The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) convened an in-person and virtual hybrid meeting via ZOOM on Thursday May 26th, 2022. Council Members via Zoom requesting a virtual appearance as a reasonable accommodation and because we obtained an in-person quorum, virtual Council Members

could vote.

**Attendance**

Council: Denise Wardle, Jack Spencer, Kathy Foley, Clarissa Williams, Rhonda Crenshaw, and Dora Easterling in person, and Sandi Klink, Cecil Williams, Carrie Carlson, Chasidy Buchanan, and Cathlyn Smith attended virtually.

Public: Beth James, Brandon Brown, Mark Woolfall, Janie Hadley VR, Cindy Miles DRS Liaison, Amelia Roehm, C Zuckerman, Jay Camperlino. Jeremy Norden-Paul, Brooke Smelcer, Nathan Walsh, Christina Clift, Lisa (Interpreter),

**Welcome**

Vice Chair Denise Wardle called meeting to order at 10:05 am Central time to start visitor presentation.

Before the meeting started Jeremy Norden-Paul and Jay Camperlino from the MAPS program introduced themselves and gave a presentation. The PowerPoint will accompany the Minutes.

**Call to Order and Roll**

Denise took roll and started meeting at 11:10 am CST.

**Minutes**

Council reviewed minutes from the March meeting. Sandi Klink found a needed correction on page two. It should read members accepted new budget not new date. Denise called for the motion to accept the minutes with the change, Clarissa Williams made the motion to approve Minutes with the change, Kathy Foley made the second. All voting members voted by roll call; all members accepted the minutes, zero opposed. Minutes were approved.

**Treasurer’s Report**

FY 2022 Budget/Financials: Jack Spencer presented the Financial Report for the period of 10/1/2021-4/30/2022. He went over all the categories, explained how funds had been used and asked for questions. With no questions, Clarissa Williams made the motion to accept the Financial Report, Rhonda Crenshaw seconded the motion. All voting members voted by roll call; all members accepted the financial statement, zero opposed. Financial report was accepted. Kathy asked if the second financial page would be presented now or later, Dora Easterling told her it would be presented later.

**Director Report:**

Dora Easterling stated she wanted to start with a SPIL update. She stated she sent the SPIL Update forms to all Center Directors and to the Council. She explained the Birds Eye View Report made it easier to look at the Goals of the SPIL. She explained this was a statewide report. Dora explained she would like to go over the SPIL Updates and SPIL with new members so they can have better knowledge of the SPIL and report. Dora reiterated the importance of going over the SPIL and Updates so that not only the Council, but the Public know they can give suggestions, feedback, or ideas for the next SPIL at Council meetings.

Dora went on to say that the ILSG NoA (Independent Living Services Grant Notice of Award) came through for 2022. She said the grant was late this year and she gave the amount of the grant as $372,228. She explained that now everyone goes into scramble amendment mode. She added that the contracts starting October first of 2021 were written off the numbers in the SPIL. If the ILSG NoA is more or less the contracts need to be amended. She further explained that the I L Network worked with the DSE to be able to have roll-over funds because each ILSG NoA is a 2-year grant. That is now going smoothly. So, any roll over funds, notice of further funding that often comes in July and August along with the true grant amounts need to be accounted for in each individual contract with the DSE. Dora stated that she spoke with Doug Whitcomb from VR about adding in roll-over funds and any extra funding that may be received late summer to the contracts in October. Doug said October is a good time for them to add these numbers in. Dora went on to say that there will still need to be an amendment when the actual ILSG NoA comes in for 2023.

Dora said that she and Denise Wardle just returned from SILC Congress, and it was a good meeting. She stated that they went over quite a bit of basics about SILCs. She stated that ILRU’s (Independent Living Research Utilization) take on the regulations is that each SILC needs at least 3 Ex-Officio members. She explained we have two (Cat Smith and Chasidy Buchanan). She explained what an Ex-Officio member is. She explained they bring their expertise and voice to the Council but do not vote. If it is deemed that we need a third Ex-Officio member Dora stated we needed a discussion as to who should we bring in. She gave an example of someone from Emergency Preparedness.

Dora also wanted to say that she wanted to discuss the individual training plans of the SILC Council. Dora stated she had individual discussions with every Council member on what they felt they needed to learn, and a plan was established. She said the training does not have to be exhaustive to this list. Any training pertinent to the SILC or the Disability World should be reported to her. She stated she keeps a book beside her computer and will log all trainings because that goes into the PPR which is our report card (Performance Review).

