

Assistive Technology Advisory Council Meeting
January 16, 2014
Approved Minutes

Members Present: Elizabeth Flaherty, Chair; Melanie Brunson; Christy Crowther; Tony Gentry; Clayton Bowen; Anthony W. Lineberry; William Massey; Melissa Oliver; Erin Smydra; Betti Thompson; Joann Willis

Members Absent: Margaret (Peggy) Fields; Michael M. Behrmann; Michele Samoy; Clay Huie

Guests:

James A. Rothrock, Commissioner

Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)

Sherry Wilson, Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment & Endowment (F.R.E.E.)

Staff Present:

Kathy Hayfield, Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS)

Barclay Shepard, VATS

Robert Krollman, VATS

Emily Fallings and Alisa Louther, George Mason University

(GMU), VATS North Regional Site

Joann Ervin, Old Dominion University, VATS Southeast Regional Site

Sonja Schaible, F.R.E.E. Foundation

Staff Absent:

Sharon Davis, David Netherton and Joann Ervin, Old Dominion University (ODU),

VATS Southeast Regional Site

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 9/19/13 Minutes:

The September 19, 2013, ATAC Meeting Minutes, as is, stand approved.

Public Comment: There were no comments from the public.

Old Business:

Mr. Shepard reviewed ATAC membership requirements as outlined in VATS State Plan 2012-2014. Mr. Shepard reported that several ATAC members sent potential ATAC member nominations to him. Mr. Shepard reported that he met with the Commissioner of DARS to

review nominations by ATAC members and that he will be working with the Commissioner's office to appoint several new members by the next meeting.

New Business:

Mr. Shepard reported that VATS needs to review its bylaws to ensure meeting requirements and term limits are appropriate in supporting VATS. Melissa Oliver, Melanie Brunson, and Erin Smydra volunteered to work with Mr. Shepard to review ATAC Bylaws and make recommendations at the next ATAC meeting.

Commissioner's Update, DARS:

James A. Rothrock, Commissioner, DARS, provided an update for the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services. This report included updates regarding the current General Assembly session.

DRS Director's Update:

Mrs. Hayfield summarized VATS efforts in 2013 and direction for 2014 and reported the following:

- Governor's re-appointment of Commissioners.
- 2013 VATS continued commitment to support direct services versus systems change initiatives.
- 2013 VATS efforts to collaborate and strengthen partnerships with new and existing groups/populations. Several examples given to include: DARS; veterans; the deaf and hard of hearing community; DOE; aging networks etc.
- 2013 VATS efforts to broaden outreach to employers to include Executive Order (EO) 55 technical assistance and trainings provided.
- 2014 VATS commitment to collaborate with DRS to expand hand-held technology programs and EO 55 program.

VATS Program Update:

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

- Extensive review of VATS Annual Report submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2013. In FFY 2013, VATS statewide programs served 3,553 Virginians through the following assistive technology (AT) services: Demonstrations; Short-Term Equipment Loans; Reuse; Training; and Information & Assistance. Mr. Shepard reviewed significant accomplishments to include the expansion of reuse services and training and technical assistance activities reported by VATS regional sites and partners. VATS provided this information to ATAC members in the January ATAC Update prior to the meeting.
- VATS collaboration with DRS to expand the Handheld Technology Program for vocational rehabilitation client's with autism.

- Reviewed a contract with the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center for 2014 to continue to provide AT@ Work Trainings to employers and employment service organizations.
- Legislative update on the impact of sequestration and impending bills which fund VATS.
- 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 January ATAC Update prior to the meeting.

F.R.E.E. Richmond Update

Sherry Wilson provided ATAC members with a review of F.R.E.E.'s reuse program in the Richmond area. The presentation included appreciation for VATS partnership and support, service expansion, and success stories.

Working Lunch: Technology Demonstrations:

- VATS Regional Sites at ODU and GMU provided hands-on technology demonstrations of some of the latest technology that they are either using in their device demonstration and loan programs or devices that they plan to purchase in 2014 for these programs.

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:

- Mr. Massey reported that the Virginia Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and Area Agencies on Aging would be participating in a quarterly meeting of the two associations in 2014 to better engage both groups with one another.
- Melissa Oliver reported on the Assistive Technology Expo on October 28, 2013 at McGuire VA Medical Center's Multi-Purpose Room.
- Christy Crowther reported on the Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority's (ATLFA) data for FFY 2013. ATLFA made more than 100 loans for AT for more than \$1.5 million dollars. This is a 60% increase in the direct loan program. Suntrust Bank is no longer a partner which means that the ATLFA will be providing more direct loans for vehicle modifications, etc.
- Ms. Crowther reviewed a budget amendment currently in the General Assembly to fund the Consumer Service Fund; a fund of last resort for persons with sensory or physical disabilities to acquire AT. It is proposed that this fund would be administered by ATLFA.

VATS Contractor Updates:

Emily Fallings and Alisa Louthier provided a program update for the VATS-North Regional Site at George Mason University (GMU). This update included:

- VATS-GMU continues to contract with the ALS Association of Virginia to provide in home AT assessments.
- VATS-GMU reported a new training program for the Summer of 2014 which will replace the Compu-Write program. This program will focus on reading and technology.

- VATS-GMU reported that they are working with the Border Patrol and protection agency to provide targeted trainings.
- VATS-GMU continues to provide ergonomic assessments in collaboration with the Department of Education.
- VATS-GMU participated in the Closing the Gap and I'm Determined conferences.
- Working with the Exceptional Family program at Quantico to better support services to a younger population (0-2 years).
- Reviewed GMU's AT Masters and Certificate programs. VATS-GMU helped develop the curriculum. All of these courses are now available online.

Joann Ervin reported the following program update for the VATS-Southeast Regional Site at Old Dominion University (ODU). This update included the following:

- Continuing work with ODU STEM program students with DRS Occupational Therapists and Rehab Engineers to provide real life barrier removal solutions for individuals with disabilities living in the Tidewater area.
- Described iPad loan program with Centers for Independent Living and Community Services Boards.
- Reported on collaborations with the Department for Blind and Vision Impaired as well as senior service organizations (AARP, AAAs etc.).

Sonja Schaible reported the following a program update for F.R.E.E. This update included the following:

- Update on F.R.E.E.'s role with the Virginia Partners for Care Transitions.
- F.R.E.E.s commitment to social media to share successes and improve access to services (Facebook).
- Reviewed F.R.E.E.'s 2013 accomplishments and 2014 program goals.

Next ATAC Meeting:

The next ATAC Meetings are scheduled for 2014 as follows:

Thursday, May 15, 2014 (10:00am-2:30pm)

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 1:30pm