

Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay
Quarterly Board Meeting
October 24, 2024

Opening:

The quarterly meeting of the Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay was called to order at 9:30 AM on Thursday, October 24, 2024, via Zoom Video Conferencing.

Present:

GABTR Board Members:

- Alfred Sonnenstrahl
- Darrin Smith
- David Drezner
- Michelle Morales
- Steve Cooper
- Alex Simmons
- Lori Berrong
- Kenneth Putkovich
- Shannon Minnick
- Tanea Brown (ODHH)

TAM Staff:

- David Bahar
- Travis Dougherty
- Kevin Steffy
- Donna Broadway-Callaman
- Bob Foster

Interpreters and Captionist:

- Natalie Ennis
- Chante Wilson
- Anne Leahy

Approval of Agenda:

The agenda for the October 2024 GABTR meeting was approved as distributed.

Approval of Minutes:

Meeting minutes from the previous meeting were approved as distributed.

Director's Report by David Bahar:

1. **Board Appointments:** The Governor's appointments office has reallocated board seats and is recruiting to fill vacancies. Efforts are underway to improve geographic diversity.
2. **Relay Services Transition:** Discussions are ongoing about sunseting CapTel services and transitioning to IP CTS due to limited users in Maryland.
3. **Office Move:** TAM is preparing to relocate to a new facility in Baltimore. Surplus furniture and assets will be auctioned off.
4. **Universal Telecommunications Access Platform (UTAP):** Development continues for a one-number relay solution, with an RFP expected soon.

Maryland Relay's Report by Travis Dougherty:

1. **NASRA Conference:** Maryland hosted a successful conference with 115 attendees from 27 states.
2. **Communication Facilitators:** The program is expanding, serving DeafBlind individuals and exploring inclusion for those with mobility and nonstandard speech needs.
3. **White Paper Filing:** A white paper on transitioning from analog to IP relay services was filed with the FCC on August 12, 2024. Advocacy with the DOJ for ADA updates is underway.

Maryland Accessibility Technology's Report by Kevin Steffy:

1. **MAT Program:** Distributed 225 pieces of equipment and received 111 applications this quarter. An RFP for a new CRM program is in progress.
2. **Training Initiatives:** Upcoming sensitivity training sessions include cognitive issues (January 2025) and mobility challenges (date TBD).
3. **Loaner Program Evaluation:** Researching potential shifts from loaner to voucher systems for MAT equipment.

Outreach's Report by Donna Broadway-Callaman:

1. **Outreach Activities:** Hosted 31 exhibits, 22 meetings, and 12 networking events. Major events included ASL Fest, Walk4Hearing, and senior expos.
2. **Upcoming Events:** Preparing for the annual Thanksgiving dinner and the holiday celebration at TAM on November 20.

Finance Report by Bob Foster:

1. **Budget Overview:** TAM operates on \$5 million annually, with revenues of \$2.6–2.8 million. Adjustments to the USTF fund are being considered to ensure sustainability.
2. **External Programs:** The Senior Call Check and NFB-NEWSLINE remain key programs funded by TAM.

New Business:

1. Discussions on potential legislative initiatives to standardize fire alarm distribution programs for Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals statewide.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:44 AM by Alfred Sonnenstrahl.

Minutes submitted by: Travis Dougherty

Minutes Draft approved by: Alfred Sonnenstrahl