Denise mentioned that on the trainings, there should be an outcome of that training. What did you learn? How can we use it?

**No Old Business.**

No need to go over. It is just a review for members to see. Unless there was an issue or update.

**New Business:**

Denise Wardle stated there was an EC (Executive Council) meeting on May 6th, 2022. Discussed was the new budget for which there is a copy for the Council to vote on. Dora Easterling stated this is this year’s budget. Because of COVID it is impossible to spend all the travel money. Dora stated she called Doug and asked if dollars from the SILC could just be added to the CILs award. It opens up the CILs to spend the money more freely. It can be used for specific assistance if this is done. The SILC cannot provide specific assistance to anyone. Kathy Foley asked if that money should still be a part of the budget and Dora explained the contracts would be amended and awarded to the CILs.

Denise asked for a motion to approve the new budget and Jack Spencer made the motion to accept the new budget and Kathy Foley seconded the motion. All voting members voted by roll call; all members accepted the new budget, zero opposed. New budget was approved.

Denise Wardle stated that during the EC meeting they performed Dora’s annual evaluation. Everyone on the EC agreed Dora was doing an awesome job, cared about the CILs, and was a very proactive SILC Director and they recommend a raise. Denise asked for a motion, Sandi Klink made the motion to approve the raise, Rhonda Crenshaw seconded the motion. All voting members voted by roll call; all members accepted the proposed raise, zero opposed. New raise for Dora was approved.

**CIL Directors Reports:**

dRC: Brooke Smelcer in for Katherine Moore. Brooke stated that with PHWF (Public Health Work Force) dollars they have hired a full time Social Support Specialist. Brooke stated she has hit the ground running and is in collaboration with different providers who are COVID free but dealing with consumers/patients that have mid- and long-term effects after they recover from their initial illness. They have started a peer support group which started on May 26th and a Wellness Walk coming up on June 5th in support of COVID Long-haulers. Brooke stated they received a community grant for Disability Awareness, and they currently have two videos and window clings. LOL (Live Out Loud) Academy will start in July.

Empower Tennessee: Brandon Brown stated Empower Tennessee continues to provide the main services mostly remotely. Our goal is to get back to office-based services in July if COVID stays in its current spot. We finished our 8 Empower-Con events in April, and we are taking a summer break. We will start again in August. We had very good attendance with Empower-Con and good responses in the evaluations. Our Youth Academy will move to a similar piecemeal process. Our applications were lower than expected. Everyone who applied was accepted, but we will work it into series of events throughout summer and fall. The PHWF (Public Health Workforce) is in the planning stages, we will be getting state dollars as well and so we await that contract and are planning the program of providing Mental Health services as it is related to COVID. We also recently applied to be a SNAP employment and training provider through United Way of Greater Nashville. We will be helping people who receive SNAP benefits to have a more access to opportunities for competitive, integrated employment. It is a reimbursement grant, and we would start in October should we be awarded. Brandon stated he will present at NCIL. He will present “I L it is Just Different”. It really discusses the difference of the I L Philosophy and how it could be replicated in other human service work. We have lots of peer support groups happening. If you would like more information, go to our website or social media.

TARP: Denise Wardle reported that TARP hired a full-time employee with the PHWF grant. She is contacting all consumers active and closed. She created a COVID survey that is very detailed. Our individuals are quite eager to discuss their issues. Oddly many of them are against masks, vaccinations, and social distancing. She is keeping a log of goals and needs and stated they are getting quite a few referrals for Brandon and Empower Tennessee’s Mental Health program. TARP has been busy; we have given out 154 pieces of assistive technology since January. We have done 8 ramps. We have a large ramp coming up in Lewis County. It is out of our jurisdiction, but we are going to try to help. We have provided some different or out of the ordinary things this year such as a therapeutic mattress to an individual who has quadriplegia. He still had the original mattress he got when he was first injured 30 years ago. We have provided a bike helmet and lock to a homeless individual who has relocated to Henry County and is using the bike and equipment to look for employment. We have provided smart scales to individuals who have put on weight during the pandemic. We are planning an in-office get together by invitation or ticket only if COVID numbers do not spike back up. We are participating in an Open House with the Office of Aging. We will have our table up. It will be the first event for us to be at publicly at since COVID. We still continue to collaborate with JCIL on monthly events.

