

Assistive Technology and Communication Committee Meeting Minutes
Cherry Valley Lodge - Newark
July 10, 2015

Committee Members: Greg Dormer, Doug Frank, Rochelle Hall-Rollins, Lisa Krauss, Linda Kunick, Heather McFarlin, Jill Radler, Michael Schroeder, Robert Shuemak, Marci Straughter, Kim Stults, Sue Willis

Other Council Members: Mark Seifarth

Staff: Fatica Ayers, Carla Cox, Kim Crishbaum, Carolyn Knight, Robin Shipp

Guests: Brandy Koeffel, Donna Lowe, Diane Marose, Eric Rathburn, Wiley Roberts, John Romer, Sharon Shuemak, Brenda Stevens, Renee Wood

Introduction

Chair Robert Shuemak called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. and introductions were made. A motion was made by Michael S. and seconded by Sue W. to approve the May 2015 Committee meeting minutes. Greg Dormer abstained. Motion passed.

Committee Structure Discussion

Since the Assistive Technology Committee and Public Awareness Sub-committee merged into the Assistive Technology and Communication Committee, Robert opened up discussion on how the Committee would work toward this combined effort. It was decided that no changes were necessary to the Committee's structure and that all AT/Communication Committee members work together.

State Plan Amendment

Kim C. provided a copy of the proposed State Plan Amendment for the AT Conference Coordinator grant. The grantee, Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council (OSILC), requested a grant extension to December 31, 2015 to conduct a follow-up activity in relation to the conference. Carolyn K. explained that as a result of the conference, many connections were made by the grantee with assistive technology organizations, vendors, and other interested stakeholders who would like to explore how they can help Ohio improve its ability to assess, fund, and train

people with disabilities who need assistive technology. The grantee proposes that they will interview each of these entities and present the results, along with recommendations, in a report that will be provided to Council. This report will have the potential to be used to (1) further strengthen collaboration among assistive technology resources, (2) identify policy issues, (3) give the Committee members insight into what the Committee can consider for future grant projects, and (4) serve as a resource for publication on the DD Council website. No additional funding is required to conduct this activity.

Michael S. suggested that the grantee consult with the Brain Injury Advisory Committee. Kim S. suggested that the Ohio Department of Aging be involved, too.

A motion was made by Sue W. to approve the State Plan Amendment. Michael S. seconded the motion. Kim S. asked for verification that there were no fiscal changes. Gary Groom confirmed that there were no changes. Motion passed.

Open Discussion on Future Projects for New State Plan

Committee members discussed ideas for future projects and the direction of the Assistive Technology and Communication Committee. The following is a list of those ideas:

- *Increase collaboration with other Committees (Kim S.):* We should look at how we can support projects of the other Committees. Sue stated that this could also involve “shared” funding among Committees. Carolyn said it is important that we make sure that the other committees consult and/or coordinate with the AT/Communications Committee when it comes to anything to do with technology.
- *Offer a discretionary fund model (Carla C.):* Michael S. felt this model might diminish the focus on technology if small amounts are given out for other communication purposes. He would rather see funds go toward projects that encourage partnership and advancing technology to help people with disabilities.
- *Build an online repository of AT information (Kim C.):* Michael suggested that we should wait to assess the need for something like this based on the report that will be done by the AT Conference grantee. Kim S. agreed and said that the goals for the State Plan should support the outcomes of the report. Renee W. pointed out that this is a good idea, but it still is missing the

part where people can actually test a device. Robert S. and Renee W. both suggested including lending libraries as part of this project.

- *Develop app (Rochelle H.):* Challenge people, organizations, universities, etc. to create an application (app) for smart phones and tablets that would provide information about assistive technology. Robert suggested an example of having one that helps a person find a device that fits their needs.
- *Guest speakers:* Many expressed interest in having guest speakers in the AT field.
- *Emphasis on self-determination (Diana M.):* Diana M. said we need to remember that not all people are comfortable with using technology. People must be self-determined to want to use the technology and must see how it ties into their lives. Sharing positive stories about people getting and using assistive technology would help the people who are hesitant to use it. Lisa K. added that sometimes people want a device, such as an iPad, but their parents/guardians won't let them have it.

Review of Survey Results

Kim C. provided an overview of the results from the post-conference survey. The survey was sent to all (192) who registered for the conference. Forty-four completed the survey. The overall response was positive and the conference was well-received. People provided numerous comments and suggestions. Kim C. will provide a copy of the results with comments to the Committee at the next meeting.

Kim C. also asked Doug F. to share his story about how he recently was connected with The Ohio State University Wexner Center's Assistive Technology Center as a result of testing some AT devices at the conference. He has been to the Center for an assessment and will return later this summer to receive a communication device to meet his needs. John R. stated that the conference was worth it if just for Doug finally getting connected to a provider who would help him find a device. Kim S. asked Doug how he felt about it. He said, "Go OSU!"

A motion was made and passed to adjourn.

ADJOURNED: 12:10 p.m.