

Relay Missouri Advisory Committee Meeting

April 22, 2015

CART Reporter: Kimberly A. Pfleinger Schacht, RPR, CRR, CCP,
CBC, CCR, CRI

LINDA BAKER: Shall I -- shall I start right now? Start the
meeting? Is that okay?

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: What?

LINDA BAKER: Is that okay to start the meeting?

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: Yes.

LINDA BAKER: Good morning. If you don't -- very quickly maybe we
need to go around the table because I don't know some of the new
people that are sitting around here. My name is Linda Baker and for
the time being I am the Chair of the Relay Advisory Council. To my
right, if you would like to introduce yourself.

MARY ULEP: I am Mary Ulep. I am an audiologist, I work at
Beltone.

BARRY CRITCHFIELD: I am Barry Critchfield. I am a visitor.

CLAIRE MENGWASSER: Hi, my name is Claire Mengwasser. I am a
speech language pathologist. I work at Missouri School for the
Deaf.

DIANE WIELAND: Hi. I am Diane Wieland. I am with Paraquad in
St. Louis.

STEPHANIE LOGAN: Hello. My name is Dr. Stephanie Logan, and I
work for the LEAD Institute for the Deaf services.

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: My name is John Van Eschen. I am with the staff
of the Public Service Commission.

DANA PARISH: My name is Dana Parish. I am staff with the Public
Service Commission.

MARY EXLINE: My name is Marty Exline, and I am the Director of Missouri Assistive Technology.

OPEOLUWA SOTONWA: My name is Opeoluwa Sotonwa, and I am the Executive Director for the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

CHRIS SMITH: Hi. My name is Chris Smith, and I am with Sprint Relay.

MARK SEEGER: Hi. My name is Mark Seeger, and I work with Sprint Relay as well.

MICHELLE VICINO: My name is Michelle Vicino. I am the account manager for Relay Missouri.

SCOTT DOLLAR: Hello. My name is Scott Dollar. And this is my name sign; it is an "S" that you wave in the air.

WHITNEY PAYNE: I am Whitney Payne here with staff office counsel here with the Public Service Commission.

LINDA BAKER: Okay. Thank you.

It looks like we have a first order of business, equipment program update.

MARY EXLINE: I am not Stacy, in case you didn't realize that. Stacy came in today and she was sick. I think she picked up something from her child from day care. So the most important question, Dana, already mentioned she was disappointed that she couldn't look at the baby pictures. I forgot. I should have texted her on the way down and got some of those. Sorry about that.

I want to give an update on the Telecommunications Access Program. So far to date we have provided adaptive telephone equipment to about 1,300 people and adaptive Internet equipment to

another 300 people. I want to give an update on the wireless pilot project that started at the -- in December.

We started in December. And this is one of the individuals that received adaptive equipment from the program. What did I do? This is Greg. Greg is -- has low vision and he received an iPhone 6+ from the program. He used it for both the fact it was able to be a little bit larger than a typical iPhone. He also uses the voiceover, so he uses it in combination to help him do everything he needs as far as his telecommunications with both the voiceover and also the larger screen.

Who have we served so far? We have started in actually in December, we actually started more toward the beginning of January in terms of -- in terms of when we actually started.

That's weird.

So it has been going for about three months. So we have had 52 participants and kind of in a nutshell, anyone who applies for the program is approved as long as they can show that somehow getting a wireless device is going to improve their ability as far as telecommunications.

So we have 52 participants that have been approved. We approved another 13 just on Friday. So far that's a distribution of the disabilities that have been served. We have had 18 persons who were blind, 19 who were low vision, about 8 that were Deaf or hard of hearing. Two had some type of speech impairment and then we had 5 with mobility impairments.

And then there were a number of people with other secondary disabilities, other types of disabilities.

Okay. Let's try this. Whoa! Not using this technology right

here. As far as age range, folks that ranged from 26 all the way up to 91, we would love to even get more folks with disabilities that were in the up ranges, folks that are a little bit more frightened of technology to see if they might be able to benefit. So we do have 12%, a small amount, six people actually that were 80 or older. So there is a nice range of ages. I would say it is pretty typical, it goes along with the regular program as far as the biggest group being in that 40 to 49 year old and then, of course, we do have a ton of folks in the regular program in the 70 and older group too.

Anyone have any questions yet?

That's kind of the same thing in terms of showing the age ranges of the wireless pilot so far.

In terms of kinds of devices we have provided quite a few iPads and iPad minis.

The smaller number we are also offering the jitter bug and the ODIN, ODIN VI is an android phone for persons who are blind. We have provided a small number of those. The program had provide accessories. If a person has a cell phone or wireless device, we can provide like a Bluetooth neck loop to help with their cell phone. Visual signalers. We can provide speech apps like Proloquo for people with communication disabilities. And the interface box is a box if somebody has an iPad and they are using a speech app to communicate because they have a speech disability, then the interface box can allow them to use their traditional home phone hooked up to that iPad with that speech app.

