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State of Wisconsin

Assistive Technology Advisory Council

Web: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/atac/index.htm>

Assistive Technology Advisory Council Quarterly Meeting

May 1, 2024

9:00 A.M. – 2:30 P.M.

754 Williamson Street Madison, WI 53703

Join via Zoom:

<https://dhs.wi.zoomgov.com/j/1604264613>

Join via Phone:

Phone: 1-669-254-5252

Meeting ID: 1604264613

Meeting Minutes

Approved August 27, 2024

A. Action Items

B. Motion Items

Motion Item 1: Motion made by Cassie Frost to approve the agenda and seconded by Mike Hipple. Motion carried.

Motion Item 2: Motion made by Laurie Lane to approve the February 22, 2024 quarterly meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Debra Remmel. Motion carried.

Motion Item 3: Motion made by Mike Hipple to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Cassie Frost. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:02pm.

A. Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome, Introductions, and Housekeeping

- Jim Denham called the meeting to order at 9:09 A.M.
- **Council Members Present:** Stacy Ellingen, Jim Rau, BJ Ermenc, Calvin Richtig, Julie Bergen, Dawn Merth-Johnson, Cassie Frost; Laurie Lane, Jim Denham; Debra

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/atac/index.htm>

Remmel; Rick Ziller, Nurudeen Amusa; Mike Hipple; Cortney Zurawski, Lindsey Kreitzman.

- **Council Members Absent:** Jennifer Seale (excused)
- **Guests Present:** Dani Kaslow; MILC; Amanda Miller, CILWW; Cass Hill.
- **DHS Staff Support Present:** Laura Plummer, Department of Health Services (DHS); Ashley Baker, Department of Health Services; Zachary Davenport, Department of Health Services.

II. Review and Approve Quarterly Meeting May 1, 2024 Meeting Agenda

- Motion made by Cassie Frost to approve the agenda and seconded by Mike Hipple. Motion carried **See Motion Item 1.**

III. Review and Approve February 22, 2024 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

- Motion made by Laurie Lane to approve the November 9, 2023 quarterly meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Debra Remmel. Motion carried. **See Motion Item 2.**

IV. Public Comment on Issues Affecting Assistive Technology Users or on the State Plan on Assistive Technology, 2021-2023

- No public comment.

V. Welcome to the Wisconsin Council of The Blind; Denise Jess, Executive Director

VI. Cross Council Member Updates and ADILN Conference Recap

- BJ Ermenc shared that it was a great conference and very well organized. She also attended the WisTech Expo and some of the mini-sessions. She was able to connect with community health workers and discussed accessible services for individuals who have a hearing loss.
- Debra Remmel from DVR attended the conference. She felt the speakers were outstanding and engaging for audience members. The conference schedule allowed for networking. She enjoyed the presentation by AT Council member Cassie Frost.
- Laurie Lane attended and supported the resources area in the WisTech Expo. She felt the conference was a great networking opportunity.
- Julie Bergen felt the conference and networking was excellent.
- Laura Plummer provided a brief update on the WisTech Expo area.
- Cassie Frost shared it was beneficial to bring all the councils together for the pre-conference. It was a good follow up to the October meeting. Table assignments were mixed to encourage more cross-council interaction. Completing the Spider Activity was informative.

- Debra Remmel agrees with Cassie but still felt the front-end part was missing again in the area of having a solid foundation about the other councils. She would benefit from learning more about what other councils are doing.
- Stacy Ellingen shared that transportation appears to be a common concern among all of the councils.
- Dean Amusa learned about the different relationships between the councils at the pre-conference.
- Jim Denham feels that having time at the in-person cross-council meetings should incorporate time for AT Council members to come together for discussion. – have time or everyone from the AT Council together to discuss.
- Mike Hipple would like to see cross-council work occur quarterly via Zoom.
- BJ Ermenc has made an effort to attend the cross-council meetings being held on Zoom.
- Jim Denham reminded council members that anyone from the AT Council is welcome to represent the council at the bi monthly meetings. If interested, please let Jim or Calvin know.

VII. Wisconsin Council of the Blind Vision Services

- Amy Wurf provided an overview of services available from the Wisconsin Council of the Blind.

VIII. Assistive Technology Program Partner Updates

- Laurie Lane shared that there are currently 41 WisLoans, including two telework loans. Brochures have been shared to each of the ADRCs and she has been attending conferences to conduct outreach. The Down Payment Assistance program is up and running. This provides assistance with down payments between 10 – 60% of the principle).
- Jim Rau shared that with input from Zachary Davenport and Jason Anderson, the Wisconsin HLAA association was able to submit input to the FCC on captioning and streaming devices. Ongoing meetings between HLAA and CDHH have been going well.
- Mike Hipple shared that the “winter” newsletter for the WI AAC network went out in March and the summer issue will go out sometime around June 1st. Please share this with your networks2.
- Dawn Merth-Johnson from the Department of Public Instruction shared that they have hired their new OT/PT AT Consultant working in the department. No name has been released yet and the new person will start in June. The State AT lending library closes for the summer and the final AT Forward COP will be on Artificial Intelligence. The Community of Practice maintains a high level of participation and badges continue to be issued. DPI is working with the Waisman Center and have been

reaching more areas around the state on AAC. Dawn spoke with pre-teachers at UW-Madison and an Early Childhood Cohort. Looking to presenting at Closing the Gap.

