

The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) convened a virtual meeting via ZOOM on Thursday August 27, 2020.

Attendance

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

Public: Beth James, Brandon Brown, Carla Elliott of Chattanooga, Cheryl Zuckerman VR of Chattanooga, Jean-Marie Lawrence of Chattanooga, Cheyenne Lindsey as sign language interpreter, Cindy Miles, DRS Liaison, and Roddy Coe.

Welcome

Chair Sandi Klink called meeting to order at 9:02 am Central time. She welcomed attendees and thanked them for attending virtually.

Minutes

Council reviewed minutes. Denise Wardle made the motion to approve the minutes as reviewed. Jack Spencer seconded. Motion passed unanimously through roll call vote.

Treasurer's Report

FFY 2020 Budget/Financials

Denise Wardle presented an update on FFY 2020 year-to-date financials. There were no questions or comments. Clarissa Williams made motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented and Jack Spencer seconded. Motion passed unanimously through roll call vote.

DSU Membership Report, DSE Report & Update:

Cindy Miles reported that she has not yet received confirmation from the Governor's office regarding the November 2019 council vacancy submission. She and Tiffany Kelley, VR Services Sensory Director, have both been following up monthly on this. There will be 6 upcoming submissions for November 2020. The names have been submitted to Tiffany Kelley and review is in process and will be submitted to DHS Commissioner Danielle Barnes for submission to the Governor's office. Sandi Klink remarked that if these are not approved by November, we would not have a Council. Dora Easterling and Sandi have met with Cindy, Kevin Wright, VR Chief Operating Officer, and Tiffany Kelley. It was Kevin's understanding that emergency appointments could be made if there is no quorum to meet federal guidelines. Dora Easterling stated that it was her understanding that current members could continue to serve as voting members until a new member is appointed as noted in our bylaws. Dora will continue to review these options. Jack Spencer commented that Tennessee has a Vice Governor and we may want to consider contacting him. Dora stated that she wanted to contact the Governor's office to ensure they have all the documentation they need. Brandon Brown commented that most commissions and boards have that clause in their bylaws so that they would not be out of compliance. It was also commented that people with disabilities are still not accepted as priority. At this point, Cindy Miles had to leave the Zoom conference.

Director Report:

Dora Easterling reported that she had been accepted into the APRIL Mentorship program and she has chosen Cathy Cooper of Kansas as her mentor. Ms. Easterling has completed the training and is now

on as needed training and has made some valuable resource connections with other SILC directors. She submitted the policy, procedures, and bylaws to Ms. Cooper for her review and perspective.

Ms. Easterling noted that several of our council signed up for the NCIL training and 139 hours of training were provided. The upcoming APRIL Conference in October will be another opportunity. The training has provided excellent ideas for outreach and reporting. She plans to reach out to every county in TN to introduce the CILS that serve those areas and to discuss the SPIL.

The SPIL update: The new SPIL goes into effect October 1, 2020. The final quarterly report is due for the current SPIL. Please submit any CIL success stories. Ms. Easterling reached out to Cindy Miles and Janie Hadley to obtain the SILC and CIL Scope of Services for the upcoming federal fiscal year contract. Ms. Easterling stated that the reports need to be submitted monthly to Cindy Miles and to her. There will be some minor tweaks to the report format for the upcoming year. Ms. Easterling noted that she plans to further dialog for outreach and the use of social media. She would like to show any trainings, such as JCIL's ASL classes that may be recorded and offered statewide in order to share the IL Philosophy throughout TN. She will send a letter to the Council and the Center directors before any information is shared. Reminder: Any success stories since the last SPIL, please collect those and send them in as they are a wonderful addition to any report submitted.

SILC Director Training: Ms. Easterling completed a Grant Writing course in July. She also completed a Grant Management course this week. Ms. Easterling has reached out to Wanda Willis with the DD Council and Carol Westlake with the TN Disability Council for collaboration suggestions. She has an upcoming meeting with the TN Policy Alliance to develop further relationships.

Financial Findings: Sandi Klink noted that Dora has done so much during her first year as the SILC Director. The Council approved a 5% raise for Ms. Easterling. There are considerable funds left in the SILC's budget this year as there is no second employee of the SILC and the physical office was closed in May. These additional funds are being used to purchase items for the CILs who participate in the current SPIL. Items purchased included: durable medical equipment for consumer use, personal protection equipment, upgraded computer equipment and cameras for virtual presentations due to COVID. Emergency Preparedness bags were also purchased for each CIL to distribute to their consumers as part of the training included in the upcoming SPIL.

Old Business: Ms. Easterling submitted the 2021 SPIL timely and have not yet received feedback from ACL.

