

**Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) Advisory Board Meeting
Held October 10, 2013
KCDHH Conference Room**

Members Present: Ms. Becky Crawford, Ms. Betty Timon,
Ms. Mindy McGirt, Mr. Lewis Fowler

Members Absent: Mr. Jeremiah Ziehr, Mr. Johnny Lawson,
Mr. Forest Skaggs, Mr. Shannon Caldwell
Ms. Nina Coyer

Staff Present: Ms. Virginia Moore, Ms. Row Holloway
Mr. Cole Zulauf, Ms. Wilma Wright-Davies
Ms. Jessica Endler

Communication Facilitators: Ms. Shannon Grider, Tammy Cantrell

Mr. Zulauf introduced Jessica Endler new employee she is the processing Document Specialist and works with Cole and Wilma in the TAP Program.

Ms. Crawford, called meeting to order at 2:15pm. Ms. Wright-Davies called the roll there was a quorum the meeting continued. Members introduced themselves and the organization or entities they represent. Minutes from last meeting were reviewed and there were no comments or additions, therefore minutes were accepted as read.

Ms. Moore, KCDHH's Executive Director reported on Wireless Distribution Program. Our new plan we are providing the phone that is attached to them for one- year it is a 12-month plan. On the eleventh month they will be notified to transfer into their own account, their account can be a family plan, they keep their phone, phone number and port their number. They can also use the TAP program at AT&T. The confusing part for our consumers is AT&T has a Telecommunication Access Program themselves and this program allows you a reduced rate it is \$50 a month. Individuals like Betty Timon will tell you if you do not figure it out when you transfer and put it in AT&T's TAP program you will get bills costing you a lot of money until you say you want the TAP Program with AT&T.

It has been a struggle a war one department saying consumers were transferred another department saying no you are not transferred we figured out that the stores are an issue. We will now get a point person on the TAP side of the program from AT&T who will be able to communicate with all to transfer them to own account. We are waiting on confirmation for this to be done. Consumers will be able to transfer straight into AT&T TAP program, they will not have to do anything or go into the stores just contact the point person for the program should be an easier process. We were told AT&T consumers are switching companies and we are not telling them to stay, they are frustrated and are switching to wherever they can get coverage.

Right now we still have AT&T we do not know of any company willing to take this on yet we may do a RFI-request for information to see who may be interested, if no one is interested we will stay with AT&T it is a service that is beneficial to all people. TAP Board members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments about the report, some individual situations were discussed.

Ms. Holloway reported on regulations changes, our application is incorporated into our regulations. We called and they permitted us to go ahead and simplify it into the one page, front and back that we now have done. We will do regulation changes to incorporate that and just a few minor wording changes that will be filed and process takes about six months to get it thru the full process. TAP Board members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments about the report.

Ms. Moore reported on NASRA-TEDPA conference in New Mexico. The Captioned telephones right now the Federal Government has seen such a huge usage on captioned telephones it is only IP Captioning, internet based captioned ones, the captel, Captioncall, the Ensemble and Clearcaptions. There is a fourth one that has not been approved another company is waiting for FCC approval. All of these phones use voice recognition. The fourth phone is coming up and will use court reporters. From the Federal side there was a huge uptick when phones were given out for free. Sorenson and the Ensemble, Captioncall given for free with incentives, we will give you an I-pad, \$50 gift card so the Federal Government said everyone were running to get these phones, giving to everyone grandkids were using them they saw this huge surge in minutes and they imposed that Caption button.

Now every time you have to push the button for Captions before using the phone. Captioned phones are not free anymore you will pay \$75 or more for

a phone for captioning for those who buy them outside of your distribution programs. They have to go back to everyone who did receive a free phone and verify that those individuals are certified as needing that phone and have to collect \$75. Captioned phones are not being Grandfathered into the process. They cannot give out any more free phones. September 30th the rules went into effect. Board members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments about the report.

Ms. Holloway reported on vendor contracts for last year and our RFPS all go out next spring for new equipment, all vendors will have a chance to bid again. If those four caption providers are still out there and want to bid on it they will have the right to go through finance department and bid to provide us whatever piece of equipment they have. Finance determines who has the lowest bid depending on the specs that we send out we will try hard to write the RFP to meet all of our consumers demands, needs and right now WCI, Captel is only one that provides an analog captioned telephone, we still have consumers that need and want an analog captioned phone, not just an IP based phone mostly still want a phone that they can read the letters and pick up dial like a regular phone. Our RFP's will have to be very specific to the needs of our consumers we will get a lot more bids than before, everyone is in competition now. At the TEDPA conference in New Mexico there were many vendors with new equipment only when there is new emerging technology we have not seen before can consumers reapply. The blackberry wireless phone is no longer available thru state contract, we are now looking for another phone that has the keyboard that some consumers prefer over touch tone phones. We have added the Bellman Tactile Signaler combo package. It was bundled as a package because the signaler rings your phone or your VP allows you to have a smoke alarm in your home for safety and we were able to add that on our contract it was a safety issue. The Bellman Tactile combo package is new emerging technology anyone that got pagers 2-years ago, last year, yesterday are eligible to reapply for this new signaling device. This is our primary signaling device that people can pick. Consumers can pick a phone and one signaling device as their choice. In our last issue of the newsletter we talked about the new signaling devices. Board members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments about the report and some individual situations were discussed.