Actually, that is the same information on a pie chart.

Those are the accessories that are provided.

Just another example, Vicki was one of the people that she already had a cell phone. She didn't need anything else, she just needed an accessory so she was able to get a cell phone amplifier because the audio for her cell phone just didn't give her quite enough of a boost.

We have been trying to do a lot of outreach. We just had a conference last week, a statewide conference. We had several telecommunications sessions and exhibitors. Sprint was a cosponsor of the conference. A couple of people were here. Dennis was there; Diane was at the conference. So I think it was a great conference. We had about 60 exhibitors altogether discovering not only telecommunications but all kinds of assistive technology.

In terms of outreach, I think the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing put something in their newsletter every week or most weeks. So we are definitely open to doing any other outreach that folks might want to suggest.

So if anyone has any questions or wants some applications or any brochures, we have a wireless brochure that has all of the different equipment in it, anything that you would want. We also will pass around the Annual Report and it gives information about all of the consumers and different programs that people might need.

St anyone have any questions?

LINDA BAKER: Are you still looking for people or is this it?

MARY EXLINE: No. We are still -- absolutely, we are looking for people. Like I said, we will accept as many folks as who apply as long as they have some type of a need for wireless communications and show that it actually is going to improve their ability as far as -- I mean if someone already has an iPod, we won't provide

another iPad for them. If they have a need, then we will provide it.

LINDA BAKER: And this may be old information, but have you reached out to the Hearing Loss Association of America in Kansas City?

MARY EXLINE: We have. And we are also doing the conference in St. Louis, is that the national conference in St. Louis?

LINDA BAKER: Yes, I have some information on that I.

MARY EXLINE: So, definitely, if you know of anybody who, you know, is interested, then the application is on our Web site. There is a Q and A on the Web site. There is the equipment book on our Web site to -- but if anyone has any questions at all, they can e-mail us or call.

LINDA BAKER: Are you reaching out to the ENT folks, the major ones?

MARY EXLINE: We haven't done much of that. That is probably a good idea.

LINDA BAKER: Well, I am just thinking, Wash U. and St. Luke's Hospital in St. Louis has a huge cochlear implant program. And I -- I did know an audiologist there. I don't know if she is still there. But I would earmark those two in St. Louis. I don't know what's the counterpart in Kansas City. But they are huge in St. Louis.

MARY EXLINE: I will touch base with Stacy. I know she touched out to a lot of audiologists.

CLAIRE MENGWASSER: Midwest Ear Institute in Kansas City.

MARY EXLINE: Good.

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: Marty, you are still referring to this as a trial? Is that correct?

MARY EXLINE: It is a sense that it is a pilot is that we are doing some surveying and reaching out to find out if people had any issues once they got the device in terms of would it have helped if -- did they get any help with that particular device? Did they need any training afterwards? In that sense it is a pilot. Basically if someone applies and they explain -- we ask them what equipment they are using now and how they felt this might improve their ability as far as telecommunications it is and they are approved. We are not turning anybody down.

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: So the total number in the program right now with wireless is what again?

MARY EXLINE: For the year? So for wireless, we are probably up to -- with everything, we are probably up to about 1600 so far.

INTERPRETER: You said 1600?

INTERPRETER: Yes.

MARY EXLINE: Great. Thanks.

LINDA BAKER: Okay. The next one is Sprint report.

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: Just a minute. Does everyone know Chairman Kenney? He is the chairman of the PSC.

CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Welcome, everybody. Thank you for the work you do for Relay Missouri. It is very important, and we appreciate your consideration. Thank you.

MICHELLE VICINO: Can everybody see me good? Where do you want me to stand?

Hello, everyone. I am Michelle Sangster Vicino, and I am the account manager for Relay Missouri, and happy to see everyone again.

It is a beautiful day today. (Sirens). I will be short and sweet and go over some things going on in Relay Missouri.

Okay. This is a snapshot of Missouri Relay what is going on since October, 2014 to now. We have 227,747 total TRS relayed minutes. And then you will see we have 161,007 total CapTel relayed minutes.

Then there has been 76 events. And you will notice from last time, the audience is a little smaller. That's because the winter months slow things down as far as numbers go. So the spring and summer things pick back up again with a lot more events coming due to the weather. Teen Institute is coming. So again the winter is slow and we still have outreach. 3,000 is a little smaller. But it is a snapshot from October to current.

Total TRS call volume from 2008 to current, you will see the decline in TRS minutes. You will see a lot of people don't use the TTYs, because things have gone over to video relay. You will see it throughout the state, and you will see those minutes go down because of that.

Now you will see that little diagram part, where you see the visual numbers are declining a little bit, you see that on the graph here.

