

RI Council on Assistive Technology
June 12, 2008: 2:30 – 4:00 pm
TechACCESS of RI, Suite I
110 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, RI

Minutes

Present: Charlie Pollock, Margaret Hoye, Jill Blaney, Jeanne Panarace, Kim Wennermark, L. Shaffer Shaffer, Denise Corson, Ying Sun, Bill Robinson, Bob Perrello, Kat Grygiel, Carol Folan-Dusablon, Joe Murphy, Lisa Labitt, and Phyllis Lynch.

- **Welcome:**
Meeting was called to order by Chair Pollock at 2:35 p.m.
- **Acceptance of Minutes:**
Approval of Minutes for 2/21/08 - Motion made by M. Hoye and seconded by J. Murphy. Motion unanimously passed.
- **Chairperson's Report:** Chair Pollock let people know about beaches in RI, and the pass offered through DEM for individuals with a disability. There was an ad in the Providence Journal. (See attached for info)
- **Project Director's Report:**
K. Grygiel noted she had recently gone to Utah for a meeting regarding the 3 year State plan they need to submit for FFY2009-2011. Primarily text, however, this year RSA has created an online state plan. To be submitted electronically. K. Grygiel explained this involves sitting down with partners to do the plan. She would like to get input from the advisory council on the state plan. The Executive Committee had just finished talking about creating an ad hoc committee for the meeting in August. C. Dusablon, D., M. Hoye, J. Panarace P., J. Blaney, and Y. Sun would like to be on it. If 1st week in August isn't good, 2nd week. Partners also will be joining. State plan is broken into 4 different sections. She would like small groups to look at each section, and feels it would be helpful to have partners there. K. Grygiel will send date for 1st and 2nd week in August and see who is available. Her agenda is to get input from the advisory council before submitting to RSA. J. Panarace added we should send an email to those absent from today's meeting in case they would like to participate. K. Grygiel stated the report needs to be in to feds by beginning of September. K. Grygiel added that another thing they are

working on is the contracts for the 5 partners which will be ending July 30. The partners are in the process of working on their work plans and contracts for next cycle. All partners have received level funding for last 7 years. With new AT act and requirements, people are getting same money for doing a lot more work. Accountability and reporting is an extremely important portion of job. Budget for ATAP is \$312,000.

- **Partner Reports**

ATEL: D. Corson commented that they have increased their equipment budget by 25% because they always run out of money. Chair Pollock asked how they handled that in the past. D. Corson responded they developed a waiting list. Things that can be recycled and refurbished are being done. They also found out that if you sent in older model speakerphones, they could get new ones for only \$75 for \$400 phones. They haven't ordered any speaker phones in past year because of these recycled ones. D. Corson explained how ATEL works with three groups – Deaf/Hard of Hearing, individuals with speech disabilities or muscular disabilities. She has recently added a voice amplified handset to their equipment. Normal availability was one with 12-14 decibels of amplification, now there is handset that goes up to 26. What is nice is that they handsets can go with phones they already carry. There are 1.5 million Americans with Parkinson's, and many cannot project their voice. D. Corson commented that she will set up an informational meeting at Kent to discuss ?this?. Cost for handset is only \$44, but it is compatible with phone costing \$80. Technologies will cover multiple disabilities. Speakerphone can be used by different techniques because some can't dial or have vision as a secondary disability. Also someone might have a muscular disease such as polio to someone who has severe arthritis. This year they were looking at an anti-stuttering device, however, that is not a big seller with only about 100 individuals that need it. Speech person would train individuals on its use. If anyone has something they would like her to research, let her know. As long as it meets those 3 criteria listed above. J. Panarace commented she has been using the Captel phone and it has been very helpful. She asked who would be the point person to make design changes. D. Corson responded Shawn from Hamilton Relay. B. Robinson asked what would be available for a youngster who just graduated. His next door neighbor was born without arms. He was offered some type of supportive devices but he did not want them. D. Corson responded ATEL only does phones and could provide a speaker phone that would be voice activated. She added K. Grygiel

would be the right person to contact. She would encourage him to apply for services for ORS.

