

**Montana Telecommunications Access Program**  
**Minutes: Full Committee Meeting via ZOOM video conferencing**  
**May 21, 2020**  
**Helena, Montana**

**Committee Members Present:** Ron Bibler, chair; Drew Arnot, vice chair; Lisa Cannon, Tina Shorten, Chanda Hermanson, Barbara Varnum, Tom Thompson (via video conference) John Pavao, Sherri Odlin, Jim Streeter, Lee Hazelbaker, Cam Tulloch

**Committee Members Absent:** Jay Preston

**MTAP Staff Present:** Mary Taylor, Lisa Gault, Mike Bouchard, Rex Wolferman

**Supporting and Contributing Persons Present:** Emilie Banasiak and Asia Johnson, Hamilton Relay; Shannon Little, budget analyst for MTAP; Trisha Smith and Stella Woodrum, sign language interpreters; Shawn Tulloch, program manager for deaf services.

**Meeting called to order:**

Ron Bibler called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Barbara Varnum made a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting and Lee Hazelbaker seconded.

**Public Comment:**

No public comment.

**MTAP Director's report: Mary Taylor**

Mary Taylor opened with welcoming new member Lee Hazelbaker to the committee representing a nondisabled member engaged in a business other than in the telecommunications industry. Four committee members will have their terms expiring on July 1, 2020 – Lisa Cannon, Drew Arnot, Cam Tulloch and Barb Varnum. All members indicated they plan to serve another term on the committee. Ms. Taylor also introduced the new communications technician for MTAP, Rex Wolferman to the committee.

Ms. Taylor informed the committee of the updates relating to COVID-19 as it pertains to the state government such as MTAP discontinuing face-to-face outreach and home visits until further notice and sending out a letter to all active clients to notify them that we will continue to provide services remotely via phone and e-mail and sending out phones. Three UV chambers have been purchased for each MTAP office for use in sanitizing equipment.

For new applications, there has been an average of around 16 applications per month and for FY2020 up to May, 164 new applications have been received in the office. For FY2019, MTAP received 195 applications and for FY 2018, MTAP received 253 applications. Mary called attention to the month of April, noting that there was a significant spike in applications; a total of 26 new applicants were served. Ms. Taylor included in the packet a map showing active clients across the state and MTAP has clients in 53 of the 56 counties. The three counties that don't have clients are McCone, Treasure and Wibaux, all with very small populations.

For outreach, most events were canceled or postponed for the last quarter, but Ms. Taylor did an interview with Aging Horizons which aired on March 29<sup>th</sup>. MTAP will participate in the upcoming Family Learning Weekend for the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind virtually. Other ways of reaching people will be through digital advertising (geofencing and search retargeting). The tech fair was canceled but Ms. Taylor mailed brochures and applications to the senior center in Browning and spoke with the director of the facility, who is excited for us to hold the event there, possibly next May.

Ms. Taylor used some of the outreach budget with Hamilton Relay to purchase a new speaker system, microphones and projectors for the committee meetings and also purchased Relay Friendly Business brochures, cards, flyers and stickers. Some funds were spent on purchasing Town Pump and Subway gift cards to use as prizes for outreach events as well as doodads that MTAP gives out. Most all of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary event costs were funded by the Hamilton Relay outreach budget.

The MTAP Facebook page has been active for almost a year and half and the report was included in the packet as well. The Facebook management contract with Devaney and Associates expired on March 31. Devaney and Associates let Ms. Taylor know they will continue to manage the Facebook page pro bono for the time being until the status of the contract has been updated. The Facebook Advertising contract expired March 31, 2020 also with Devaney & Associates. The advertising has been put on hold until a new contract is awarded. The MTAP Outreach Subcommittee assisted Mary with ranking the RFP responses. The team recently completed scoring of the 10 responses received; the tentative highest scoring offeror is Devaney & Associates.

The equipment contract with Teltex expires May 26, 2020 and this contract may be renewed for up to six more years. The contract was renewed through June 30, 2021 to coincide with the state fiscal year.