This graph is for CapTel call volume. And it is similar, of course, you remember these numbers are not Internet based CapTel. These are traditional landline CapTel call volume. And again, you see a little decline in minutes. The reason is many people are moving to IP CapTel. And so -- IP CapTel. They are switching over to Internet based CapTel phone services. Again, that's why there is

a decline in the minutes here.

So I want to point that out right here.

That's as of March up to current.

So TRS and CapTel are both on the decline.

However, I do want to show you an example of -- when I say they are on decline because of the transition to the Internet, I do want to show you some comparisons. The blue is the IP CapTel minutes, and you see they are up. They are on the up implement you see that trend. And the red is the traditional CapTel minutes, which is going down. So you kind of see the transition as one goes up, the other goes down.

So there is clearly a difference in the number of minutes based on this graph.

You may remember last time I was here you asked me for a breakdown of who uses what services. So I am going to add this slide in from now on to show you the breakdown of services. So at the top you see the TTY is 32.58%, Turbo Code is 24.17%, and then you can see the rest of the graph on down. Deaf-blind, there is just zero. This is a breakdown of different services that we have.

These numbers -- okay, I am sorry, let me rephrase that. These average percentages are from this contract year. And that is from July of 2014 to February of 2015. So that's the average number, that's where we get our average number.

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: Michelle? Can you briefly explain the difference between say TTY, Turbo Code, voice, and voice carryover?

MICHELLE VICINO: The difference. A TTY is the traditional device that you can type on. It is the machine that a user can type on.

Turbo Code, to help with this one -- I am

sorry.

INTERPRETER: Okay. I didn't know the sign.

MICHELLE VICINO: Mark, you may be able to help with Turbo Code.

Help with this one, Mark.

MARK SEEGER: Turbo Code allows TTY user -- you want me to stand? Can you see? So Turbo Code allows a TTY user to juice up the speed. When they are typing it doesn't buffer. It goes as fast as they can type. So it is very similar to ASCII which is an older technology as well. But Turbo Code started probably in around 2000. So it has been around for about 15 years.

The original speed was Baudot which could only transfer like 45 words per minute. Turbo Code can transmit at about 90 words per minute. ASCII can transmit as fast as you want to transmit.

MICHELLE VICINO: Thank you for explaining that.

So voice means voice users who call through the Relay and use the Relay to help with voice facilitation.

And VCO stands for Voice Carryover so someone can speak for themselves but since they are not able to hear on the phone, they have the sign language or they have typed for them so they can read what the other person says and talk back. So they can speak for themselves, but they have someone type so they can read.

And the HCO is the opposite of that, the reversal. It means I can't speak, but I can hear and so I listen to my end of the conversation, and then I type back and the Relay user speaks back for me.

And then ASCII was explained.

And this is deaf-blind Baudot is for deaf-blind users. Those are the services provided for on this chart.

I also gave out the outreach report. This is the report since last time we met in October. If you remember, the number of people that were reached was smaller because there was not a whole lot of events again, because of the weather, the seasonal changes. So a lot of it was one-on-one interactions. But we do have reports of everything going on since October. That's what this is.

I would like to add, that the average part, the HLAA which is coming up this summer, Relay Missouri will be sponsoring that event. We will be there June 26th so we are very excited about this event. And we will be setting up a Sprint table there and it is an exciting time and exciting event. Hopefully all of you will be able to come to this. It will be in St. Louis. And we also plan to go to the baseball game. HLA is selling tickets for the baseball game.

How many Cardinals fans do we have in the house today? That's what I thought.

[SHOW OF HANDS]

LINDA BAKER: I am actually a volunteer for the convention. So I will see you. I will be at the ballgame too I.

MICHELLE VICINO: Good. Exciting. It will be an exciting time. That's for sure.

DANA PARISH: June 26th, is that correct?

LINDA BAKER: Well it is --

MICHELLE VICINO: 26th and 27th.

LINDA BAKER: It actually starts the 25th. If you go to hearingloss.org, and on the right side you see "convention," and it is all there. And they got the schedule and the whole thing. As Michelle said, it is exciting. You really see the diverse

population of people under that umbrella of deafness and hard of hearing. It is huge. And you see all kinds of the latest technology that are designed for people like us. It is wonderful.

MICHELLE VICINO: Yes, it is. It is actually the Friday and Saturday, the events take place. And we facilitate the connection with HLA and the Cardinals stadium, so we agreed if HLA sells all 500, then the first pitch, we will get to be a part of the first pitch out of the opening game. We talked about the organization, and the captioning for the hearing impaired, and so they will be able to talk about that event at the game. So the first pitch, that's exciting to be a part of the first pitch. I am not the one pitching, just so you know. My luck it would going flying off. Someone else will do it.