EBEC: L. Labbitt noted that she is responsible for the ATAP Resource Center for Children and Youth. Today she has already been at a pre-school graduation, a transition academy graduation, and then the last was her own son's graduation from 6th grade. She noticed all graduations had the same thing in common - technology plays a huge role in providing access to students with disabilities. It allows them access into the classrooms by having students use types of technology tools to equalize the playing field for students and allow them to access the curriculum they are in. She added that over the summer things slow up but she will be working on EBEC's work plan. She will be focusing on device loan and getting devices out to students, teachers, therapists etc. Even during the summer, device loans are still available to students and families to try out. L. Labbitt added this is a good time to try out instead of starting school in September with a new piece of technology. Students get a chance to learn it over the summer and become more familiar with the device. NIMAS – RI has a regional center at the Northern Educational Collaborative run by Jane Robideaux, for students who are blind/low vision with print disabilities. It has been up and running for about 6 months to a year. In fall they would like her to come in and do a brief presentation. It has been a learning experience for her getting textbooks to students. EBEC houses most of the science resources and materials for state. Chair Pollock asked how she became this source. Lisa responded that back in 1996 a bid went out. She could have ended up at any one of the collaboratives. She works at all the different schools and collaboratives. M. Hoyer commented that she wanted to congratulate her on what she is doing. She added her two sisters both needed large print. NIMAS is only through grade 12. Colleges are using more digital format.

OSCIL: L. Shaffer noted that her news is not as positive. Currently there is not a lot of options for funding. She is still doing a lot of community outreach, doing assessments to identify equipment to meet their needs, and doing demonstrations. But their funding sources are drying up. Their consumers are basically adults with disabilities. Chair Pollock asked what percentage of those people with disabilities are covered by them. She did not have an exact percentage, because it varies from year to year. In some years they have special grant funding. A year ago they had an extra \$40,000 available. Some of their federal funding is being either level funded or decreased. A lot of resources they were able to refer have dried up or not even exist anymore. She added that there has been a

waiting list for their home modification program. New money will be coming in October 1st. Hearing aid money for next year is already spoken for for people on the waiting list. Home mods have a waiting period of 2 years out. They are being as creative as possible. Alzheimer and dementia don't fall within IL guidelines, however consumers are calling them as a last resort. OSCIL has an AT specialist – Brian - who has been doing a great job going out in the community to help consumers. They are providing for people who do have funding, identifying what they need and where to get it. They do comparison shopping and give vendor information. Nice piece about ATAP partners and vendors working together.

PARI: No report

TECHACCESS: No report

- **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- **Executive Committee:**

J. Blaney discussed how they met before the regular RICAT meeting to go over and determine the purpose of RICAT. Their first line of business – J. Blaney looked over websites to see how other states handled their councils. Next step is to go over bylaws and determine if they should keep by-laws or go to “guidelines”. If by-laws they will review and revise to give more flexibility. K. Grygiel added that they also talked about orientations. J. Blaney also asked that RICAT members bear with them while they get refocused on what RICAT is all about. K. Grygiel added she really needs help with state plan and is looking at volunteers.

- **Membership/Outreach**

J. Blaney stated that last meeting there was not enough for quorum so a ballot went out via the mail. The majority voted yes and RICAT has 2 new members. They will be holding an orientation on July 16th , and hopefully everyone will meet them in August at the next meeting.

- **By-Laws:**

J. Blaney stated they will be looking them over, reviewing and revising. Not sure if guidelines or bylaws. Chair Pollock added if there is anything you want to add or comment on, let them know.

- **Alternative Finance:**

K. Grygiel commented that at the last meeting she shared with them that they were exploring shared duties with another agency in setting up an alternative finance program. Thought it sounded

