

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Assistive Technology (AT) Committee Meeting Minutes
June 17, 2020

Members Present

Bea Shapiro, Chair
Sue LeHew
Terri Hedgpeth
Bob Kresmer
Nathan Pullen
Ed Gervasoni

Members Absent

Mark Nelson

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Bea Shapiro, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of May 20, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Ed Gervasoni motioned to approve the May 20, 2020 meeting minutes. Nathan Pullen seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

TVBI Training/Survey Discussion

Bea Shapiro stated that so far, only committee members had completed the AT Survey. Ms. Shapiro inquired whether Bob Kresmer had forwarded the survey to his contact at the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER). Bob Kresmer stated he forwarded the survey to his contact at AER and the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB). Terri Hedgpeth noted the school year had ended when the survey was distributed and suggested the committee resend the survey at the beginning of the next school year. Bea Shapiro agreed and noted the committee had discussed sending the survey out again at the beginning of the school year. Ed Gervasoni stated he had not received an email

regarding a survey through his ASDB email. Bob Kresmer stated he sent the survey to Lisa Yencarelli to be distributed to ASDB staff and the TVBIs in the co-operatives. Mr. Kresmer stated the survey would have been distributed in late May or early June from Jennifer Wheeler. Ed Gervasoni stated that Penny Rosenblum was the individual that posted to the list serve. Bob Kresmer stated he would follow up with Ms. Rosenblum regarding the distribution of the AT survey. Bea Shapiro inquired whether the committee had decided whether the survey would be distributed only to the TBVI's or to other staff as well. Bob Kresmer stated the committee had decided to send the survey to elementary teachers, TVIs and their supporting staff. Terri Hedgpeth stated that if Ed Gervasoni had not received the email regarding the survey, then perhaps the email had not been sent. Bob Kresmer stated he would contact Lisa Yencarelli and Penny Rosenblum, although some staff might not have received the email due to the abrupt ending of the school year. Bea Shapiro noted that she was not part of AER, although she would typically receive forwarded emails that were of interest to her. Ms. Shapiro stated the committee could resend the email at the beginning of the school year and inquired whether ASDB intended for students to return to the classroom. Ed Gervasoni stated ASDB hoped that students would be able to return to the classroom, although the school would plan for alternate scenarios as well. Sue LeHew inquired whether the committee should resend the survey to the TVIs. Terri Hedgpeth suggested the committee wait until Bob Kresmer was able to contact Lisa Yencarelli and Penny Rosenblum. Ed Gervasoni noted that ASDB staff were encouraged to check their emails weekly for updates, although he was unsure how many staff members were doing so.

Bea Shapiro stated the committee would move forward with planning the AT training and she hoped the Department of Economic Security (DES) would have a Zoom license by that time. Ed Gervasoni inquired whether GCBVI committees would be able to use Zoom as well and noted the Deaf-Blind Issues Committee needed an accessible meeting platform such as Zoom. Bea Shapiro stated her understanding that the GCBVI committees would be eligible to use Zoom for meetings for accessibility. Ms. Shapiro stated she would include the GCBVI on the list of individuals/groups that were requesting Zoom accounts. Bea Shapiro inquired whether Arizona State University (ASU) used the Zoom Enterprise license. Terri Hedgpeth stated ASU did use Zoom Enterprise.

AT Trends

Bob Kresmer inquired whether Audible allowed an individual to play audio books. Terri Hedgpeth stated she used Audible to play audio books. Bob Kresmer inquired whether Audible was the only platform that played audio

books. Terri Hedgpeth stated that she subscribed to Audible. Bea Shapiro stated the ILB program could provide Amazon Echo devices to individuals. Terri Hedgpeth stated BARD released an update, and included more features for the PC and phone, which allowed the individual to subscribe to series.