Any questions about the report itself? Questions? No questions, all right. Since we met last, this is the new Web site, the new look, the new name, everything is new. I mean nothing is really the same from the last time implement if you remember, we discussed the web address that we have had for the past -- for -- prior to, it was kind of hard to remember. It is really easy now. Relay Missouri. This is what it looks like. We took some pictures from things that symbolize Missouri, pictures that make you think of Missouri, the Arch, the Mizzou campus, things that make you think of the location of the state it self. And so when you have time, go to it, check it out. If you have some feedback or ideas, please let me know. We can adjust accordingly.

Another exciting news, we have a Facebook page for Relay Missouri. We just started this a few months ago. This is kind of a snapshot of what it looks like. When we started it, we started with

a small number of people, just like two or three Likes. But what it was is actually -- we did a Facebook ad campaign, where we created an ad and we setup a limited who will see the ad.

For example, you know, maybe there was a group of 18 to 65 plus, where do you live, Missouri. We established interest, in the interest category we put hearing loss, so that we could kind of custom design who would see the ad. Every time someone clicks on the ad, it goes to the Facebook page, then we pay. So someone who from California, who is hearing, who has no interest in hearing loss issues in Missouri, we didn't want them to click on it and have to pay for that. It would just increase the Likes. So we set up apartments, \$10 a day, throughout the week, never over \$70 per week. And that result in 91 new Likes a week. That was a good. So that campaign kind of got the ball rolling and increased our Likes. And also, you know, now that we have all of these Likes, you just have help by word of mouth, people share things. We may do it again down the road. But for now we are up to 112 as of last week. So that's where we are at. Hopefully those Likes will grow and tell your friends to Like it if you can, you can do it. Spread the word with the Facebook page to help it grow. That would be great.

Other updates, I am sure you all know, we celebrate 25 years of service in the Relay business already.

And so here is the slide that explains that. It is an exciting time where we had to kickoff in Kansas City recently. And I can show you a videotape that we made.

I think Missouri, coming up to 25 years, if you would like to see the video, we can modify it for the state also. It is a 4-minute

video we made to celebrate our 25 years of service.

I hope it works.

Can someone get the lights? It is captioned.

There is no volume.

(Captioned video shown.)

MICHELLE VICINO: Okay.

So that was a video made to celebrate our 25 years. So we could make one and take that and fit it for our particular state.

Next, I don't know if you are familiar but last fall, around November, after the last meeting, you know, Purple IP, they went out of business. So it left the IP Relay business. Sprint is now the only provider of IP Relay. So we are hiring new operators to handle the increased traffic. Right now we are not really actively promoting the service, but it is there for those that need it.

The deaf-blind really, really benefit from IP relay services. So we are now currently the only provider of that. I thought it was important for you all to be aware of that. If you have any questions about that, just let me know. That's where we stand with the IP Relay.

LINDA BAKER: Are you saying you are the only provider in the country?

MICHELLE VICINO: Yes.

LINDA BAKER: Really?

MICHELLE VICINO: I was asked to bring up this subject for this meeting, another option for outreach throughout Missouri is called Outreach Experts, Inc., and they are a contract that they use throughout the United States and they work with people that have hearing loss, people who use CapTel phones. What we do is send them

information about advanced and then we promote IP CapTel, also state programs.

So suppose here in Missouri, if I were to go to an event, we would promote IP CapTel services there and they would actually have brochures for the state program too. I really like that. I think it would be an amazing opportunity to invite O and I to do the outreach for us, that's who it would be do it in Missouri. They don't just do the phones but also install. They will install the phones themselves. It doesn't take away business from the state. It does not -- as far as Relay Missouri, as far as the contractor goes to all of these trade shows for traditional CapTel, we still would be going to those events and everything there is good. But this is more for larger events like the home garden shows where there is a larger crowd, boat shows, bigger type of events that draw big crowds. We would send this ONI.

INTERPRETER: I am sorry. OEI.

MICHELLE VICINO: They would provide CapTel via brochures, materials, and little brochures and so on. They would also refer to MoTAP, MoTAP, that they can refer them to MoTAP, this is a win/win/win for all of us, for Sprint, Sprint, and Missouri. We get more referrals. And Sprint provides more phones that need it. And so I know there probably will be questions on how the program works. But we are open for discussion since we brought this up here. So that's what OEI does. It does that for the state. OEI, Outreach Experts, Inc. I would like to add this does not come from the Missouri budget. OEI pays for the booth themselves, and promotion themselves. Bob, the contractor is in the area and he can go and

help. Otherwise, they run the show themselves, and they do provide referral information throughout the state programs.

Does anyone have any questions about the program?

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: So who exactly is Outreach Experts?

MICHELLE VICINO: They work for CapTel, the company of CapTel. They hire these people -- they don't work for Sprint, they actually work for CapTel. We would just give them a list of trade shows or different events. And Sprint CapTel have a partnership, we have worked together for many years. So they are actually contracted with CapTel but they will help us within our state.

