



May 2022 Public Policy and Advocacy Committee

Minutes

May 9th, 2022

3:00-4:00 p.m. ET

1. Opening

Mr. Brian Nerland opened the meeting. No member presented an issue with being recorded. The meeting was called to order at 3:04 pm.

Members Present: Dr. Betsy Burgos, Mr. Brian Nerland

Staff Present: Ms. Whitney Doyle

Members of the Public: Ms. Kristi Warren

2. Approval of Agenda

No members of the public commented. No modifications were made to the agenda. The agenda was approved as presented by acclamation without any objection.

3. Approval of Minutes

No members of the public commented. No modifications were made to the minutes. The April 2022 Public Policy and Advocacy Meeting Minutes were approved as presented by acclamation without any objection.

4. Discuss Potential 2023 Legislative Priorities | Whitney Doyle

Ms. Doyle stated she has not updated the document since the committee last met. The two priorities she pointed out were the GR funding request and the Federal Increase

The committee motioned to move the 2023 legislative priorities to the ATAC for approval.

6. Action Items

The Committee is on track with the 2020 strategic plan year 2.



7. Closing

Next Meeting- June 13th, 2022, at 3:00 pm. No other public comment. Meeting adjourned at 3:11 pm.



FAAST 2023 Legislative Priorities Strategy Ideas

State – \$305,585 General Revenue funding request

- Continues FY22 state funding request from \$444,415 to \$750,000
- This funding will be used to expand/increase funding for the assistive technology programs.

Federal – Assistive Technology Act Reauthorization

- Updates the AT Act.
- Senate:
 - The Senate introduced a reauthorization bill and it was passed out of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee in August of 2021 – S. 2401, *The 21st Century Assistive Technology Act*.
- House:
 - No companion bill in House

Federal – Fully Fund State AT Act Programs

- Requesting the AT Act be funded at \$60 million
- Has been included in House FY2023 Labor, Health, and Human Services Appropriations Bill at \$44 million (same amount in President's budget).

Monthly Actions

June 2022

- FY2023 Legislative Priorities sent to VR and ATAC - COMPLETED

July 2022

- Draft Meeting Talking Points – DRAFTED
- Continue working with Rep. Salzman to make FY23 request recurring dollars



August 2022

- First set of meetings with Legislators for FY23 Priorities

September 2022

- Work on follow ups from September meetings

October 2022

November 2022

December 2022

January 2023

February 2023

March 2023

- Regular session begins March 7, 2023.

April 2023

May 2023

- Last day of regular session May 5, 2023.

June 2023

Meetings Held:



FAAST 2023 Legislative Priorities Talking Points

FAAST General Talking Points

- 501(c)3 nonprofit based in Tallahassee, FL with subcontract locations across the state
- Established in 1994 from federal Assistive Technology Act (as amended in 2004)
- Assistive technology is any item, piece of equipment, or system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is commonly used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.
- FAAST provides all assistive technology services as describe in the federal law:
 - AT demonstrations
 - AT short-term loans
 - Public awareness activities
 - Information and assistance activities
 - AT training
 - Financial loans
 - Device reuse
- FAAST serves individuals with disabilities, their family members, guardians, and authorized representatives. We also serve representatives from education, employment, health, allied health, rehabilitation, community living, and technology.
- Assistive technology provides people who have disabilities the option to access education and the workplace, to live within their communities, and enjoy recreational activities.
- FAAST services are free to all Floridians.



State – \$305,585 General Revenue funding request

- FAAST received an increase in funding for FY2023 and wants to continue this funding level for FY2024 from \$444,415 to \$750,000 (\$305,585 increase).
- This is the first State funding increase FAAST has had since 2009. Florida's population has increased since FAAST first received state funding in 1994.
- This funding will be used to expand/increase funding for the Regional ReUse Center and Regional Demonstration Center programs.
 - In 2021, FAAST device loans, demonstrations, and reutilization activities saved Floridians an estimated \$1.45 million. FAAST projects the increase in funding will result in an estimated \$2.32 million in savings for Floridians. Therefore, a \$305,585 increase will yield \$866,231 in more savings for Floridians with disabilities. That's a 60% increase in savings to Floridians!
 - In 2021, FAAST provided an estimated 18,000 services to individuals. This increase in funding is projected to provide an estimated total of 21,900 services provided to individuals. Therefore, a \$305,585 increase will equate to providing 3,900 more assistive technology services to Floridians. That's a 22% increase in services provided by FAAST!