New Business:

Bylaws Changes: Bylaws changed to reflect the WIOA wording of the completed SPIL. One of the noted changes was that the SPIL is now between the SILC and CILS rather than the DSE. The bylaws changes were sent to your email. Jack Spencer made the motion to accept the change to the bylaws. Edward Mitchell seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Policy and Procedures Changes: The Policy and Procedures were changed to reflect the Tennessee Open Meeting Act wording and solidarity statement. This was sent to the Council via email. The statement was read, and changes noted. Executive Session Meetings will have the same language as the Open Meeting act. Lisa Settles made the motion to accept the changes. Clarissa Williams seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously passed by roll call vote.

Proposed Dates for 2021 SILC Meetings: The list of proposed dates for the upcoming year were sent to the Council members email.

Officer Candidate Nominations and Vote for next year: Current officers are eligible to continue to serve if so nominated. The nominees must have been a SILC Council member for at least one year, and all our current members have been. Those currently serving have agreed to serve another term if it is the Council's wishes, they will be honored to serve again.

Chair: Denise Wardle nominated Sandi Klink. Lisa Settles seconded. The roll call vote was unanimous.

Vice Chair: Sandi Klink nominated Edward Mitchell. Lisa Settles seconded. The roll call vote was unanimous.

Treasurer: Sandi Klink nominated Denise Wardle. Lisa Settles and Rhonda Crenshaw seconded. The roll call vote was unanimous.

Secretary: Sandi Klink nominated Jack Spencer. Denise Wardle seconded. The roll call vote was unanimous.

Ms. Easterling thanked the nominees for agreeing to serve again in their positions.

Announcements/Public Comment:

Center Reports:

TARP: Denise Wardle reported that the TARP office has received some CARES Act funds. They are currently offering services remotely. There is someone in the office 1 day per week per person.

JCIL: Beth James reported that they had also received the CARES Act funds. They are a combination some in office and some remote services. They have distributed 113 iPads, 40 Kindle, 250 care bags, 176 food packages, 27 DME, and completed 15 ramps in the past 3 months. They have accepted 211 new consumer service records in the past 3 months; where normally they only receive 120-160 in a full year.

Empower: Brandon Brown reported they are serving consumers mostly remotely. He is in the office 3-4 days per week and Evan Espey, Technology Coordinator, is in the office 1-2 days per week. They have been working on refurbishing loan equipment so their consumers can connect remotely. They are providing emergency housing and financial assistance through the CARES Act when there are no other funds available. As for their service coordination with employment, Nashville has a lot of resources, so Empower is working on finding any gaps in these services. They have moved their ADA celebration to a virtual conference in October. This will be a 2 day even called Empower Con. There will be learning sessions and small conferences in education, voting, micro ability, and access. Everyday experts will speak as well as professionals. It will be completely virtual. Mr. Brown will send out information and links the first or second week of October. This conference will be available statewide.

MCIL: Sandi Klink reported they are still working from home and providing services remotely. They also received CARE Act funds. They completed one home modification and ramp install; however, the contractor did not follow the specifications and had to redo the work. MCIL is providing groceries to consumers. They are offering training. MCIL will be 35 years old in October. They will have a virtual birthday celebration. They are receiving new consumer calls nearly every day. They are working on outreach to unserved counties this Fall and working on plans for the new year.

Public Reports:

Lisa Settles: Chattanooga area report. Transportation numbers are way down. She and her staff are still working from home. (Portions of Ms. Settles comments were not clear, as the connection was not clear.)

Jean-Marie Lawrence: We have come a long way since the last Council meeting. We now have a charter as a non-profit for Southeast TN. We have our FEIN and are applying for 501C3. We have a physical location, but due to COVID, we have not occupied the building. We are finalizing our Board of Directors and working on our bylaws. Services will be provided on a volunteer basis, and we have some volunteers ready. We are also applying to do a webinar presentation for a local conference to get employers interested and educated on hiring individuals with disabilities. Dora Easterling stated that we applaud the efforts and reminded them that they are not CIL or SPIL center. Cheryl Zuckerman stated that they hope soon the new organization can be involved in the SPIL. We plan to provide core services through any funding, even private funding. Lisa Settles mentioned that the SPIL is already done so Chattanooga cannot be added until the SPIL is updated or amended. Ms. Zuckerman responded that the SPIL may be amended and hopefully added at a future date.


Jack Spencer: I was photographed in Paris magazine wearing my TARP mask!

Nicole Craig: RHA is working remotely and working to grow their ECF Employment 1st Program. She stated that a lot of businesses are not allowing services due to COVID. RHA has their CQL accreditation and provide wrap-around services for IDD in Middle Tennessee. They have the Katie Beckett waiver.

Edward Mitchell: I was featured on the ABLE National Resource Center publication regarding ABLE accounts. I will share the link to your social media pages.

Alicia Cone: The DD Council is doing well.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 10:22 a.m. CST. Denise Wardle made the motion. Clarissa Williams seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.


SILC Secretary Signature


Date