). Detailed information regarding this regional site's activities was provided to ATAC members in the May 2014 ATAC Update prior to the meeting.

Joann Ervin provided a program update for the VATS-Southeast regional site at Old Dominion University (ODU). Detailed information regarding this regional site's activities was provided to ATAC members in the May 2014 ATAC Update prior to the meeting.

Mr. Shepard reported the following a program update for the Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment and Endowment (F.R.E.E.) Detailed information regarding this regional site's activities was provided to ATAC members in the May 2014 ATAC Update prior to the meeting. In addition to the Update, Mr. Shepard reported the following:

- F.R.E.E.'s durable medical equipment reuse program won a Commonwealth Council on Aging 2014 Best Practices Award.

Next ATAC Meeting:

The next ATAC Meetings are scheduled for 2014 as follows:

Thursday, Sept. 18, 2014 (10:00am-2:30pm)

Meeting Location: DARS Central Office, 8004 Franklin Farms Drive, Richmond, VA 23229

Adjournment:

A motion was made to adjourn and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 2:00pm