Does that answer your question?

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: I guess so. The relationship with Sprint, can you -- I understand there is no relationship. Is that right?

MICHELLE VICINO: Well, yes, we have been working with CapTel for many years. We partnered with CapTel. Mark, you can help clarify that.

MARK SEEGER: Sure. Sprint and CapTel both fund this Outreach together. And the way that we benefit is that there are more CapTel users in the state of Missouri. And so the majority of these new CapTel users are IP CapTel users that are billed to the FCC.

We have a protocol when we introduce a person to CapTel. If they qualify for the State assistance, we would refer them to MoTAP for support. If they don't have an IP line, then they would be using the PSTN CapTel device. If they have an IP connection, then they have sometimes a choice if they want to fill out the paperwork for MoTAP and they think they qualify they can go that direction. If they don't want to go through the paperwork and they would rather just pay for the phone, they can pay \$75 and just buy the phone.

And some people would rather not fill out the paperwork and not disclose their income and not go through that process and just buy the phone.

Then there is another way to get the phone and that is to have a third-party audiologist who is independent and can't be paid for by Sprint. They can sign off that the person has a hearing loss and that person can get a phone free of charge.

LINDA BAKER: Is that based off income?

MARK SEEGER: The free phones is not based on income. It is based on hearing loss verified by an audiologist. And the audiologist -- it is illegal for them to be paid by any company. They have to be independent.

BARRY CRITCHFIELD: Do you know what level of hearing loss is required to receive the benefit?

MARK SEEGER: There is not a threshold. There is several views on this. Audiologists vary in their opinions of what is valid for use of a CapTel phone.

Some people benefit from amplification without the captioning. Some people have processing disorders and even though they may have a good amount of hearing left, they would benefit from the captions to help them with processing and to help them learn to hear. Because they are hearing and reading and it helps them retain memory of sound.

So there is all different kinds of losses. And an audiologist is the best person to make that decision.

BARRY CRITCHFIELD: It is your fault!

[LAUGHTER]

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: So would this be like a movement from traditional CapTel to IP CapTel to try and move people from this traditional CapTel service to IP CapTel service?

MARK SEEGER: It is an option for the consumer. And it is just more awareness for the consumer and support of Outreach.

LINDA BAKER: So what I am understanding, this Outreach Experts, you are outsourcing that service away from Sprint?

MARK SEEGER: Correct.

LINDA BAKER: And they call themselves "Outreach Experts?"

MARK SEEGER: Yes.

LINDA BAKER: Bob Lister is he under that out reach expert.

MARK SEEGER: No. He pays -- he belongs to Missouri. Missouri pays for Bob.

MICHELLE VICINO: He is ours. That's right.

DANA PARISH: Michelle, so Bob Lister, if he would assist at some of these functions or with --

MICHELLE VICINO: Yes, if he wants to, yes. That's the point. He doesn't actually have to. He can go do other events that may coincide. He can participate with them, but he has an option, but he doesn't have to. We still pay for the hours. Now the booth itself and the OEI stuff is not in the Missouri budget. Did I see a hand over here too?

SCOTT DOLLAR: Yes. I have a question in regards to the IP Relay. I understand the deaf-blind, you said that IP Relay is not available for the deaf-blind?

MICHELLE VICINO: I am sorry. You are going back to IP Relay; right?

SCOTT DOLLAR: Yes.

MICHELLE VICINO: Yes, it is available. It is available for the deaf and blind. I was just saying that Sprint Relay is the only provider remaining, but, yes, we definitely do provide that for the deaf and blind, yes.

SCOTT DOLLAR: Okay.

MICHELLE VICINO: Any other questions about OEI?

LINDA BAKER: Interesting implement.

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: Does -- would this mean you wouldn't be promoting traditional CapTel service as much?

MICHELLE VICINO: Yes, well, Bob's job will not change. He will still be promoting traditional CapTel. I mean that remains. That part will not change. OEI is just another option when it is all said and done. Bob still does what Bob does.

MARK SEEGER: I am not sure -- maybe Marty can answer this -- CapTel has recently produced a new phone that is called the 840 Plus. What it does is it allows the equipment distribution program to start placing phones to PSTN users that can switch to IP without having to replace the phone. And that's huge because right now if you place an 840, that's a PSTN phone, when that customer -- and this is happening a lot -- the customer drops their landline and they move to cable or they drop their landline and they move to DSL, that phone no longer works because it is not VoiP based. It is PSTN based.

So in the future if MoTAP uses the 840 Plus, that phone will migrate to PSTN to DSL or to VoiP, VoiP or cable or whatever the customer moves to as PSTN goes away, and you don't have to buy new equipment. The same equipment works on both. But there are a lot

of people out there who just still have an analog line. So we still have to promote both types of service implement.

