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*Karen Wiley*

*Chairperson*

**NEW MEXICO TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING – MINUTES**

Monday, October 15, 2018

Disability Rights New Mexico – Conference Room

3916 Juan Tabo Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM, 87111

ATTENDANCE:

**Members Present:** Karen Wiley (Chair) & Keith Maes (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation/DVR); Andrea Valles & Robin Garrison (Disability Rights New Mexico/DRNM); Richard Bailey (Consumer of AT); Albert Deimer (Independent Living Resource Center/ILRC); German Benitez (New Mexico Commission for Blind/CFB); and by phone - Larry Melendez (Gadsden Schools Transitions); Nat Dean (Consumer of AT); Michael Acorta (Consumer of AT) **Members Absent:** Katharine Gutierrez (Vice Chair - Consumer of AT) – excused. Chris Zafra (Workforce Solutions), Sam Cueto (Consumer of AT).

**NMTAP Staff**: Tracy Agiovlasitis (NMTAP Program Manager); Karen Courtney-Peterson (GCD Director): Anthony Alarid (GCD Deputy Director); Jesse Armijo (NMTAP AT Specialist)

**NMTAP Partners:** Meta Hirschl, Yvette Tovar & Jerome Rael (Adelante); on the phone -Tim Carver (San Juan Center for Independence/SJCI).

**Guests:** none

**CALL TO ORDER:**

NMTAP Council Chair, Karen W, called the meeting to order at 1:01 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 to approve the agenda. Albert D moved to approve the agenda, Nat D seconded and the committee approved the agenda unanimously.

The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed. Karen W asked for a vote to approve minutes from July 16, 2018. Andrea V moved to approve with one grammatical correction, Albert D seconded and the committee approved unanimously.

**NMTAP PROGRAM UPDATE:**

Tracy A presented activity statistics since the last quarterly meeting. During this period, NMTAP loaned 26 devices to 11 individuals, provided 63 device demonstrations to 156 individuals and conducted 19 trainings. NMTAP provided information at 10 outreach events and the NMTAP staff provided device technical support and resource referrals to 44 individuals. As an example of widespread population for outreach in this last quarter, the list of events we participated in included Veteran’s Golden Age Games, City of Albuquerque Health Fair, Conference on Aging, Isleta Pueblo Elder Center, State Fair, Northeastern Workforce Summit and Job Fair, Education for Parents of Indian Children with Special Needs (EPICS) Conference, Adult Protective Services, AHEPA Senior Apartments, Las Vegas School Transition Fair, Attorney General’s Disability Summit and the City of Albuquerque Senior Affairs. Tracy A also presented NMTAP services to the Legislative Health and Humans Services Committee last week, especially as it relates to employment. There are at least six events planned through next week as well. As requested by this council, NMTAP staff provided a consumer training on built in phone use for executive functioning to DVR participants in Albuquerque. Only six individuals attended and so better planning is needed to continue this project. The scope of work was sent to DVR to provide AT Evaluations for DVR participants and NMTAP is waiting on the written agreement from DVR to move forward. NMTAP has chosen an individual for the open AT Specialist position and anticipate it will be filled by early November. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture announced that New Mexico State University Extension Services, NMTAP, University of New Mexico and Mandy’s Farm partnership, was awarded an AgrAbility Grant. We will be gearing up to deliver AT services to farmers and ranchers statewide, which will include recruitment of an AgrAbility Specialist staff position with NMTAP. To best utilize the NMTAP adapted sports equipment, we are entering into agreements with two adapted sports programs to house the equipment, making it more readily available for individuals with disabilities to utilize. The two adaptive sports groups are the Zia Freewheelers at Carrie Tingley Hospital Foundation and Adapted Sports Program New Mexico. Assistive Technology Conference (ATC19) is scheduled for May 6 & 7, 2019 at the Uptown Sheraton in Albuquerque and the call for papers has been opened with a February 1, 2019 deadline to submit. ATC19 will have eight (8) educational sessions and will end around 3pm on the second day. This is per attendee request in order to have time to travel back home. Nat D noted that it is mostly mobility equipment that she is seeing as a need at this time. No other council members reported the AT needs they are aware of in our state.

Karen P noted NMTAP has about $50,000 additional funding for this current federal year and there is no word on the funding level for the next year. NMTAP will always need funds for new AT and SJCI requested advertising funds for the financial loan programs. Karen P also noted the federal funding from the AgrAbility grant will be for staff, travel costs and a small amount of equipment for statewide demonstrations.

