Call to Order and Introductions

Bea Shapiro, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

AT Outreach Discussion

Bea Shapiro stated the Assistive Technology (AT) Committee had discussed potentially collaborating with Sun Sounds on developing a way to assist individuals in using BARD. Janet Fisher stated she spoke to Andrea Pasquale with Sun Sounds, who was interested in collaborating with the committee and the Arizona Talking Book Library. Ms. Fisher stated she forwarded the Program Development Plan to the committee members which requested the program title, who would be the audience, how long the program would be and how often would the program run. Bea Shapiro stated the program could be held for one hour and either weekly or monthly depending on Sun Sounds’ schedule. David Steinmetz inquired whether the AT program would be a podcast about AT. Bea Shapiro stated the program could help assist individuals in using BARD, as well as some general AT equipment. She noted the committee could assess how well the program was attended for about 3 months and decide whether to continue. David Steinmetz inquired whether the AT Committee members and GCBVI council members or Talking Book Library staff would be providing the instruction. Bea Shapiro stated that once the program became successful, the committee could invite other
individuals to attend the program. Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the different ways that an individual could access the Talking Book Library. Christine Tuttle stated that individuals would need to be members of the library, have a device that could connect to the library, and have an email that registered the individual as a member of the library. Bob Kresmer stated that once an individual was a member of the library, the individual would be able to access BARD through any phone or device. Ms. Tuttle stated that individuals should be able to access BARD through any portable device that had Internet access. Bea Shapiro stated she was not familiar with all devices and noted that a library staff member might be able to assist. Christine Tuttle stated she was not an AT specialist, and would rely on staff that were familiar with different AT devices.

Christine Tuttle noted that individuals might not be aware that they must register and be approved to use the Talking Book Library to access BARD. Bea Shapiro agreed, and noted that library staff could provide a brief presentation regarding the registration process for becoming a library user. Christine Tuttle stated that if the AT program focused on BARD, the presenter would need to provide a disclaimer indicating that an individual needed to be a registered member of the library to access BARD. Janet Fisher stated the library had machine staff, who were familiar with the common devices used by library users and could provide instruction. Bob Kresmer stated he was told anecdotally that individuals tried to access BARD, but had difficulty following instructions and would benefit from additional instruction. Christine Tuttle stated she envisioned a basic outreach presentation but would focus on BARD. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the library had any statistics regarding the number of individuals that used BARD. Christine Tuttle stated she did not have the actual numbers, but approximately 50% used BARD, although the younger generations tended to be more comfortable using technology. Janet Fisher stated the National Library Service (NLS) was encouraging all Talking Book Libraries to inform new users about BARD and then offer the Talking Book machines. Ms. Fisher noted there were delays with mailing materials through the post office to library users, and they were encouraged to download items if they were able to.

Bea Shapiro stated the committee could inquire how often the program could run on Sun Sounds. David Steinmetz stated that he would not likely be able to participate on a podcast weekly but could attend monthly. David Steinmetz stated the committee would need to prepare questions and topics to discuss during the program. Christine Tuttle stated that Sun Sounds staff were volunteers that provided information to the public through their Internet channel or other media channels. Ms. Tuttle stated Sun Sounds did not have a call-in option, but they would live record presentations that would
be played at other times. Bea Shapiro stated that a recorded show could potentially be played once a week before the next show was recorded. Janet Fisher stated that Andrea Pasquale was willing to work with the committee. Ms. Fisher noted that Sun Sounds did run a show, AT Update, which committee members could listen to and get an idea of the presentation format. Janet Fisher stated that Andrea Pasquale requested the committee plan 6 months in advance and provide the presenters names and topics of the shows. Janet Fisher stated that Sun Sounds staff could be the presenters as well, but they would need to know the questions for the show. Bob Kresmer inquired how individuals would benefit from listening to a recorded presentation verses speaking to library staff on how to use different devices. Janet Fisher stated that some library users might understand the instructions better hearing it from one individual over another. Bea Shapiro stated the AT program would be less technical and inquired whether each program could cover 2 topics such as BARD and the library registration process. Christine Tuttle stated the library had a specific registration process that required a medical authority to sign an application for library access. Bea Shapiro stated the individual providing the presentation could ensure that individuals understood the registration process.

Christine Tuttle stated that a monthly podcast would not likely cover enough AT topics. Bea Shapiro agreed and noted that the committee could inquire whether the podcasts could be played weekly. Bea Shapiro suggested the program discuss topics such as BARD, the Talking Book Library registration process, and AT devices such as video magnifiers. Bob Kresmer stated the purpose of the AT program was to increase the effectiveness of Christine Tuttle’s outreach efforts and to assist individuals in using BARD. Christine Tuttle agreed and noted the Talking Book Library and Sun Sounds would often co-present or would provide basic information about the other organization. Janet Fisher suggested an interview style presentation where library machine staff could answer some of their most asked questions. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the next step was to develop an outline of the presentations. Bea Shapiro stated that she would review the Program Development Plan that would be submitted to Sun Sounds. David Steinmetz inquired whether books on BARD were released at the same time as books that would be delivered. Janet Fisher stated the Talking Book Library was not receiving any more books from the NLS, and the library was transferring books to multi-cartridges to be mailed to users. Bea Shapiro inquired whether library staff put the books onto the cartridges. Janet Fisher stated the library had some single title cartridges, although the library was phasing out of those. Bea Shapiro stated that she would review the program paperwork and inquired whether Christine Tuttle or a library staff member could provide the first presentation about the library. Bea Shapiro suggested
the first presentation cover BARD and a brief presentation about the Talking Book Library.

**Agenda and Date for Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the VRATE Workgroup was scheduled for June 25, 2021. Agenda items are as follows:

- AT Outreach Discussion

**Announcements**

There were no announcements.

**Public Comment**

A call to the public was made with no response’s forthcoming.

**Adjournment of Meeting**

Bob Kresmer motioned to adjourn the meeting. Bea Shapiro seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 1:57 pm.