

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Assistive Technology (AT) Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2017

Member's Present

Jeff Bishop, Chair*
Nathan Pullen*
Terri Hedgpeth*
Sue Lehew*
Bea Shapiro*
Ed Gervasoni*
Julie Jones*

Member's Absent

Adam Cruz

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Admin Assistant
*Teleconferenced

Guests Present

Amy Porterfield*

Call to Order and Introductions

Jeff Bishop, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of October 12, 2016 meeting minutes

Ed Gervasoni moved to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2016 Assistive Technology Committee meeting as written. Bea Shapiro seconded the motion. The committee approved the minutes by unanimous voice vote.

AT Trends

Jeff Bishop stated he would attend CSUN in San Diego. Jeff Bishop stated JAWS 18 had been released. He noted Windows Eyes was required to develop a patch by January 26 due to a developer certification expiration. Sue Lehew stated that JAWS and Zoom Text had collaborated well. Jeff Bishop noted Zoom Text 11 had been released and was compatible with JAWS. Jeff Bishop stated Microsoft developed several podcast series, which included discussions surrounding all of the Office updates. Jeff Bishop noted Windows 10 would offer native Braille support, allowing users to connect

Braille support without a screen reader. Jeff Bishop stated he attended a Train the Trainer through the American Federation of the Blind (AFB), and noted the training included advancements within Chrome Books accessibility. Jeff Bishop stated Chrome Books were more accessible, although the product required additional accessibility. Terri Hedgpeth stated the Train the Trainer sessions were helpful, although the training program was somewhat disorganized. Ms. Hedgpeth stated during the training, the trainer recommended individuals purchase a middle version of the Chrome Book, rather than a basic model. Jeff Bishop stated unfortunately, the Chrome Books distributed to students were the less expensive models. Jeff Bishop noted some of the trainers were not as engaging as others.

Terri Hedgpeth stated Dictation Bridge acted a bridge between a user's screen reader and Windows 10 voice recognition had been released, and allowed the user to perform basic functions. Ms. Hedgpeth stated Dictation Bridge could potentially be hosted by Lighthouse. Sue Lehw inquired whether the commands within Google had been modified. Jeff Bishop stated the Google key commands had changed, and the commands had been refined to compare to screen reader commands. He noted the commands were not as efficient as JAWS or Windows Eyes, although there had been improvements. Terri Hedgpeth stated she used Google docs and noted the streamlined commands allowed the user to navigate much easier. Terri Hedgpeth stated Chrome Box was more accessible with the additional Braille support.

AT in Schools Discussion

Jeff Bishop stated he spoke to the individual in charge of Assistive Technology (AT) at the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB), who indicated that ASDB tried using Google products with the students unsuccessfully. He noted the AT staff member from ASDB indicated that ASDB would not be interested in utilizing Google products currently. Ed Gervasoni inquired regarding Jeff Bishop's meeting with the ASDB AT staff member. Jeff Bishop stated the head of AT at ASDB was very polite although he noted that ASDB would not focus on Google products for students. Ed Gervasoni inquired whether the ASDB Superintendent was aware of the Chrome Books accessibility issues. Jeff Bishop stated he only discussed the use of Google products within the ASDB campus.

Jeff Bishop stated he tried to contact several individuals from Google regarding a Google training, and indicated that Google was not interested in participating in a Google accessibility training. Terri Hedgpeth noted the AT team at Google was a rather small team of about ten individuals supporting about 60,000 Google employees.

Jeff Bishop stated he contacted Clint Covington, a Senior Accessibility staff member within Microsoft, to partner with the legal department to craft a letter that could be used to recommend the use of Office 365 to students. Jeff Bishop stated UA would be moving to Office 365 by July 1, 2017 and had been training and preparing for updated software. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the Office of Procurement had indicated the policy that stated Arizona was unable to purchase subscription based software. Jeff Bishop stated he would contact Procurement staff to inquire regarding that specific policy. Sue Lehew she was unaware of the exact language, although her understanding that the Department of Economic Security (DES) did not want to be responsible for continuing subscription based software fees. Jeff Bishop stated when the committee inquired regarding the technology procurement policies, the Procurement office emphatically indicated that DES could not purchase subscription based software. Amy Porterfield stated the Office of Procurement should be able to provide the actual policy forbidding the purchase of subscription based software. Ms. Porterfield stated if the policy did not exist, the AT Committee could make the argument for the purchase of subscription based software. Terri Hedgpeth suggested Jeff Bishop contact Rich Sorey, Services for the Blind Visually Impaired and Deaf (SBVID) Program Manager regarding the issue. Amy Porterfield noted that Rich Sorey would not know the Procurement policy. Ms. Porterfield suggested Jeff Bishop contact an individual in Procurement and request the actual policy.

ADE Transition Conference Accessibility Review

Amy Porterfield stated she was trying to meet with Dawn Wallace, the Education Policy Advisor for the Governor's office to discuss AT within Arizona. Ms. Porterfield stated her hope that Dawn Wallace could request that Google attend a Google accessibility training due to the state procuring Google products. Jeff Bishop stated each school district was responsible for purchasing their own technology products. Amy Porterfield agreed and noted the school districts purchased technology products with state funds. Jeff Bishop stated the AT Committee met with Arizona Department of Education (ADE) staff previously to discuss the procurement process related to technology. Lindsey Powers agreed to send the names of the ADE staff members to Jeff Bishop.

Jeff Bishop summarized that the AT Committee was interested in collaborating with the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) and potentially holding a Google accessibility training at a future AzTAP conference. Jeff Bishop stated his vision that elementary and college students would attend the training. Terri Hedgpeth stated individuals from Arizona State University (ASU), Northern Arizona University (NAU) and the University of Arizona (UA) contacted Google regarding accessibility, and

noted that Google did not express concern regarding the university technology contracts.

Jeff Bishop stated if the AT Committee offered a Google accessibility training, the committee would need to encourage the schools to purchase the products, which would be a challenge. Julie Jones inquired whether the committee anticipated offering a Google training for the upcoming AzTAP Conference. Jeff Bishop stated the committee would not be ready to offer a training for the upcoming AzTAP Conference in July 2017, although the committee could plan for 2018 potentially. Jeff Bishop stated the committee would need to partner with the ADE to become familiar with the technologies used by the larger school districts.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Assistive Technology Committee was scheduled for March 15, 2017 from 3:00-4:30 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows:

- AT Trends
- AT in Schools Data Discussion
- ADE Transition Conference Accessibility Update

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

A call was made to the public with no comments forthcoming.

Adjournment of meeting

The meeting stood adjourned at 3:54 pm.