The MTAP website update is still a work in progress, because of the way the website is set up and incorporated as a page within the State of Montana website, some vendors are not able to offer their services or not willing to take on the challenge. The state requires a limited solicitation process for contracts between \$5,001 and \$25,000 requiring MTAP to obtain three quotes. Two have been received, still waiting on the third. Once all three are received, the quotes will be submitted to the committee for review.

Purchasing versus leasing a vehicle for the Billings MTAP office is still under discussion. Due to the timing of the process, MTAP will hold off on obtaining a new vehicle until FY2021.

The NASRA/TEDPA conferences have been postponed to 2021. The annual business meeting will still happen through a virtual platform later on.

### **Budget Report – Shannon Little**

Shannon Little opened with the budget report as of April 2020.

### **SFY 2020 Budget Totals:**

The Montana Telecommunication Access Program (MTAP) SFY 2020 appropriated budget total is \$1,681,780. The breakdown of the appropriation is as follows:

Personal Services	\$ 249,054	HB2 Appropriation
Operations	<u>\$ 657,726</u>	HB2 Appropriation
Total	\$ 906,780	Total HB2 Appropriation

FCC Mandate      \$ 775,000 Restricted Appropriation for FCC Mandate (Language Appropriation)  
Total Budget      \$1,681,780

**SFY 2020 MTAP actual expenses through April 30, 2020:**

As of April 30, 2020, 10 month(s) or 83% of SFY2020 has been completed. Two months remain in SFY2020.

The MTAP program expended \$2,214,335 as of April 30, 2020:

\$ 644,148 HB2 budget appropriation (71% of the \$906,780 available)  
\$ 50,610 Indirect Costs (Non-Budgeted appropriation)  
\$ 19,577 Prior Year Expense  
\$1,500,000 Fund Transfer HB669  
\$2,214,335 Total expenses for program

HB2 expenditures through April 30, 2020 are allocated as follows:

\$ 201,077 Personal services (80.7% of \$249,054 PS budget)  
\$ 443,071 Operating expenses (67.4% of \$657,726 OP budget) (Not including Indirect Costs)  
\$ 644,148 Total MTAP Expense (71% of \$906,780 total HB2 budget)

**SFY 2020 – Comments and Projected Expenditures:**

**Personal Services:**

- Actual costs for SFY 2020 personal services are \$ 201,077.
- Staffing: The Missoula Technician position vacancy has been filled.
- Payroll costs for the month of April 2020 that have not posted are for PPE 04/24/2020, which will post in May 2020.

**Operating Expenses:**

YTD actual operating expenses for SFY 2020 are \$443,071. Included in this are:

- Relay Services – Total actual expenditures are \$ 172,736.
- Total Relay budget \$ 225,000. Total remaining budget \$ 52,264.
- Outreach – Total actual expenditures are \$ 119,461.
- Total Outreach budget \$ 170,150. Total remaining budget \$ 50,689.
  - Changes in Hamilton contract add an additional cost of approximately \$5,000 per month or \$60,000 annually for Fiscal Year 2020 for outreach services.
- Rent/Utilities – Total actual expenditures are \$ 40,026.
- Total Rent budget \$ 48,100. Total remaining budget \$ 8,074.
- Supplies/Distribution Equipment (Teltex) – Total actual expenditures are \$53,025.
- Total Supplies/Distribution Equipment budget \$ 100,576. Total remaining budget \$ 44,451.
- Travel – Total actual expenditures are \$ 13,828.
  - Total Travel budget \$ 23,500. Total remaining budget \$ 9,672.
- Equipment/Other Expenses – Total actual expenditures are \$ 5,499.
  - Total Equipment budget \$ 16,000. Total remaining budget \$ 10,501.
  - These expenses include: Dues, Education-Training, Meetings, and Parking fees.
- Vehicle – No expenses YTD.
  - Total Vehicle remaining budget \$25,000 □

- Communications – Total actual expenditures are \$ 8,077.
  - Total Communications budget \$ 11,000. Total remaining budget \$ 2,923.
- Repairs/Maintenance (Vehicles) – Total actual expenditures are \$ 2,470.
  - Total Repairs/Maintenance budget \$ 4,500. Total remaining budget \$ 2,030.
- Other Services – Total actual expenditures are \$ 27,948.
  - Total Other Services budget \$ 37,000. Total remaining budget \$ 9,052.