VRATE Presentation Discussion

Terri Hedgpeth stated the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) Board had decided to hold a virtual conference, although the Board would reschedule the event from the November 13th date. Terri Hedgpeth stated the Board was discussing the logistics for holding a virtual conference and the potential topic streams for presentations. Terri Hedgpeth stated the Board was discussing how to ensure the presentations were accessible and she had suggested using CART providers. Bea Shapiro inquired whether VRATE would be held using Zoom. Terri Hedgpeth stated the Board was considering using Zoom, although the Board members had tried Microsoft Teams as a possibility. Terri Hedgpeth stated she was encouraging the Board to use Zoom for VRATE due to the large number of individuals that used it in their daily lives. Ed Gervasoni noted that Zoom allowed the meeting moderator to pin the interpreters in a window so individuals could see the interpreters during the presentation. Mr. Gervasoni noted that many deaf-blind individuals were not proficient in Braille and struggled to keep up with the CART transcription and inquired whether the VRATE Board would consider sending an interpreter to the individual's home. Terri Hedgpeth stated she was unsure, but she would bring it up with the VRATE Board. Ed Gervasoni stated that Support Service Providers (SSP) s were unable to provide interpretation to individuals, although they could go into individual's homes to assist with phone calls. Terri Hedgpeth noted that VRATE was a statewide conference, and there could be challenges in finding interpreters for individuals in rural areas. Ms. Hedgpeth stated she would inquire whether the VRATE Board would consider different scenarios. Bea Shapiro stated that seniors interested in attending VRATE might not have the technology or technology skills to attend VRATE virtually. Terri Hedgpeth stated the VRATE Board had just started discussing the logistics, although Zoom did have a call-in option also. Bea Shapiro stated the AT Committee would wait to discuss potential presentation topics until the VRATE Board decided on the topic streams for the event.

AT Committee/Talking Book Library Training Discussion

Bob Kresmer stated he spoke to Janet Fisher, Arizona Talking Book Library, regarding the library's outreach and training to library patrons. Mr. Kresmer stated the library offered training to patrons on how to access BARD and Newsline on their phones to individuals or small groups but did not have a

remote training option. Bob Kresmer noted that individuals were unable to go to the library currently due to the pandemic. Bea Shapiro suggested distributing a survey to individuals to ascertain their technology skill levels first. Ms. Shapiro noted that individuals could download BARD on their phones as well. Bob Kresmer agreed and stated that he received several questions from seniors trying to use their smart phones. Bea Shapiro stated the difficulty in teaching individuals to use their smart phones before teaching them how to access BARD. Terri Hedgpeth inquired whether Bob Kresmer walked the individuals through the process of using their smart phones. Bob Kresmer stated he would encourage individuals to contact Hadley or organizations that could offer instructions on using their smart phones. Bea Shapiro stated that it was challenging trying to teach individuals to use their smart phones and was even more difficult trying to teach them remotely. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the AT Committee could offer advice to the library staff that were providing the training to library patrons. Bea Shapiro stated that it was challenging to teach individuals technology virtually and would be much easier to teach in person. Terri Hedgpeth stated the library could consider requesting that businesses or organizations develop tutorials that could be shared with library patrons. Bea Shapiro stated the Independent Living Blind (ILB) program could potentially subcontract for organizations such as the Arizona Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ACBVI) or SAAVI Services for the Blind to offer tutorials.

Sue LeHew inquired whether the committee should consider developing a brief listing of resources and videos on how to use their smart phones. Bea Shapiro stated Hadley had some great videos that instructed individuals on how to use their phones. Ms. Shapiro stated Hadley also offered video transcription for individuals. Sue LeHew stated that individuals would benefit from a brief list of resources for individuals needing technology instructions. Bea Shapiro stated the committee could consider developing a one-page document with technology resources. Sue LeHew stated some individuals might not be familiar with training resources offered through organizations such as Freedom Scientific.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Assistive Technology Committee was scheduled for July 15, 2020 from 3:00-4:00 pm. Agenda items are as follows:

- TBVI Survey/Training Discussion
- VRATE Presentation Discussion
- AT Trends

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

Ed Gervasoni motioned to adjourn the meeting. Bob Kresmer seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.