MARY EXLINE: That is something that the state is looking into.

Yeah, there is a few different transitional phones for people that might be transitioning from a landline to

MICHELLE VICINO: Okay. Are you done? Yes, I am done. Question and answer.

LINDA BAKER: Okay. Is this a good time to break for lunch?

DANA PARISH: I would say lunch and then some of us need to move vehicles as well. So I know the garage is full.

LINDA BAKER: Break time.

DANA PARISH: Also, can I add one more thing, there is a sign-in sheet going around. If you can sign-in and get the sheet back to me, I would need that as well. Thank you.

(Lunch break.)

LINDA BAKER: We will be starting the meeting soon. Okay. I hope everybody enjoyed their lunch. I know I did. Thank you again for organizing the lunch.

We will start with the Missouri PSC staff report.

DANA PARISH: I will pass out a handout here for the Relay Missouri fund, if you can pass it around. I will wait just a minute to make their way around.

The graph will give you a brief overview of the fund for the past two years. Where we remained, dollarwise, there has been two decreases in the fund.

The most recent was December 2014 from 8 cents to 6 cents, and you can see that the amount is starting to drop slowly.

Roughly right now we are at approximately 5.9 in the fund.

LINDA BAKER: 5.9 million?

DANA PARISH: Yes. In addition, I will also add, John may want to add something as well, the Missouri State Auditor has come to the Commission as well and they are looking over some of our accounts. Relay Missouri was one of these that was included in the review. Not sure exactly why. They are just redoing --

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: Well, the Missouri State Auditor's office, they are auditing Missouri Public Service Commission and it is a standard audit that they do. They look at other Public Service Commission -- how the Public Service Commission operates and the fact that we do oversee a couple of funds like Relay Missouri and we also oversee the Missouri Universal Service fund, they look at that as well in terms of how it is administered to things like that.

I know they have asked for various information about the assessments and things like that for these funds.

I am not quite sure what to expect out of it. But that audit is on-going right now.

There may be some recommendations that the auditor has, that they might produce for us, and we will take a look at and anticipate the Commission will direct us to implement them if that's the case.

LINDA BAKER: Okay, if they make recommendations, can the Public Service Commission implement those recommendations or does it need legislative action?

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: I wouldn't think there would be any legislation that would be needed.

Most of it might be, you know, just the oversight of the fund in terms of -- they might say, for example, based on revenues, expenses, the Commission needs to be more aggressive in getting the

fund balance down to a reasonable level. And that might be a possible recommendation. Whether they would actually recommend something like that, it is difficult to say.

The Commission has been through several prior audits by the State Auditor's office. They seem to be getting a little more detailed this time around. But I am really not anticipating anything unusual.

DANA PARISH: Okay? No questions, then we can move on to the next item.

LINDA BAKER: I guess before the recommendations are implemented the Advisory Council would know about them?

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: Um, yeah, I can -- once the Auditor's report is released, I am provided a copy to the advisory committee and we can see what they say. And if there is anything significant, We will talk to you about it and keep you informed of what we need to do. And if we need input, we will ask for it and go from there.

LINDA BAKER: Thank you. Dana, did you want to add something? Did you want to add about the status of committee vacancy?

DANA PARISH: Sure. I am passing around another handout that shows the committee members and when the terms will be -- I guess when their terms end. We are fully staffed. So if you just want to take a look over that. It is like Diane Wieland, her term ends May, 2016. That's the most recent one. Nothing else to really report on that.

LINDA BAKER: I just thought my term ended in 2016, not 2017. I guess I am here for the duration.

[LAUGHTER]

LINDA BAKER: Any discussion? Okay. I see no discussion. Now we will move on and Scott Dollar wanted the opportunity to discuss the Braille CapTel.

SCOTT DOLLAR: Should I move or should I stay where I am at? Am I good where I am at?

LINDA BAKER: If you use the edge of the table, that might be helpful.

SCOTT DOLLAR: What I want to share -- everybody can see me good? Great.

I want to talk about the Braille CapTel, just explain a little bit about this. It really is -- 940I, I believe, I she --

INTERPRETER: Oh, 840. Thank you.

SCOTT DOLLAR: That means it does not have Bluetooth. There is no Bluetooth on it. It uses high speed Internet in addition to the phone line, the landline. Also, the new Braille CapTel is -- it does have Bluetooth inside of it or with it.

It is the same as the old one -- no, it is not the same as the old one. It is different. And the Braille that is in there, you have all of these different kinds of Braille names, types. For example, Focus Four or HIMS Braille Sense, I believe it is called, number two, or Braille Edge, and those are some examples that are coming with that. You connect the phone to the Braille system and then it means when I make a call and I speak and then wait for the answer, then I use Braille and then I can read the Braille. That's how it works.

And as of right now it is in beta testing.