- Debra Rimmel shared that the AsTec statewide team continues to work with each WDA on AT questions or issues. She also attended the ADLIN Conference.
- Deen Amusa shared that the Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired has a vacancy for the La Crosse area.
- Calvin shared updates from Options for Independent Living and the other IL Centers. Updated included new equipment for some of the centers. Options now has a 3D printer and is creating lo-tech AT to give away. Some new recreational equipment has also been added to the loan/demo program.

Options and MILC have received funding through the DHS livable communities grant. that Options and MILC submitted a proposal for. Another IL submitted hosted a wheelchair and stick curling event in Green Bay. Upcoming soccer and basketball events and a wheelchair wash. Adaptive Gaming and Kayak events coming this summer from Access to Independence and Midstate Independent Living Consultants. One ILC working with Ottawa University on a wheelchair stroller. IF working with UW Milwaukee on a robotic arm.

- Julie Bergen shared that she was able to get a scooter through Society's Assets and she still maintains her OT certification. She recently attended a conference in Little Rock, Arkansas and is looking to get youth with disabilities more involved.
- BJ Ermenc reporting for the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CDHH) attended the ADILN Conference and the HLA A Convention. She also attended the Engage for Change Council Pre-Conference. CDHH will be developing their strategic plan and will share with other councils. The CDHH has a goal to integrate the Deaf and hard of hearing communities.
- Cassie Frost shared that the Wisconsin Council for Exceptional Children held elections and had many applications for positions. She presented at ADILN on AT or Executive Functioning and then attended the HLA A Wisconsin Convention in the Fox Valley.
- Dani Kaslow from the Center for Deafblind Persons shared that she works mostly on the iCanConnect program which is funded by the FCC. The program has served many people this year and would have run of funds. DHS has requested an additional \$30,000 from the FCC so the program can continue to serve consumers through the current fiscal year which ends June 30, 2024.
- Cass Hill from the City of Madison introduced herself as the new Digital Inclusion Coordinator. Her role is ensuring residents have access in the City of Madison for services as well as the City of Madison workforce. They are seeking a workforce development grant which is a collaboration between IT and the libraries with a focus on assistive technology. They have reached the second level of the grant process.

- Cortney Zurawksi shared that she is working with UW-Stevens Point on an employment seminar which will include accommodations.
- Cindi Picher from Independence First has been very busy with outreach events in March and April. The Republican National Convention toured her agency ahead of the RNC Convention which will take place in July in Milwaukee.
- Stacy Ellingen shared that she is one of five self-advocates specifically working on voting access in conjunction with DRW as it relates to electronic voting access.

IX. WisTech Program Updates and State Plan Timeline

- Laura Plummer provided an update on the Independent Living Supports Pilot program which includes that WisTech has received approximately 575 AT consult requests and have completed approximately 417 reports. This includes some requests where they were not applicable or the participants were not reachable. Some requests are also for married couples where they both qualify.
- Laura Plummer shared a brief update from the AT3 Leadership Symposium in Washington D.C.
- WisTech will be represented at the National Council for Independent Living Conference in July and at the Hearing Loss Association of America Convention in June.
- The State Plan for Assistive Technology reporting tool is currently under a public comment period with the Administration for Community Living. Once the comment period closes, ACL will update the form for submission. It is anticipated that submission will be in August or September of this year for the next three year plan.

X. Assistive Technology Advisory Council Member Officer Elections, Appointments, and Vacancies

- None

XI. Tour of the WI Council for the Blind

- A self-guided tour was made available for AT Council members.

XII. Adjourn

- Motion made by Mike Hipple to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Cassie Frost. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:02pm. **See Motion Item 3.**

The purpose of this meeting is to conduct the governmental business outlined in the above agenda. The purpose of the Advisory Council is to provide advice and guidance to the WisTech Program and assure that it is in compliance with the provisions of the Assistive Technology Act (Tech Act) of 1998, as amended. Specifically, the Advisory Council will provide advice and guidance on the following:

- Submission of Wisconsin's State Plan for Assistive Technology (AT) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living (ACL);
- Monitoring the WisTech program according to the State Plan for AT;
- Developing and maintaining collaborations with other agencies, organizations, and bodies providing AT services and devices throughout the State; and
- Monitoring of program data and outcomes.

The Council is administratively attached to the Department of Health Services. If you need an interpreter, alternate formats, or other accommodations to participate, please contact Laura Plummer at 608-514-2513 or laura.plummer1@dhs.wisconsin.gov.

Phone: 1-669 254 5252

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