

The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) convened an in-person and virtual hybrid meeting via ZOOM on Tuesday, November 16, 2021. Council Members via Zoom could not vote.

Attendance

Council: Dora Easterling, Denise Wardle, Sandi Klink, Jack Spencer, Edward Mitchell, Rhonda Crenshaw, Kathy Foley, Cathlyn Smith via Zoom, and Chasidy Buchanan via Zoom.

Public: Beth James, Brandon Brown, Mark Woolfall, Katherine Moore, Janie Hadley VR, Cindy Miles DRS Liaison, Amelia Roehm, Nathan Welsh, Alyssa Burris, and Sydney Clark

Welcome and Call to Order and Roll

Vice Chair Denise Wardle called meeting to order at 10:02 am Central time. Denise explained Nicole Craig Chair could not make it. Denise then took roll.

Guest Speaker

Denise Wardle introduced Sydney Clark and gave her title.

Sydney Clark explained that she was here to introduce herself, she is the Disability Emergency Preparedness Specialist for Tennessee and wants to bring inclusion to the state emergency plan. She stated she did not really have a presentation because the intent is to schedule a meeting with all CIL Directors and interested Council Members on how we can best serve each other. She said their plans and planning process is not inclusive and she is wanting to fix that while she is here. Her position is funded through a grant by CDC and how long she will be here is up in the air. She stated she has met with Dora, Beth, and Denise with some of the team from the state to discuss how to get it started. She asked if there were suggestions and to set up a further meeting.

Dora stated that she would contact CIL Directors, Sydney, and SILC members to set up a formal meeting with the vision of bringing inclusion to the state plan.

Sydney stated that she had a meeting yesterday there were folks from the Centers for Excellence, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, and Deaf and Blind services. It seems that the emergency services are more advanced in this population, however as Denise pointed out in the meeting yesterday there is a way to go for all PWD to be included in the plan. There is one sector of Tennessee that has a better grasp on these populations.

Denise stated the communication with EMS is little to nothing and she did not know where to go. She said she is interested in any form of work that grows that communication.

Sydney stated that Nancy from Bridges has a list of regions and contacts. She said that regions are different but once she receives all these contacts, she will put together a master contact list and get it to Dora for distribution.

Sydney gave her contact info and asked if Dora could please send out her information to all.

Janie asked for the floor. She introduced herself. She went on to say she has a spreadsheet with contacts, and she is not sure it can be read by a screen reader, but she would gladly pass that on to Sydney. She said Cindy Miles is on the call as well and she is the SILC liaison, and she also is the liaison for visually impaired. Also, she stated that Tiffany Kelley or Jessica Villanova? They work with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing as well as Deaf Blind.

Sydney stated she has not talked to these folk, she is just started. She wants to do as much as possible quickly. Sydney felt that it would be great to have representatives from each group would be best to keep the work group manageable.

Minutes

Council reviewed minutes from the August meeting. Denise called for the motion to accept the minutes as written, Kathy Foley made the motion. Rhonda Crenshaw made mention that there was a page missing from the notes that included the new executive council. Kathy made the motion to accept the corrected minutes and Jack Spencer seconded the motion. All voting members voted by voice all members accepted the minutes, zero opposed. Minutes were approved when missing info is put back into the notes.

Treasurer's Report

FY 2021 Budget/Financials: Jack Spencer presented the Financial Report for the period of 10/1/2020-9/30/2021. He went over all the categories and stated that all the funds were spent and asked for questions. Kathy Foley asked why all categories matched to the penny. Denise said she was going to ask the same question. Dora explained this form has the amended numbers, but original budget numbers could easily be added it. Jack again asked for comments and concerns and gave kudos to spending the funds. Sandi Klink made the motion to accept the financials, Edward Mitchell seconded the motion. All voting members voted by voice all members accepted the financial statement.

Director Report:

Dora said as you can see, we spent the money! She said it was a great year with the new SPIL. She stated she had both the SPIL update and the Bird's Eye View of the year for comparison. Dora explained that the latter form is a great way to see the momentum building especially in emergency preparedness. This was a new avenue as addressed in the SPIL and it took a different curve from what was originally intended, but what a magnificent start to emergency preparedness in the I L Network of Tennessee.

Dora went on to say that the FY 2020 PPR has been turned in and accepted by OILP. The FY 2021 PPR has already been well started, although she did not know when it could be inputted into Q90. Dora explained the PPR for the ILSG PPR is a SILC based PPR, because the CILs turn in their own PPR. Although the SILC based PPR does contain information concerning the collaboration with the I L Network because the SILC is nothing without the centers. However, expect to see a PPR that is SILC based.