JCIL: Beth said JCIL has been busy. One of the neat thing we did this year is a mass emergency simulation at Union University. The participants were firemen, police, ambulance first responders, and Union students. We did this scenario 3 times. The simulation was collapsed bleachers. It was very intense and realistic. What we discovered is a grandmother hollering, “My babies, come see my babies!’ would get all the attention as first responders walked right past deaf individuals with serious injuries. JCIL has coming up monthly events and in June we will show “Koda” the movie. This will be our ADA event and we will serve hotdogs and popcorn. Like everyone else, depending on the COVID numbers we will do Christmas in July movie too. We are planning a fitness Walk and Roll. We will hand out JCIL water bottles and try to encourage folks to get back outside. Beth said we are always doing stuff, please keep an eye on Facebook.

MCIL: Sandi said there is so much going on at MCIL! We too accepted the PHWF money as well and are looking for a Health Outreach position and are working with a Mental Health provider to work out kinks on a support group that will be offered virtually and in person. The person is selected and ready to get started. June 1st we will roll out the first step in a rebranding campaign for MCIL. She stated we have been in business for 36 years but lately almost half the calls are from people who want to move into our independent living. So as part of our strategic plan we will be selecting a new name, a new logo, and doing a new branding program in January that closer matches what we do. Leading up to that we have rolled out our new name campaign and will be offering a prize for our new name. This year we will have our first in 3 years. Deborah Cunningham Access Awards. It will be at the Crosstown Concourse. We will have a panel of disability organizations talking about the changes we have seen in access over the last three years. The tickets are $50.00. For questions ask Christina, she’s in charge. “MCIL on the Road” got off to a rocky start and now we have 2 staff down with COVID. So, we are going to step back and do more focus planning on that. We have 2 job openings, one for the Health Outreach position and one to help with Home-Mod program.

TRAC: Mark said our “Pair and Share” program is growing with more enrollees. They are folks that want to share homes and expenses to help with the hardship put on people with the renting crisis. We are excited to expand that program in all ten counties. Initially it was in Hamilton, then to Bradley. Now we are in the midst of rolling it out in the other 8 counties. We met with Nick Louis from TN Parks at Harrison Bay with a common goal of more accessibility at Harrison Bay by 2030. Roddy Coe from TNCDD was there also. Roddy Coe and I really pushed for a lift to be put on the dock but there was a little bit of resistance from the Park Ranger because he felt wind factor could create a hardship. Mark said that the wind factor could play a part at hotels on the beach as well, so maybe we can all put our heads together and come up with a plan. Most of the accessible concerns we had the state said they would take under advisement. It was a productive meeting. On other items we are in the process of hiring someone for PHWF grant. He will be starting next week, and he will be working on various aspects related to COVID we need to take care of. We also met with an individual a few months back who needed a ramp. This individual stated about 2 months prior he was employed to go by hospitals and NHF (Nursing Home Facilities) to transport COVID victims who were deceased. He got COVID and took it home to his wife. She has been determined to be bed ridden for the rest of her life if she went without proper physical therapy. If they had a ramp that he could get his wife to physical therapy, they project she could have a chance at a 98% recovery. The ramp was installed. Last week he reported that with the ramp and physical therapy, she has already made about a 35% recovery!

**DSU Membership Report, DSE Report & Update:**

Cindy Miles reported that the Council still has 2 vacancies due to resignations. She stated she did call to follow up and see if there are any updates. No updates to report. Cindy stated that Dora mentioned that maybe we need to add another Ex-Officio member, Cindy said if I can be of any help, let me know. Cindy stated she did not have any VR updates to share.

**Announcements/Public Comment**

Nathan Walsh asked where he could get the March Minutes. Dora told him the March minutes were approved today and would go on the website today or tomorrow.

Janie Hadley wanted to remind everyone that VR does still have vacancies for the Personal Care Assistance Subsidy Program. This is for people who are physically disabled with impairments to pretty much all four limbs and require a PA a minimum of 14 hours a week. Also, the individual needs to still be working and was previously a VR customer. They can contact Janie for further information. Dora has a pamphlet to share, and my email is Janie.Hadley@tn.gov. We are working on the PHWF contract and will be getting in touch with you soon.

Denise asked Janie if it mattered how long ago a person was a VR client? Janie said it did not matter.

**Adjourn:**

Denise asked if there were no further comments, she needed a motion to adjourn. Jack Spencer made the motion to adjourn. Kathy Foley seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 12:38 p.m. CST.

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SILC Secretary signature Date