wonderful, however, they found out there is a little bit of a wrinkle. When they discussed what administrative overhead expectation was, the other agency said it was 60% of money. Since we would be starting off with a limited amount of funds, that percentage going to administrative costs was too high. They did not want to start a program for one year using VR dollars to start program and ATAP dollars to help with that, and not be able to sustain program. She added that they didn't have any ATAP dollars to spare. She noted that the other problem was that when they are using VR dollars, they cannot use those dollars for indefinite amounts of time. She noted the biggest obstacle was really the amount of overhead, and said they were not actively pursuing this any longer. RSA, however, did give them good news. In the past when talking about ATEL joining partnership, RSA said they couldn't be considered State Financing Activities. However now device distribution programs are being taken in as part of that, so now it is at least recognizing that we are using state dollars for device loans. J. Panarace commented that URI and some of the other universities charge 30% for administrative costs. J. Panarace also asked if there is anyway to do an RFP that is not as binding. K. Grygiel responded what was attractive with this was that they had so much experience with managing this. If we were going to go out and RFP, their baseline would be the same as ours. J. Panarace asked if nonprofit agency was willing to negotiate. K. Grygiel responded that when they heard her silence when they gave the cost, they immediately went into their justification. They originally got their funding from the feds when RSA put out an initial grant, and they get legislative money as well. In general it sounded like a good idea, but at this point ATAP is not in the position to do it. There are only 33 AFPs because a lot of states are not able to participate in the program. J. Blaney asked if it was needed for AT act. K. Grygiel responded it is not a requirement. K. Wennermark asked if they are asking 60%, what were they planning to do with their talent - replacing money, using their people to search for the grants like received. K. Grygiel responded that was a great question which she didn't ask. Startup really had to do with transporting manual and expertise. Infusion of money would be repayment. Y. Sun asked if were profit or non profit. K. Grygiel responded it is a non-profit, however she feels that they are more profit. J. Panarace asked that because records were a public domain, would the manual fall into that. When at Health, they had to give credit to feds. K. Grygiel commented that still to bring in for one year, they would have to be able to sustain.

- **Legislative**

B. Perrello commented that not much is going on. New budget was passed with a lot of bills to cover budget cuts. He also discussed voting and wondered how many students at colleges actually vote because they have to change their address if they want to vote in RI because most are out of state students. Bob handed out “Provisional Ballot Application” and “Voter Registration Form”. L. Labitt asked B. Perrello if they also contacted URI and RIC because there is a higher number of RI’ers. He responded he hadn’t because he is involved only with Newport area. Chair Pollock asked about the disabled vote and if he had contacted any voters who have a disability. B. Perrello responded individuals can mail in an absentee ballot. Adding that in Newport, if a person calls them, they send a bi-partisan committee in to the persons’ home to assist with filling out ballot. M. Hoyer stated she is legally blind, and when calls for an absentee ballot, everything has to be on the up and up. Her form is notarized by notary public. J. Panarace questioned if that was done every year. C. Dusablon commented that she has power to vote for her cousin, and there is a way to have it not need to be notarized every year by having a doctor sign it. More important than the process of voting and registering people is getting people the information about voting. Chair Pollock added that there are 24.6% of people that have disabilities and can vote. If person comes in that needs help, they assign 2 people – one from each party.

- **Communications**

Y. Sun commented that he had believed this committee was set up to promote RICAT and ATAP and use of AT in RI. They have developed their own website and brochure (insert) and are trying to make themselves more autonomous from ATAP. He added that during the Executive Committee held previously, they are asking their members to think about whether it is suitable to have this autonomy. As for now, no activities are going on. Chair Pollock added that he feels the insert is necessary and shows that they are here.

- **Partner Support**

K. Grygiel talked about a site visit they did to TechACCESS last Sept./Oct. The Executive Committee will revisit this committee as the previous rationale to have it doesn’t exist anymore. It may or may not be eliminated as a permanent standing committee and instead become an Ad Hoc function. That will be determined after reviewing bylaws.

Roundtable:

- M. Hoyer commented that a couple of her neighbors over the last 2 or 3 weeks needed wheelchairs, but did not want to purchase them because they only needed them for a short time. Asked if there was any help out there. PARI has a slew of wheelchairs. K. Grygiel added that is part of what ATAP is all about - having a short term loan, device demonstration, etc. B. Robinson added that various Elks associations also provide items if they have them available including walkers and wheelchairs. Chair Pollock added Vanguard does as well.
 - Y. Sun made the announcement that URI will be holding a Summer Computing Institute from August 5-7th. This is mainly for HS students with disabilities, and is like a day camp where students work on various engineering projects. They will have 18 HS students, most with learning disabilities. They had done this last year and it was extremely successful. They are actively recruiting students. If you know anyone interested contact Ying. They are looking for 15 – 20. Transportation would be done by parents. K. Wennermark asked about the focus of this camp. Ying responded it is to attract students to the field of Science Tech and Engineering Mathematics. Ying added that the high school robotics program has a lot of participants in this, and this program is specifically for them and is on a one on one basis.
 - L. Shaffer commented that the IL Conference will be held on September 5th at the Providence Marriott. This year there will be a legislative component with a representative from each party for a question and answer period.
 - K. Wennermark discussed a project that is for veterans where they are trying to teach them as volunteers. They had a grant to develop volunteers. Kim will forward email re: this to J. Blaney.
- **Next Meeting Date: August 14, 2008** at from 2:30 pm. – 4:00 p..m at TechACCESS.
 - Motion made to adjourn by M. Hoyer, seconded by J. Blaney. Meeting 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.



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RHODE ISLAND DEM ACCESSIBILITY

It is our aim to provide, at each park and beach location, the same opportunities for people with disabilities as are available to people without disabilities. The R.I. Division of Parks and Recreation has an on going program of renovating facilities to make them accessible to and usable by persons with physical disabilities. In all new design and construction accessibility is automatically included.

In addition to designated wider parking spaces, restroom accommodations and ramped building entrances, the RI State park and Beach System offers accessible picnic tables and sites at all major day use parks. Further information about availability can be obtained by contacting individual parks.

Rhode Island State Law 32-1-17: No fee shall be charged to any person with a disability regardless of age, or to automobiles transporting a non-driver with a disability at any recreational facility owned by the state, provided, however, proper identification is presented as prescribed by the Department of Environmental Management. For the purpose of this section "person with a disability shall mean an individual who has a physical or mental impairment and is receiving: [A] Social Security disability (SSDI), [B] Supplemental Security Income benefits (SSI) or Veterans benefits and who shall be determined under applicable federal law by the Federal Department of Veteran's Affairs to be 100% disabled through a service connected injury. For this section "fees" shall include all fees for parking, admittance, or other user-fees for playing golf. The term "fees" shall not include licensing fees; camping fees, picnic table fees or specialized facility use fees, including, but not limited to fees for the use of equestrian areas, performing art centers, game fields and mule shed.

Fee System: Under the existing fee system at R.I. State Beaches and Goddard Park golf course, you must obtain an Annual or Lifetime Photo ID prior to the fee exemption.

Obtaining a Disability Pass

Disability passes are issued only at the Johnston office located at 2321 HARTFORD AVE , JOHNSTON , RI , 02919. **The office hours are: 8:30am – 4:00pm Monday-Friday, closed on holidays.** Starting February 1st, of each year, the Division of Parks and Recreation will begin issuing Annual Disability, and Lifetime Disability

RI TOURISM

ID's. You must present a valid form of photo identification or a birth certificate for children. We encourage everyone to call the Johnston office before your visit. The telephone number is 401-222-2632.

TIDE CHART

First Time Disability Pass:

WATER QUALITY

You must present on an original letterhead, a form from the Social security office stating the following:

WEATHER

- 1) Your full name and address.
 - 2) The current year.
 - 3) That you are receiving **monthly disability benefits**.
 - 4) The form must be signed by an authorized social security representative.
- ***NOTE: this pass is required to be renewed each year.*****

To renew this pass:

you must present your current year **NEW BENEFIT AMOUNT LETTER** or on an original letterhead, a form from the Social security office stating the following:

- 1) Your full name and address
- 2) The current year.
- 3) That you are receiving **monthly disability benefits**.
- 4) The form must be signed by an authorized social security representative.

Disabled OVER 65 YEARS OLD:

if you wish to obtain a Disability Pass for the first time, you must present on an original letterhead, a form from the Social security office stating the following:

- 1) Your full name and address
- 2) The current year.
- 3) That you **WERE receiving monthly disability benefits** before the age of 65.
- 4) The form must be signed by an authorized social security representative.

*****NOTE: For this pass you must have been receiving social security disability benefits prior to turning 65. Also you will be receiving a life time pass.*****

Disabled VETERANS:

If you wish to obtain a Disability Pass for the first time, you must present on an original letterhead, a form from the Veterans Administration stating the following:

- 1) Your full name and address
- 2) The current year.
- 3) That you are **100% disabled service connected**.
- 4) The form must be signed by an authorized representative of the Veterans Administration.