So that's the reason it is not quite ready, I guess to go to the market. It is still a work in progress. And so I use -- it is

CapTel 7 days, 24 hours, but in the beta testing, it is 5 days per week, just Monday through Friday and I think it is -- I believe 10:00 in the morning until 6:00 in the evening, Central Time, those are the times for the beta testing of the new product. So there is limitations there. But we are still giving it the time to try to improve the product for Braille phone services for deaf and blind and hard of hearing, and also for those who are blind but hard of hearing and for those who might not read too.

And there is also an Ultratech that has Braille inside the system also. I just wanted to give you a report on that. Any questions on that?

BARRY CRITCHFIELD: What's your experience with it, Scott? Pro or con?

SCOTT DOLLAR: I have been testing it. And I have found some problems. And I have been able to report back to CapTel who is obviously running this testing process, the beta test. And I have been able to contact them and share some of the reported problems that I have discovered in the usage. And they are recording the information that I have passed along to them. And they are making the adjustments within the software program to fix the few problems.

I guess an example of that would be like, my understanding is in the Program 2 there was not some shortcuts and as opposed to the Braille Model 1. And the shortcuts are good and I didn't see some of the shortcuts in the newer system. So they are working on some shortcuts for that. They are analyzing that, and I passed on that information. That's an example. So it is going to be an extensive process. It is examining to take some time.

MARK SEEGER: I was wondering if you have had a chance to use this combined with any other relay service, such as video relay service?

SCOTT DOLLAR: Good question. I had an experience in New York one time with the video relay service I could sign what I was saying, but I couldn't really see if -- you know, what was coming back to me. And so, yes, I was able to use it, but I still had to have someone to help facilitate the communication. So before the call the video relay service was waiting for the interpreter to come up on the screen, you know, Deaf people tell the VRS, the video relay service, I am deaf and blind. I can't see your sign language on camera, and I interpret it. And then I had someone there helping me facilitate the conversation with the interpreter. And then, of course, they said, no problem, okay, and then we proceeded.

My understanding is that people who are fully Deaf and blind, I mean they can't really use it, you know. They have to have an interpreter or some Deaf person, someone that can obviously facilitate the conversation, a friend or family member to help with the video relay service phone call.

I have also heard that they are --

INTERPRETER: I am not sure of this sign.

SCOTT DOLLAR: -- developing the independent video relay service text screen. And that's been worked on a little bit last year. And my understanding is that Purple VRS had it but stopped using that program with the IP Relay. And I think that's why it was stopped, it was already mentioned today. So Sprint currently is the only one that provides IP Relay. Many Deaf and blind have complained, at least from what I have heard, that's not -- that it is not helping

facilitate the Braille part of it. Low vision, maybe it is not as bad because they can see a little bit, as far as the lower vision part of the market.

MARK SEEGER: Thank you.

SCOTT DOLLAR: Questions?

LINDA BAKER: It is not a question but more of a comment. Maybe the phone could be passed around the table so we could see the features, and then, of course, returned to you.

SCOTT DOLLAR: Yes. I can definitely pass that around or have it passed around. Just so you know, it is similar to the old one as far as the setup of format. What you do is you add-- they added the Braille on some area of it and so it will say CS on there, which means customer service. So I can click on that if there is any problems or if I need assistance, I can hit on that or push on it and it helps. Those are some of the Braille, I guess, characters that are on there that you can see as I pass the phone around.

OPEOLUWA SOTONWA: Question. In regards to -- with the video phone, do you prefer the interpreter IP?

BARRY CRITCHFIELD: SSP.

OPEOLUWA SOTONWA: SSP or interpreter, do you prefer which one?

INTERPRETER: Thank you.

SCOTT DOLLAR: Good question.

From my understanding from what I have heard and experienced, it depends on the interpreter. That is the main component of this. Sometimes you need the SSPs help to facilitate. Remember, deaf-blind can sign fine. I mean we can communicate the message we are saying fine; we just can't see what is being conveyed back to us

in turn.

So sometimes the SSP if there is like an emergency situation or it is a last-minute need for something, it really does depend on the individual too. And that's why it is really hard to tell you or answer the question and say -- because every deaf-blind person has differences and preferences. And that's why I recommend that maybe we should have SSP as a backup plan meaning if there is no interpreter available -- remember, the interpreter has to be scheduled ahead of time in advance. And so SSP could be a backup. So we have got to figure that out, schedule accordingly.

Also, deaf and blind and low vision who use these phone systems, relay services, we should survey them and get some feedback from them and kind of get like a wish list from them on what they would like to help because then it would give you more specific answers. So right now I don't really have an answer.

LINDA BAKER: Voice.