Ms. Holloway reported on new technology at the TEDPA New Mexico conference. Many vendors had new amplified phones that had a lot of bells

and whistles, some were very simple ready to adapt for new technology changes. We are looking at some different amplified phones that will come up on the RFP. The electrolarynx has a new accessory pack with it that allows the device to be used as a battery operated device you can walk around with it like a wireless phone. Speech impaired individuals would be able to walk around and talk with the device. We will be doing I-pads as a communication device. It has speech applications that can be put on it for speech impaired individuals. There are applications for deaf-blind it is mobile captioning, it has IP relay, all kinds of things that can be adapted and New Mexico did a pilot project and gave these out and have been successful. We want to model it and get that added to our contracts, we will be giving out I-pads soon.

Ms. Moore reported on I-pad distribution. An application will come in and indicate deaf, hard of hearing, speech-impaired, deaf-blind. Your phone will arrive with the back of the I-pad etched, completely etched, saying that you know this is through the Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, not for sale. This device will have apps on it that will pertain to what you have indicated. If you are deaf apps will be dragon speech, it will have IP relay, it will have caption calling device already loaded to this device. If you indicate you are hard of hearing, it will have all things already loaded. If you indicate you are deaf-blind it will have all these things already loaded. Deaf-blind apps cost anywhere between \$200-250, to \$500. A deaf-blind communicator is \$8,000 so this would be a good option. We will not remove the other option but this is a wonderful added option. I-pads will be WI-FIED only. A service plan will not be hooked to it, will be WI-FI only most people have WI-FI in their homes now. Most people can go anywhere and hook into WI-FI, most restaurants have WI-FI and you can hook into and take care of your needs. I-pads will have an automatic update feature that if any of the apps that you received through us whatever the apps are it will have an automatic update that if for some reason the Captioncall has an update to it will automatically push in you do not have to update your apps it will be done for you. I-pads will have an automatic tracking system on it that if for any reason device is moved to another state for long periods of time or it is lost, inactive or stolen we will be able to track the device. If it is pawned we will be able to track it and shut it down device will become a brick. We will be able to remove that consumer from ever receiving any equipment from our program again. I-pads will become a service we provide it is not your right we will play hardball with this because some people will wonder why we are giving I-phones, I-pads this is a luxury, being deaf is not a luxury these are

devices that will definitely help our community. It evens the playing field. Some legislatures may not understand and we need to make sure that what we do is on the up and up and consumers will not abuse this program. Plans are to get the I-pad distribution ready before the end of the year. It will be WI-FI only, with the regular I-pad because of consumers with low vision.

Mr. Zulauf reported on the new application being used now. Social Security numbers were taken off the application we have added the last four digits on the new application. The new application is one page front and back, physicians sign the certification section. We have a new brochure with 14 different devices included. Brochure explains each one of the devices and has a description. Blackberry Curve phone has been eliminated we will add a new device later to the brochure. Bellman combo package is explained in the brochure. Last three months 81 people have received the Bellman package. During those three months we received request from 390 applications, 233 responded by filling out the form all wanted a landline phone plus the Bellman signaler combo package. Seventy-four consumers wanted wireless phones. From July 1st to September 30th most saw television ads run by Sprint. Word of mouth from friends was 76 people, from our newsletter 77 people. Five consumers wanted Captel either analog or digital we explained about the Captel 840, 840i, 880 is also digital. Board members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments about the report.

Ms. Moore reported on the new posters for doctor's offices, medical centers, hospitals, health centers. People can take one and mail it in requesting information. Two billboards are up now in Pikeville, and Paducah. We have radio spots that are going out, television ads, newspaper and facebook. We are tracking how we are getting information to find best way to reach out to people. We have made a strong effort to push information out about our commission and it is not only for the phones and equipment it is about the commission overall. Board members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments about the report.

Mr. Zulauf reported on new business. Last two Advisory Board meetings we did not meet a quorum and we cannot discuss new business without a quorum. Since there was no quorum new business will have to wait until the next meeting. If something was to happen and new business was needed to discuss instead of face to face quorum we could do an email or a fax and ask for your vote of support or not support, when we meet at the next meeting we could have the discussion.

Ms. Danielson reported on internet Captel and with the FCC situation. They have a good outreach team working with the Commission, Bob Stuckey and Lisa Harris. They went to the state fair which was a successful event.

Ms. Wright-Davies asked that travel vouchers be turned in after the meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 3:25. Next TAP Advisory Board meeting will be held April 17, 2014 at 2pm.