

*Karen Wiley*

*Chairperson*

 **NEW MEXICO TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

 **ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING – MINUTES**

Monday, July 16, 2018

Governor’s Commission on Disability – Conference Room

491 Old Santa Fe Trail, Lamy Building, Santa Fe, NM 87501

ATTENDANCE:

**Members Present:** Karen Wiley (Chairperson - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation/DVR); Katharine Gutierrez (Vice Chair - Consumer of AT); Nat Dean (Consumer of AT); Andrea Valles (Disability Rights New Mexico/DRNM) and by phone - TJ Chester (Independent Living Resource Center/ILRC); Curtis Chong (New Mexico Commission for Blind/CFB); Larry Melendez (Gadsden Schools Transitions); **Members Absent:** Richard Bailey (Consumer of AT) – excused. Chris Zafra (Workforce Solutions), Sam Cueto (Consumer of AT).

**NMTAP Staff**: Tracy Agiovlasitis (NMTAP Supervisor); Karen Courtney-Peterson (GCD Director): Anthony Alarid (GCD Deputy Director)

**NMTAP Partners:** Meta Hirschl & Jill Beets (Adelante); Tim Carver (San Juan Center for Independence/SJCI).

**Guests:** Mitchell Lawrence, Robin Garrison

**CALL TO ORDER:**

NMTAP Council Chair, Karen W, called the meeting to order at 1:09 pm. The chair called the roll and established that a Quorum was present. Karen W asked for everyone to introduce themselves.

Karen W asked for a vote of acclimation to approve the agenda. Agenda was approved unanimously.

The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed. Karen W asked for a vote of acclimation to approve minutes from the last quarterly meeting. The minutes from January 22, 2018 were approved unanimously.

**NMTAP PROGRAM UPDATE:**

Tracy A presented activity statistics for the state fiscal year (July 2017 to June 2018). During this period, NMTAP loaned 659 devices to 485 individuals, provided 142 demonstrations to 910 individuals and 37 trainings to 1000 individuals. We provided information at 23 events reaching directly 5747 individuals and the NMTAP staff participated in 41 taskforce or committee meetings in which on-going information or support was offered to 485 people. She noted that NMTAP is operating on our previous state plan as the new data entry platform is not yet released from the federal Administration on Community Living agency. As requested at the last council meeting, NMTAP staff will provide a consumer training to DVR participants in Albuquerque on August 7, 2018. This beta test will cover organizational tools, text to speech apps and other accessibility tools for both iPhone and Android smart phones. NMTAP will also attend the Jemez Transition Fair on July 20, 2018 and the Veterans Golden Age Games on August 4, 2018. Tracy A and Karen P are beginning to work out the details of doing AT Evaluations for DVR participants. DVR estimated the need to be 177 AT Evaluations, but NMTAP probably can provide only one third of that amount. The current open AT Specialist position closes today since Erin Gallegos is no longer with the program. There were 179 participants at the Assistive Technology Conference 2018 (ATC18) on May 7 & 8, 2018. More schools participated and the feedback was very positive from attendees and exhibitors. Unfortunately, the income received was nearly $3000 less than the expenses, so there will be no funds to add to the AT Community Fund. Fortunately, part of GCD support is to leverage NMTAP expenses. There was discussion about trimming expenses for next year and changes for ATC19. Tracy A offered the new NMTAP brochures to Council members for their outreach to potential consumers and requested any further feedback on NMTAP services. No new questions or suggestions were provided, other than a follow up on a consumer Nat D talked about.

Karen P noted the federal budget increased by about $17,000 for this year and it will probably remain flat for the next federal fiscal year. Karen P also noted that if we get awarded the AgrAbility grant, the budget will increase from that federal funding. However, that would be primarily to hire another specific AT Specialist. An AgrAbility grant provides AT information and assistance, in the same format of services we currently provide, but specifically to ranchers, farmers and their families. This year there will be seventeen competitive grants awarded with notice this fall. There is also a potential for additional funding this year from DVR for AT evaluations and the small remaining amount of funds from program transferring to GCD. Tracy A noted that the priority for any increased funds would be to provide new AT equipment. Tim C requested possible funding for advertisement of the financial loan programs.

**FINANCIAL LOANS (NM SEED Loans, Access Loan NM & Community Fund) UPDATE:**

Tim C reported that the SJCI Director is no longer with them and the Interim Director is Leslie Wright. He then reported full financial review of all statewide loan programs available through SJCI, the NMTAP partner for financial AT loans. He stated that both Access Loan NM (available for anyone with a disability to obtain needed AT) and SEED Loans (available to purchase equipment for entrepreneurs with disabilities) continue to be financially secure. He noted there were no new Access Loans in the last quarter. Two in Albuquerque, one for a van and another for a home modification, are in the works for the next quarter. There have been no new SEED Loans approved and two should be paid off in September/October 2018. They did approve a new small loan at the July meeting for a small business in the Albuquerque area. Tim C reported that the NMTAP Community Fund program approved two applicants in the last quarter; one for a bathing system and one to offset the expense of an accessible van. In summary, there is funds available for several Access Loans or SEED Loans, but the AT Community Fund has funds for one individual only.

There were a few questions that Tim C responded to about the financial loans. He noted that it is about a two month timeline generally to approve a SEED Loan and that both loan committees carefully review applications in order to put consumers into a position that they can afford. He added that only three Access Loans defaulted since it began in 2005 and only three SEED Loans defaulted since they began in 1997.

**REUSE (Back In Use and DiverseIT) UPDATE:**

Meta H reported that they are in the beginning phases of Give ABQ, the Adelante program that will house the Back in Use program providing Durable Medical Equipment (DME), as well as home and office furnishings for other non-profit agencies. Adelante’s Give ABQ will be located at 1520 First Street NW in Albuquerque and will be open Tuesday through Saturday in the fall to allow for access. Jill B discussed some logistics for that operation including software development, moving equipment, inviting groups to become “member agencies” and the website may be live by August 2018. They noted that the current Back in Use website is not functioning now, but they will get it running and will update it in a few months. Jill B and Meta J will provide more details about Give ABQ at the next meeting and invited the council members to tour the facility at the January meeting. In this last quarter, Adelante Back in Use provided 198 pieces of equipment to 182 consumers with great customer service ratings. They have completed the draft Policy and Procedure manual for DiverseIT and will have the Back in Use draft soon. They also agreed to add a breakdown of how they receive requests each month.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Karen W reviewed that three members’ terms are ending this October, including her term. She will be replaced by Keith Maes, another DVR Counselor who was a previous student employee at the NMTAP Satellite office in Las Vegas. Curtis C’s term will also expire in October and he was asked to check with CFB who will be his replacement. These two members are statutory seats, so replacements need to come from their agencies. Andrea V brought Robin G to the meeting today to see if she could replace her seat when her terms also ends in October. There was discussion about keeping an agency representative from DRNM, which is not a statutory seat but is valuable to our services. We are still in need of three individuals with disabilities or their family members to serve as consumers. This will meet the mandate for a majority of consumers serving on the council. Mitchell L attended the meeting to prepare to find a Veteran who uses AT that he could nominate. Karen W reminded all council members to provide nominations to Tracy A or Karen P, keeping in mind the desire for a diverse representation of disability and areas of the state. Tracy A will send the nomination forms to all the members.

Karen W also noted that elections for council leadership will occur at the next meeting, so be prepared to choose a new Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

**ADJOURN:**

The next NMTAP Advisory Council meeting was scheduled for October 15, 2018 at a location to be determined in Albuquerque. Karen W adjourned the meeting at 2:40 pm.

***Approved at October 15, 2018 meeting.***