**Indirects and Prior Year:**

- Actual costs for SFY 2020 Indirect costs are \$ 50,610.
  - Projected costs for SFY 2020 Indirect costs are \$ 70,450.
- Actual costs for SFY 2020 prior year Indirect costs are \$19,577.
  - We do not anticipate any additional prior year Indirect costs.

**FCC Mandate:**

- No expenses for the FCC Mandate are projected at this time.

**Revenue Update:**

As of April 30, 2020 (SFY2020) \$ 1,389,724 in revenue has been collected. The MTAP TDD Revenue spreadsheet for March 31, 2020 has been provided to the committee.

**DPHHS Report: Chanda Hermanson**

Chanda Hermanson spoke about the adjustments that have been made due to COVID-19 such as closing public offices, encouraging telework, publishing flexibilities and personal protective equipment. There will be assistive technology grants for teleworkers with disabilities and planning is ongoing for the upcoming legislative session as well as hiring goals for the division.

**Hamilton Relay Report: Emilie Banasiak and Asia Johnson**

Hamilton Talking Points (High Level Overview Provided by Asia Johnson)

- March 16, 2020, the FCC released a waiver Order, which was designed to bring much-needed relief for TRS providers as we experienced surging call volumes. The Order specifically waived the daily 85% in 10 answer performance requirement conditional on the TRS provider ensuring that 85% of calls are answered within 120 seconds, measured on a monthly basis (Extended through June 30<sup>th</sup>).
- Compared to Jan, the number of MT CTS session minutes we processed in March increased 32% as a result of COVID-19 as so many people were desperately trying to keep connected with loved ones and continue to conduct business in what quickly became a non-traditional way.
- Hamilton In-Person Outreach Suspension extended through June.
- Outreach Events Cancelled due to COVID-19:
  - Montana Gerontology Society Conference (Missoula, April 16-17, 2020)
  - Women 4 Wellness Health Fair at Salish-Kootenai Indian Reservation (Pablo, May 28, 2020)
  - Kalispell Veterans Stand Down (Kalispell, May 30, 2020)
- Montana Relay Upcoming Outreach:
  - Family Learning Weekend (Virtual, June 13, 2020)
  - 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Governor’s Conference on Aging (Butte, September 15-16, 2020)
  - Montana Deaf Awareness Day (Great Falls, September 26, 2020)
  - Health and Wellness Fair (Missoula, October 24, 2020)

- Emilie will continue to work with Mary to modify Outreach Plan as needed.

### **MTAP Equipment Report – Mike Bouchard and Rex Wolferman**

Mike Bouchard reported that while he was still able to travel, he was covering most of the state until Rex Wolferman was hired on in mid-March. He attended the Billings Home Show which had a big turnout. The third week of March, he accompanied Rex on a few client visits in the Missoula area and did some training with Rex. Since the lockdown, Mr. Bouchard and Mr. Wolferman have been setting up resources to assist them in helping the clients set up phones over the phone or a video link via Zoom. A folder was created with videos and manuals that Ms. Taylor thought would be helpful for client self-help. Mr. Bouchard also added that he has set up the new microphones and speakers at his office to test for use for future meetings. Mr. Wolferman introduced himself and explained his background and interests to the committee.

### **Unfinished business**

MTAP Subcommittees

### **New business**

#### **Action items – Facebook Contract**

John Pavao made a motion to approve and Barbara Varnum seconded the motion to allow the MTAP Outreach Subcommittee to proceed on awarding the contract for the Facebook Management and Advertising to the winner of the bid.

### **2020 meeting dates:**

**August 20, 2020 – Helena**

**November 19, 2020 - Helena**

**The meeting was adjourned at 11:53 a.m.**