

# **Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)**

## **Assistive Technology (AT) Committee Meeting Minutes**

August 21, 2024

### **Attendance**

#### **Members Present**

Bea Shapiro, Chair

Jeff Bishop

Sue LeHew

Nathan Pullen

Bob Kresmer

Karla Rivas-Parker

#### **Members Absent**

#### **Staff Present**

Lindsey Powers

## **Guests Present**

## **Minutes**

### **Call to Order and Introductions**

Bea Shapiro, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made, and a quorum was present.

### **Approval of July 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Bob Kresmer motioned to approve the July 17, 2024 meeting minutes. Sue LeHew seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes was passed by unanimous voice vote.

### **AT Committee Updates**

Bea Shapiro stated that she submitted the committee's presentation proposal to the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) Board and were pleased with the presentation outline. Ms. Shapiro stated she had not heard when the committee would be presenting, and she would follow up with the Board. Bob Kresmer inquired whether VRATE was in person only or if it was hybrid. Bea Shapiro stated her understanding that it was in person, although she could inquire whether if offered hybrid options. She added that the event was being held at Ability 360 and inquired whether the location was large. Nathan Pullen stated they would likely use the gym, which was an event space for job fairs and other events.

## **AT Committee Outreach**

Jeff Bishop stated he created an account for the committee's podcast, although he was having difficulties connecting it to iTunes. Mr. Bishop inquired whether the podcast had its own email account. Bea Shapiro stated the podcast did not have an email account. Jeff Bishop noted his preference not to use his personal email account as he would be the only person to access it. Sue LeHew inquired whether the GCBVI had an email account that could be used. Lindsey Powers stated the GCBVI did have an email account that she could access. Bea Shapiro stated it would be preferable for the committee to have an email account that several members could access if needed. Ms. Shapiro stated that she could create an email account and inquired whether it should include the podcast name. Jeff Bishop stated that any name would work, and the committee could change it later if necessary. Bea Shapiro stated that she would create an email with the podcast name, AT in the Desert. Bea Shapiro inquired regarding the best platform or way to record the podcasts. Jeff Bishop stated that he had a Zoom account that could be used to record the podcasts. Bea Shapiro stated that she had a Zoom account also.

## **AT Trends**

Bea Shapiro stated that she heard AppleVis might be coming to an end. Jeff Bishop stated he saw a recent post, and that it might not be ending yet. Mr. Bishop stated that if anyone was interested in a fully immersive training for Office 365, to let him know. Jeff Bishop stated the Smith Kettle Research Institute was offering computer science training each summer on data visualization. He noted they would be providing instruction on the new Python library, which was in the alpha stage. Jeff Bishop stated data and graphics could be received by text, braille, or sonification, and was very impressive. Bob Kresmer inquired whether any committee members had seen the new Monarch braille display. Karla Rivas-Parker stated she had seen it and was very impressed and noted the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) did not receive many requests for braille displays. She added the Center for Assistive Technology Training (CATT), a new program run by the American Printing House for the Blind, did have loaner devices for teachers. Bea Shapiro stated the new OrCam could potentially be used by

individuals that were Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHOH). Karla Rivas-Parker stated the OrCam was typically used by blind and visually impaired individuals, and she wasn't aware that it was used by DHOH individuals also. Ms. Rivas-Parker stated she preferred using Be My Eyes and wasn't sure what the best wearable glasses would be. Jeff Bishop stated that he was enjoying using his new Ray Ban glasses, which allowed him to go to the mall and would identify nearby stores. Bea Shapiro inquired whether the glasses would tell him the aisle names in a grocery store. Jeff Bishop stated the glasses would identify aisle names in Walmart. Karla Rivas-Parker stated that once she figured out how to use her glasses to read items, she enjoyed using them also. Bob Kresmer inquired whether certain devices or technologies were requested more according to the season at AzTAP. Karla Rivas-Parker stated she didn't notice a demand for specific devices, although there was an increase in requests at the beginning of the school year.

### **Agenda and Date for Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Assistive Technology Committee was scheduled for September 18th. Agenda items are as follows:

- AT Committee Activities Discussion
- AT Outreach Update
- AT Trends

### **Announcements**

Bob Kresmer stated the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona (NFBA) State Conference would be held August 23<sup>rd</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup> at the Hyatt in Phoenix and anyone was welcome to register the day of the event and attend.

## **Public Comment**

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

## **Adjournment of Meeting**

Bob Kresmer motioned to adjourn the meeting. Karla Rivas-Parker seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.