OPEOLUWA SOTONWA: There is a bill right now that could be passed that will give some -- award some funding for SSP for the Deaf and blind of Missouri. We might need to sit down with some deaf-blind and discuss establishing some guidelines and also what to use the funding for and what not to use the funding for, those kinds of things. As time goes on, hopefully you will be involved and we will keep each other informed on that subject.

SCOTT DOLLAR: Yes, I would like to be involved with the planning for that. Plus, it is my understanding, also, please understand and remember, not all deaf-blind are the same. They are not all alike. Their communication levels vary which means obviously some deaf-blind use more English sign language, then some are ASL, some

are Pidgin Signed English. Plus, some are more on the oral method side, or they are hard of hearing. Some can't use sign language at all; they use what is called POP, which is print on palm. So they actually will print their communication on their palm to establish communication.

So there is a lot of varying -- I guess methods and modes of communication. And some use technology, you know, the different technological advances to help them facilitate communication in the languages they particularly use.

OPEOLUWA SOTONWA: Thank you.

LINDA BAKER: Any more questions for Scott? Thank you, Scott, I appreciate you doing that.

Next topic is open discussion, and I want to start with the open discussion.

I am going to pass on this flyer on Walk4Hearing that is coming in late September. You can form a team. You can be a sponsor. And Kathy Patrick is our Chair. Just because it is based in St. Louis, doesn't mean that the rest of the state can't join us.

I know that Sprint is one of our sponsors for the Walk4Hearing. We are happy to hear that. It is -- it is a fun time. And we always have Redbird out there. Kathy Patrick, who is the chair, she is a huge Cardinal fan. So she always makes sure we have our Redbird out there. There is also stuff for children as well, and we actually have several school teams of children that have cochlear implants. So it is a mixture of ages and everything. It is a wonderful event. And what St. Louis does with that money, we have a project called Looping the Lou, that means we are -- we also have

our first venue lined up which is the Repertory Theater of St. Louis.

Looping, if you are not familiar with it, it is the perimeter of a room or venue. And if you have a telecoil, I can put my hearing aid or my cochlear implant on the processor for telecoil and the sound comes immediately to my hearing aid or CI. We call it the wireless for people who are hard of hearing. It is wonderful. We won't have to mess with assistive listening systems. We can go into a venue, a public venue and have this sound come directly to our ear.

As I mentioned, the Repertory Theater is our first venue. We have other venues lined up. And I am hoping that the St. Louis County Courthouse as they do their renovation will install a looping system as well. So we are excited about that.

I wanted to piggyback on what Michelle was talking about, the Hearing Loss Convention that is coming to St. Louis. If you want more information, just go to hearingloss.org, and the information is there. I do know that the conference hotel is already booked up. But the Drury Inn is nearby and the Hampton Inn is nearby.

I did want to say to Scott that there is a lot of people who are hard of hearing and losing their vision. They have Usher's syndrome, and in fact, my roommate is one of them. She has Usher's syndrome.

So a lot of people, Scott, go there that are hard of hearing and losing their vision. It is a very broad spectrum of the population that falls under that umbrella. I encourage you to check that out.

So that's the end of my discussion. Anyone else? Yes, Marty.

MARY EXLINE: I might mention that in addition to the TAP program,

there is also a deaf-blind equipment program. And that is actually a separate program from the TAP program through the FCC. The 21st century Video Relay Act established that. So anybody that meets the income guidelines and is deaf-blind can receive telecommunications equipment through that program too.

JOHN VAN ESCHEN: That, both --

MARY EXLINE: Yes, it is deaf-blind. So you have to be deaf and blind. It is for telecommunications only.

LINDA BAKER: Anything to add, discuss? Okay. Wow! I guess we look at our calendars for the next meeting. Sometime in October.

Do we usually have it the third Wednesday of the month? Is that what we usually do?

DANA PARISH: I think it is -- lately it has kind of varied. Generally, it is on a Wednesday. It is whatever works best for everybody.

LINDA BAKER: Wednesday, October 21st looks good for me. Anyone else object to that?

STEPHANIE LOGAN: I am good with that.

MICHELLE VICINO: I am good as well.

OPEOLUWA SOTONWA: The Interpreters Conference starts that weekend; so I will be very busy that week.

LINDA BAKER: That weekend. Does that mean you couldn't make it on Wednesday?

OPEOLUWA SOTONWA: Yes, I will be very busy that week in preparation for that weekend.

LINDA BAKER: Oh, okay.
Well, without -- either the 14th or the 28th.

MICHELLE VICINO: The 28th works for me.

LINDA BAKER: How about you, Opeoluwa?

OPEOLUWA SOTONWA: I am fine with the 28th.

LINDA BAKER: 28th? Okay, the 28th of October.

DANA PARISH: I have got expense report forms if anyone needs one, didn't get one, for mileage and such. Stop by and get this before you head out today.

LINDA BAKER: Okay. If we don't have any more business to conduct, we will adjourn. Thank you and see you in October.