

The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) convened a meeting on Thursday December 12, 2019 at the Radisson Hotel on Airport Center Drive in Nashville, TN.

Attendance

Council: Denise Wardle, Sandi Klink, Sidney McDonald, Clarissa Williams, Dora Easterling, Nicole Craig, Alicia Cone and Janie Hadley. Jack Spencer attended via video/phone. ABSENT: Rhonda Crenshaw, Edward Mitchell and Lisa Suttles.

Public: Beth James, Cindy Miles, Brandon Brown, Katherine Moore, Gina Linnett of Empower, and Brooke Rogers of DRC.

Welcome

Newly elected Chair Sandi Klink called meeting to order at 9:03 am Central time. She welcomed attendees and invited all present to introduce themselves. Chair Klink noted that Jack Spencer was unable to attend in person; however, he is on video phone.

Minutes

Council reviewed minutes. Denise Wardle made motion to approve the minutes and Clarissa Williams seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

FFY2019 ending Budget/Financials and FFY 2020 Budget/Financials

Denise Wardle presented an update on FFY 2019 ending financials and the FFY2020 year-to-date. The annual amount was divided by twelve to get the Budget to Date figures. The Travel line item had a larger than usual expense for the first of the FFY 2020 budget due to the APRIL conference. Clarissa Williams made motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented and Nicole Craig seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

DSU Membership Report, DSE Report & Update:

Cindy Miles reported on the SILC Membership Report, that there are currently 3 membership recommendations that are still awaiting confirmation of appointment. Paula Knisley was unable to attend the meeting; however, she provided a report for Cindy Miles to share. For the FFY 2020, there have been 498 VR applications and for the SFY 2020 (since July 1) there have been 2,399. The currently active client count is 8,627 with an average caseload size of 111. Successful closures for SFY are 671 with an average wage per hour of \$10.36 with an average of 30 hours per week worked.

Director Report:

Dora Easterling reported that the Directors met yesterday to start work on the groundwork for the next SPIL. The SPIL is due 7/1/2020. They defined the SILC/CIL participation with three out of four meetings to be attended. The 704 report is being completed timely. The plan is for one of the CILs to provide a presentation at each of the SILC meetings in order to help council members learn about each of the CILs. There will be three community conversation meetings held: one in East, one in Middle, and one in West. JCIL volunteered their office for the SPIL retreat.

Nineteen individuals attended the APRIL Conference last fall which did not hit the travel budget until the FFY 2020 budget. We will need to be aware of this and watch the spending. Janie Hadley reminded them that a Budget Revision Request may be made, if needed.

The SPIL update quarterly report is provided to each Council member attending today. The report includes a list of SILC training, governance, and financials. This is a snapshot of what the CILs are doing with a list of events noted in the report. The Consumer Needs Assessment section of the report shows unmet needs across the state with approximately 17 issues noted. Tim Wheat of MCIL developed a form that all CILs can use for consistency in quarterly reporting. There is also a copy of the SILC's portion of the tentative/unapproved 704 report. Some numbers may not be for the entire year due to the change in Directors and the start of the CILS1st software usage.

Ms. Easterling reviewed handouts in the members' packets regarding the difference between Lobbying and Advocacy according to the ILRU and ACL. SILC cannot lobby, we cannot lobby as members of the SILC when on SILC business. CILS staff cannot identify themselves as a CIL or SILC member and endorse candidates or say why you want someone to vote a particular manner. A specific bill or bill number cannot be mentioned. It was noted that NCIL does do lobbying, so there was some concern about SILC and CIL members attending NCIL. It was noted that NCIL membership dues and fees are not used for lobbying and an email to that effect may be obtained from NCIL for CIL files. There was considerable discussion regarding the "educate and inform", what can be posted on social media, what to say to legislators when requesting a meeting, "I'm just here to tell my story", etc.

Old Business

- Ms. Easterling stated that the policies and procedures discussed at the last SILC meeting were later approved by email vote.
- Elections were held at the last SILC meeting and the new officers took over at today's meeting.

New Business

Chair Report

- Chair Klink announced that she will be having shoulder surgery on 12/26/19 and will be out of the office for a few weeks recovering. She plans to work from home. She will be unable to attend SILC Congress, as she will not be approved to travel at that time.
- Chair Klink and Ms. Easterling reminded members if they have any information for the SPIL, they are encouraged to contact them.

Announcements/Public Comment:

disABILITY Resource Center: Katherine Moore reported that Friday 12/13/19 will be their annual holiday feast catered by a staff member's sister. They anticipate 60 people will attend. They have been working on a new program visiting employers in the community to let them know that dRC is there to assist them with accommodation information. They are working to develop a strong relationship with the community. They have been going to business meetings, so the business community will see that they are a business as well. They have hired an additional person in the IL program. They are working with a youth mentoring program where they pair a mentor with a student to learn more about self-advocacy.

Jackson Center for Independent Living: Beth James reported that they have completed their 704 report. They have been working on two fund raisers. They sold 92 brownie trays for \$40-\$55 each.