Federal – Assistive Technology Act Reauthorization

- Updates the AT Act.
- The Senate introduced a reauthorization bill and it was passed out of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee in August of 2021 – S. 2401, *The 21st Century Assistive Technology Act*. No companion bill in House yet.
- The AT Act has not been reauthorized in 17 years.



Federal – Fully Fund State AT Act Programs

- Requesting the AT Act be funded at \$60 million
 - Has been included in House FY2023 Labor, Health, and Human Services Appropriations Bill at \$44 million (same amount in President's budget).
 - Using the ATAP Return on Investment Document, the AT Act is a federal investment of \$29.5 million for the State AT Grantees, this investment yields over \$65.08 million in benefits and savings (in FY2021). In President's budget for \$44 million, ATAP requesting \$60 million.
 - The AT Act is facing a reauthorization and in addition to sincerely needing additional funding, it is imperative the programs' actual funding levels increase as they are essential when determining the authorization levels in the updated – reauthorized - AT Act.
 - Therefore, we are asking to increase the overall allocation so the starting point for the updated authorized level, at minimum, mirrors the rate of inflation over the past 17 years (which is how long it has been since it was last reauthorized) and also allows for programs to address the full range of needs at the state level.
-

Strategic Issue 2

Issue 2: How can FFAST expand its capacity to reach all Floridians while maintaining a quality and equitable level of service?

Description:

- Inequitable access to service based on geography
- Mismatch between local provider and consumer needs
- Telehealth and other innovations allow for cost-effective expansion
- Differing levels in service quality of contracted providers
- Wide variety of healthcare settings and needs across Florida
- Current service model limits ability to expand capacity

Consequences of Inaction:

- Inequitable service access
- Continued provider-consumer mismatch
- Organizational and consumer stagnation
- Competition from other providers
- Continued disparity in contracted-provider quality

Goal: FFAST serves all Floridians through a quality and equitable level of service.

Objective 6: By September 30, 2021, September 30, 2022, and September 30, 2023, create annual legislative priorities to implement within the strategic plan.

~~Strategy 6-1: Build out Strategies and Indicators for Strategic Issue 2, Objective 6 (SI206). Legislative Priorities drafted and approved by Public Policy and Advocacy Committee.~~

~~Indicator 6-1: By September 30, 2021, Strategies and Indicator will be created for SI206. By June of the prior FY, the Legislative Priorities are approved by the ATAC.~~



Public Policy and Advocacy Committee

Strategic Plan 2020 – Goal Tracking Year 2

Strategic Issue 2, Objective 6 - By September 30, 2021, September 30, 2022, and September 30, 2023, create annual legislative priorities to implement within the strategic plan.

Strategy 6-1: Legislative priorities drafted and approved by PPAC

- Due: By June 2022, FY 2023 Legislative Priorities will be approved by ATAC.
- Staff Assigned: Whitney Doyle

Actions:

- COMPLETED Determine appropriate legislative priorities for FY23.
 - 3/21/2022 Draft priorities for next session
 - 4/11/2022 Continued review of draft priorities by PPAC
- COMPLETED Send priorities to be reviewed by VR/DOE.
- IN PROGRESS Create plan to bring awareness to priorities.

Strategic Issue 2, Objective 9 - By September 30, 2022, FAAST will research and establish an updated service delivery model for Regional Reuse Centers.

Strategy: Report findings from service delivery model research to FL legislators to develop or support legislative priorities.

- Due: 9/30/2022
- Staff Assigned: Whitney Doyle & Hannah Brock

Actions:

- IN PROGRESS Service Delivery Committee results to be presented to PPAC.
 - 4/11/2022 Service Delivery Committee still drafting Reuse program evaluation and proposed new model
- NOT STARTED Incorporate results into monthly legislator messaging.