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

Tim C reported full financial review of all statewide loan programs available through SJCI, the NMTAP partner for financial AT loans. Expenditures to provide the Access Loan NM program for federal fiscal year 2018 was $52,032.66 and $31,876.99 for NM SEED Loans. These are level annual expenditures. He noted there were five (5) new Access Loans and three (3) closed loans within the last quarter. One loan for a van with a lift defaulted for $40,364.10 due to a death in the family, but the van was relinquished to SJCI and was resold. There were two (2) new NM SEED Loans approved in the last quarter; one for a moving business out of Albuquerque and one for a construction company out of Carlsbad. Tim stated that both Access Loan NM (available for anyone with a disability to obtain needed AT) and NM SEED Loans (available to purchase equipment for entrepreneurs with disabilities) continue to be financially secure with the balanced investments SJCI oversees. Tim C reported that the NMTAP Community Fund program remains with a low balance and SJCI is looking for other sources to replenish the funding.

When asked about the number of loans not approved in both programs, Tim C responded that there are more denials in the NM SEED Loans since it is more complex with a business plan. He can provide that information going forward. The council agrees that SJCI has been doing a great job for many years providing these financial loans to individuals with disabilities statewide.

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

Meta H introduced Yvette Tovar, the new Executive Director, and Jerome Rael, Warehouse Coordinator, of Give ABQ. This Adelante initiative houses the Back in Use program providing Durable Medical Equipment (DME), as well as home and office furnishings for other non-profit agencies. The equipment has been moved to the new location at 1520 First Street NW in Albuquerque and they are gearing up for an official opening soon. The September 2018 report indicates only a few Back in Use equipment items were distributed, but they provided about 90 items during the month. This is due to a data entry learning curve of the new staff and will be reflected in the October report. Note that the DiverseIT provides about 20 computers monthly, which was reflected on the September report. Yvette T noted that the most requested item from Back in Use is a rollator (walker with wheels). They have also moved incoming calls requesting equipment to their call center in order to streamline the process. The benefit is a live person response during 8am-5p Monday through Friday, as well as ability to obtain more details from consumers about the equipment requested. In order to sustain to the program, they have implemented a delivery fee for donated and distributed equipment. The home and office equipment fee will be $65 and the medical equipment fee will be $25. They will be providing medical equipment at an event at the Rio Bravo Senior Meal Site this coming Friday, October 19, 2018. In response to council members’ questions, it was noted that incoming donations of computers continue from various sources and there was discussion about methods to expand medical equipment distribution statewide in the future. The NMTAP staff recently toured the new facility and the staff looks forward to working with the new Back in Use team.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Karen W stated that three council members will end their terms as of this month and the replacements have been appointed as of today. Keith Maes will represent DVR, German Benitez will represent CFB and Robin Garrison will represent DRNM. The council and NMTAP are very grateful for the service that Karen W, Curtis C and Andrea V provided during their terms of service. Two individuals with disabilities have been appointed, so we will only need one more individual with a disability who uses AT to meet the mandate for a majority of consumers serving on the council. Bill Newroe from the Albuquerque area was appointed and not only uses AT himself, but is a retired AT evaluation specialist. Michael Acorta from Silver City was appointed and is a Western New Mexico University student who uses AT. Tracy A noted that the Veteran’s program and our northern satellite office may have candidates to nominate. Tracy A will email the five new members for a possible group orientation and if not, they will be provided an individual orientation.

Karen W opened the floor to elect new council leadership. Karen W nominated Keith M as the new Chairperson and Bill N as the new Vice-Chairperson. Keith M and Bill N were approved by acclamation. Keith M was a previous student employee at the NMTAP Satellite office in Las Vegas and currently works for DVR. Bill N has past experience working with NMTAP. The council and NMTAP staff appreciate the work of the previous Chair, Karen W, and the Vice-Chair, Katharine G. Karen W thanked the group for allowing her to be the Chair and serve on this advisory council.

It was requested to add the revision of the NMTAP Council’s By-Laws and the development of an Open Meeting Act resolution, to the January meeting agenda under new business.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

**ADJOURN:**

The next NMTAP Advisory Council meeting was scheduled for January 28, 2019 at the Governor’s Commission on Disability in Santa Fe at 1pm. Karen W adjourned the meeting at 2:54 pm.

***Approved at January 28, 2019 meeting.***