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*Keith Maes*

*Chairperson*

**NEW MEXICO TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING – MINUTES**

Monday, April 15, 2019

Gadsden Independent School District, Special Education Complex

500 Fourth Street, Anthony, NM 88021

ATTENDANCE:

**Members Present:** Keith Maes (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation/DVR - Chair); German Benitez (New Mexico Commission for Blind/CFB); Larry Melendez (Gadsden Schools Transition); and by phone - Albert Deimer (Independent Living Resource Center/ILRC); Katharine Gutierrez (Vice Chair - Consumer of AT); Robin Garrison (Disability Rights New Mexico/DRNM); Nat Dean (Consumer of AT); Bill Newroe (Consumer of AT); Ricardo Ortega (Consumer of AT)  **Absent:** – Chris Zafra (Workforce Solutions) - excused; Michael Acorta (Consumer of AT).

**NMTAP Staff**: Tracy Agiovlasitis (NMTAP Program Manager); Anthony Alarid (GCD Deputy Director); Jesse Armijo, Maurice Alvarez & Sophia DeConti (NMTAP AT Specialists).

**NMTAP Partners present:** on the phone – Meta Hirschl (Adelante); **Absent:** Tim Carver (San Juan Center for Independence/SJCI) – excused.

**Guests:** Olga Alvara (Gadsden Schools Transition)

**CALL TO ORDER:**

NMTAP Council Chair, Keith M, called the meeting to order at 1:07 pm. The chair called the roll and established that a quorum was present. Keith M asked for everyone to introduce themselves.

Keith M asked for approval of the agenda. Katharine G moved to approve the agenda, German B seconded and the committee approved the agenda unanimously.

The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed. Nat D noted omitted information and the minutes were amended. Keith M asked for a vote to approve minutes from January 28, 2019. Nat D moved to approve the minutes as amended, Larry M seconded and the committee approved unanimously.

**NMTAP PROGRAM UPDATE:**

Tracy A reported statistics from our main area and both satellite offices for this last quarter. Our satellite office partnerships include Northeast Regional Educational Cooperative (NEREC) in Las Vegas, NM and Western New Mexico University (WNMU) in Silver City, NM. NMTAP provided device demonstrations to 58 individuals with disabilities, in which 90 people total were in attendance. NMAP loaned 116 devices to 56 individuals. We attended 10 outreach events, including Transition Fairs in Las Cruces, Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. NMTAP also did an informational segment on TV for channel KCHF, which may reach some folks we would not otherwise find. We provided 13 trainings for 191 individuals, including a variety of audiences that include veteran’s case managers, educational professionals, Native American areas, home health care agents and to Speech Language Therapy students at the University of New Mexico. The Assistive Technology Conference (ATC19) is scheduled for May 6 & 7, 2019 at the Sheraton Uptown in Albuquerque and 130 individuals have registered at this time. The AgrAbility Specialist position still has not been posted and the kick off to the NM AgrAbility Project will be at ATC19. Tracy A attended the National Training Workshop in Nebraska for AgrAbility and reported a brief outline of what she learned. The Hands-On Workshop of Assistive Technology (HOW-AT) in Anthony is at this location tomorrow. SJCI has reserved space for a HOW-AT in Farmington after the next council meeting. Members discussed how we could include ABLE account information into our next meeting. Tracy A noted that she combined demographic information from the Council Member nomination and appointment forms. This will streamline the process. She will provide the updated form to all council members to recruit new members.

Council members discussed collaboration with schools and staff noted we currently loan devices to Albuquerque Public Schools, T or C, Hatch, Cuba as well as schools in the satellite locations. Outreach to rural areas by staff and satellite locations was discussed. Katharine G noted that she keeps a stack of NMTAP brochures in her car and often gives them out in the Espanola area. Nat D suggested all council members talk about our services at all opportunities, as she does.

Karen P retired as of April 1, 2019, so Anthony A reported that that federal funding for fiscal year 2020 is the same as this current year. Federal funding for the AgrAbility project, $62,080, was just released to New Mexico State University and we hope to get that job posted soon. The $62,080 is designated for a staff person (AgrAbility AT Specialist), travel and some AT farming tools. He noted that GCD did receive some legislative funds, some of which can be used to purchase NMTAP AT devices.

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

Tim C was unable to attend and no reports were submitted. These financial loans are maintained well by SJCI, providing low interest financial loans for individuals with disabilities to obtain AT needed for their business or general life access. Tracy A noted that we do need to discuss the AT Community Fund soon, as it has had little to no funds available in the last several years. It is part of the NMTAP state plan and with a new state plan due soon, the council should discuss the feasibility to continue this fund. The council agreed to put this discussion as an action item at the next meeting.

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

Adelante is the NMTAP program partner that provides refurbished equipment to individuals with disabilities with no other options. The Back in Use program, housed in GiveABQ, provides Durable Medical Equipment (DME) to individuals. Adelante’s DiverseIT provides refurbished computers to individuals. Meta H reported that in the last quarter, 347 durable medical equipment items and 120 computers were provided to individuals with disabilities. A new Hub Scrub to clean donated medical equipment is due to open in May, which is needed due to an increase in DME donations. DiverseIT is excited to announce an expansion to a location on San Mateo called the DiverseIT Computer Repair and Training Center. This will be a storefront in which the public can bring in computers for repair and/or get some training in the use of computers. They will also provide training in computer programs to individuals with disabilities. They anticipate a grand opening probably in August of this year.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Revised By-Laws: Keith M reviewed the updated council By-laws that were revised by the committee. Nat D suggested that the word “hear” be replaced by the word “understood” in regard to telephone or other communication technology for participation by members in the meeting. Keith M postponed the approval of the updated version until the next meeting. This will be an action item.

Open Meetings Act (OMA) Resolution: Keith M discussed the idea of creating a special committee to complete a resolution. Robin G and Larry M volunteered to serve with Keith M on this committee. Tracy A has collected some samples of varied depth and noted that we currently adhere to the OMA guidelines. She agreed to create a sample, provide information to the committee and assist with committee work. A resolution will be addressed at the next meeting as an action item.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Tracy A noted that the by-laws reference Robert’s Rules to be used as a guideline and suggested that the council may want to look at what guidelines they would like to follow. In the future, some written guidelines might be useful. Keith M and Tracy A also thanked the council members for their attention and service.

**ADJOURN:**

The next NMTAP Advisory Council meeting was scheduled for August 19, 2019 in Farmington, NM at 1pm, location to be determined. The HOW-AT will be the following day. Keith M adjourned the meeting at 2:40 pm.

***Approved at August 19, 2019 meeting***