During the Disability in the City even, they sold marshmellow pops. The event featured live reindeer and a deaf Santa whose elves were interpreters. There were over 425 children seen in a four and ½ hour event. They sold 15 gallons of hot chocolate and 425 marsh mellowpops with approximately \$4,000 raised. JCIL has a new intern in interpreting from a college in Indiana. This is a 10-week internship. She is working with the Chamber to encourage employment of individuals with disabilities, especially the deaf community. JCIL has been working on ASL training modules for a truck driving school. They have a consumer, who is a deaf individual working with Vocational Rehabilitation, who is attending truck driving school. They are working on the hearing waivers and determining if assistive technology will be needed for him. He has completed 14 weeks of training using interpreters. JCIL is also looking at a new fund raiser with having 100 items to sell on eBay by individuals. JCIL has had several recent classes on candy making, Christmas Crafts, and Death and Dying: How to Prepare. JCIL will be having their Open House on Thursday 12/19/19 from 1 to 3.

Empower Tennessee: Brandon Brown reported they are still working on their SCIF Controls to Control hand controls and driver training. This is a statewide program. They received a part C grant for Empowered Youth for high school students. They are planning a Youth Leadership Academy for next year. Their Empowered Ladies monthly peer group was featured on the cover of the Disability Coalition's Breaking Ground magazine. They have a monthly peer group called Tech Talk and More to discuss issues with technology, learn about new technology, and share ideas. Empower is partnering with STEP to develop a Ready for Life program statewide for youth. They hope to receive funding from Vocational Rehabilitation to provide the 5 core Pre-Employment Transition Services as well as wraparound services for families of the students. They plan to meet with VR Directors in the next few weeks to discuss this further. They provide job readiness and WIPA training. Empower provides Braille transcription services for a fee. The Frist Center and the DD Council are regular clients. They have an intern from the IDEAL Program at Lipscomb who heads this up. She wants to be an event coordinator and has been working at the Frist in their events department. Empower is also working with Legal Tree, a non-profit Tennessee family law services who have a sliding fee scale for their services. They are hosting a gala fundraiser tonight. Empower is planning to redevelop their website and they met with them yesterday. Gina Linnett, new Empower staff member, reported that they have received 100 donated calendars that were drawn by hand by Sara Life from Portland, TN. These calendars will go on sale on Monday for \$10 each. The calendar is called "I Stand for Love". They will be available on Empower's website at #Empower with Love.

TARP: Denise Wardle reported that she has completed her 704 report. They had their Thankfulness event last month with 36 people attending. They played Bingo and ADA Trivia and discussed what they were thankful for. Last week was their Breakfast with Santa with 40 people in attendance. They will be hosting the Paris City ADA Advisory Board meeting in February. The city of Paris self-evaluated the city and have added curb cuts and additional lighting. They have applied for grants to build an accessible playground. TARP staff will be helping the city with census taking. The residents will come to TARP to use the laptops for assistance with completing the survey. TARP's reuse program had \$8,000 to \$9,000 worth of durable medical equipment donated for exchange this year. 200 pieces have already been loaned this year. TARP received a nonprofit grant and a Helping Hand grant to buy more DME larger pieces such as lift chairs. They plan to purchase Chrome books for these individuals who are isolated and could use these for socialization or for education purposes. TARP is working with 40 students at two of the area schools. They recently teamed up with the Community Tennessee Rehabilitation Center in Paris to teach IL skills: etiquette, proper dress, hygiene, social skills, etc. TARP recently hired a new staff person Desiree. She has a degree in Special Education. TARP hired

a part time person who is an 86-year-old consumer who was involved with the Senior Employment. She wants to have a purpose, she comes to work every day, with a wonderful work ethic. She previously worked as a nurse and a truck driver.

MCIL: Sandi Klink reported Tim Wheat is her tech specialist, and he told her he would handle all of that, if she would handle the administrative part of the job. MCIL's Gray Panther's senior group has grown. The Aging Commission Summits meets monthly and they are getting even more calls. Approximately 32 individuals attend each month. Last month, MCIL hosted a workshop called Sexy Seniors. There were quite a few participants. MCIL has several students learning Braille, and the students are peer teaching as well. Their Holiday Auction and Jingle Hop raised approximately \$2,000. The band plays for three hours and donates their time. Ms. Klink presented on People 1st Language and etiquette at the Realtors Association of Memphis. Approximately 20 realtors attended and asked many questions and were very receptive. MCIL has received a call from Memphis Rocks, a rock-climbing wall company, who want to develop a program for individuals with disabilities and are requesting information. They plan to start in January with individuals on the Autism spectrum. They currently have two individuals with ASD who come, and they are looking to start a class of 5-8 individuals. They are requesting information on "do's and don'ts" and how to help with meltdowns, etc. MCIL will be having their staff and board member Christmas party on Friday 12/20 and then MCIL will close for the holidays until January 2, 2020.

Additional Public Comments: Sidney McDonald, SILC Member, expressed his concerns about the TRAC Center for Independent Living in Chattanooga. He has been hearing that TRAC is closing and the disabled community do not want that to happen. He stated that the mayor of Chattanooga is behind them and wants to know what can be done. SILC members and CIL Directors provided Mr. McDonald with suggestions; including filing a formal complaint with ACL, get on their board of directors, get a petition, start a peer group of individuals interested in these services and report to the Mayor's Advisory Board, start a Facebook page for individuals who are interested to share information, etc.

JCIL requested that if any SILC or CIL member knows of any consumers who are deaf and who were (or are) incarcerated and did not receive the needed services due to their disability; to contact JCIL for information on how to get accommodations. There is also a class action lawsuit in preparation that those individuals may be a part of.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m. CST. Denise Wardle moved for adjournment and Sandi Klink seconded the motion.

Next meeting will be held Thursday March 26, 2020 at Homewood Suites Nashville Airport.