NOTE: for a veteran disability pass you must be 100% disabled from a service connected injury. this pass is required to be renewed each year unless you are no longer going to be reevaluated.**

To renew this pass:

You must present on an original letterhead, a form from the Veterans Administration stating the following:

- 1) Your full name and address
- 2) The current year.
- 3) That you are **100% disabled service connected**.
- 4) The form must be signed by an authorized representative of the Veterans

Administration.**SSI RECIPIENTS:**

If you wish to obtain a Disability Pass for the **FIRST TIME**, you must present on an original letterhead, a form from the Social security office stating the following:

- 1) Your full name and address
- 2) The current year.
- 3) That you are **receiving SSI benefits**.
- 4) The form must be signed by an authorized social security representative.

*****NOTE:** This pass is required to be renewed each year.***

To renew this pass:

You must present on an original letterhead, a form from the Social security office stating the following:

- 1) Your full name and address
- 2) The current year.
- 3) That you are **receiving SSI benefits**.
- 4) The form must be signed by an authorized social security representative.

Questions? Additional Information, Special Considerations & Locations: If you have additional questions or feel your situation needs to be clarified, please call us at: 401-222-2632 or use this link, [Email](#), to contact us.

Directions from Providence to the Johnston office: From 95 North or South take Route 10 connector South [near Civic Center] to State 195 West to the 295 North on ramp, take exit 6 and at the bottom of the ramp turn right on Rt. 6 heading West for 1.2 miles. Our office is on the right.

Goddard Park Golf Course Exemption:

R.I. Law 32-1-20: Any veteran who is a resident of the state, and who is shall be determined under applicable federal law by the Veteran's Administration of the United States of America to be totally disabled through service connected disability shall be exempt from paying any fee to play golf at the Goddard Park Golf Course. (32-1-17 Disability Social Security also applies).

Further information can be obtained regarding this exemption by calling the Clubhouse at **Goddard Memorial State Park** from April 1st through the 3rd Saturday in November at (401) 884-9834 or year round at [Division Headquarters](#) at (401) 222-2632.

Handicap-License Plates:**Handicap-Assisted Surf Chairs:****Self-Propelled All terrain Handicap Surf Chairs:**

On a first come, first serve basis, four self propelled chairs are available free of charge at the following R.I. state beach locations; Scarborough North, Scarborough South, and Roger Wheeler.

Recreational Hand Cycle:



[On the East Bay Bike Path, driven by Robert B. Keaveney]

On a first come, first serve basis, two hand cycles are available at Colt State Park for use through out the park or for the East Bay Bike path.

Handicap-Accessible Boat Ramp at Colt State Park:



The Department of Environmental Management with the help of the Governor's Commission on Disabilities has reconstructed the boat ramp at Colt State Park that allows easy access to recreation services by people with physical limitations. This facility includes a non-slip metal dock with multiple landings that allow boaters with disabilities and others to easily board their boats regardless of the level of the tide. Each dock is purposely configured to be submerged at different stages of the tide, with a good portion of it flooded at high tide. The design, in effect, allows the water to come to the boater, giving easy access to vessels at all times. For other information about Colt Park click [Here!](#)

Handicap-Accessible Boat Ramp at Haines State Park:



On June 19, 2000, the Department of Environmental Management, Governor's Commission on Disabilities, the City of East Providence and the US Fish and Wildlife Service has dedicated a new handicap-accessible boat ramp and parking lot at Haines Memorial State Park in East Providence. The facility features a 60-foot wide concrete ramp. Two floating courtesy docks, one 8 feet wide that is handicap-accessible and another measuring 6 feet wide have been constructed on either side of the ramp. Adjacent to the boat ramp is a new paved parking area with 67 vehicles/trailer parking spaces and 12 vehicle-only parking spaces. The parking lot also includes a drainage and storm water treatment unit that will remove 80 percent of solids such as sand and gravel from storm water entering Bullocks Cove from the lot. In addition, a separator will remove oil and grease from the storm water. For

[other information about Haines State Park, click Here.](#)

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