SILC update is that Grayson Jennings sent in his resignation to the SILC. Since he applied and was chosen for the SILC, he had an apprenticeship which led to a great job. He stated he could not give the SILC the time it truly deserved. He is very complementary of the work that the SILC is doing. Dora further explained that we have 5 people whose terms end in December. One id Edward Mitchell who is

finishing his second term and will greatly be missed. The other four have reapplied but there still needs to be three applications sent in for every vacancy. Dora stated she reached out to Cindy Miles who told her she could use some of those wonderful applications to use to finish Greyson's term, and this has been done. Dora stated that one of those potential members (Amelia Roehm) who Dora met through Making Our Way with the ADA has been coming to the meetings via public. Dora stated that Amelia sends her some of the most interesting information to read and contemplate. Dora said she attends as many events as possible with the CILs to meet so many wonderful folks.

Dora stated that as far as vaccination collaboration the ACXL grantees started with a program through the AAADs for in home vaccinations, but that did not pan out. However, DRT took the charge and has aided in removing every physical barrier in 87/95 counties for in home COVID vaccinations in Tennessee. This also aids family members and caregivers in the home.

The SILC joined the NASILC, and the NASILC Advocacy Committee. It has been interesting, Dora stated she joined to learn how to be a better advocate for Tennessee and has had some great ideas. However, she has also been able to help NASILC make and present two different trainings on a national level for SILCs. Kathy Cooper asked Dora to please consider many more trainings, Kathy said Dora had an ease about presenting that made her a natural. Dora also said unbeknown to her that the SILC was paid for Dora's efforts so now there is a small stream of unrestricted dollars!

Dora also stated that she knew that there should training for every Council member but did not understand there should be an individual training plan for every Council member. That is why she sent the Member Knowledge Checklist. This way an individual plan can be developed. She also stated Policies would need to reflect that plan. Dora also said she knew that some of the members could not be here today inclusive of Nicole, the new Chair. We will hold off till the February meeting to finalize the policy changes along with the individual plans. Dora also explained she sent out Conflict of Interest Forms to all Council members. She thanked those who have returned them and urged the others to do so. She stated she could send them again if needed. Dora asked for questions.

New Business:

No new business.

Old Business:

Denise went over old business which was the elections for the new year, and new meeting dates.

CIL Directors Reports:

Denise said she would set out this time.

dRC Katherine stated that dRC has received all the equipment to start Early Intervention Occupational Therapy for ages 0-5. Their rack cards will soon be ready so they can begin to promote the program. The start date is set up for the 3rd week in December. Also, in December we will get our new group of interns from Tennessee Wesleyan University of OT level 2 therapists which now can offer OT to adults and children free of charge and without the need of a doctor referral. Also Katherine said a new pre-med student at UT who is going to do some specific research on accessible health care in Knox, Blunt,

and Sevier Counties, and they will share those outcomes. Also, dRC just received funding that will pay for new brochures printing about the research she will gather. This will be a huge part of our disability awareness campaign. dRC is starting to work with local providers who offer services to people with domestic abuse issues. dRC wants to make sure PWD receive the services needed within these providers. There is also a student of sociology master's level who will be providing us information regarding domestic abuse and people with disabilities. We are still delivering life sustaining items to our clients. We are only open for appointments, but we will re-evaluate that in January. It is something I am just not comfortable with.

Empower Tennessee: In addition to our core services, we have changed Empower Con to a virtual monthly series. In October it was focused on employment, and we gave our Access City Business award. It went very well. In November we did Cooking with Joy focused on Food and Gratitude. She did a cooking demonstration. She does this quite frequently on social media. Then we had folk come speak on getting yourself emotionally and physically for the holidays. Next, we are going to do a night-time event. It will be songs and stories like the Delilah show. People can request songs, stories to share. Others will be about emergency preparedness with incentives for people who complete personal emergency plans. There will be some on fitness, voting and advocacy, and data gathering for our strategic plan process. We are excited about it being virtual, there are folk from around the state and around the US. We have had a great response from people who have participated, and our numbers grow every month. It is a great way to gather referrals. It has been a win-win. And staff is enjoying the process. Please come join us.

JCIL: Beth said she did not prepare a report either, but December is bringing the Brownie Fund Raiser. 12/3/2021 we are having our virtual Christmas party with TARP. The baskets are full of goodies to make cookies, we will have a cookie contest, singing, and trivia. It will be fun. In January we will partner with TARP again on an air fryer class. There are folk statewide and nationwide as well. Everyone is welcome to join us. Edward is getting ready to start his fit-bit class again. If you have a Fitbit, please consider joining us. If you are in our service area, we have some Fitbit available. It is 6 weeks class that looks at nutrition, exercise, chair yoga, line dancing, meditation. A wide range of things focused on health. Amerigroup reached out to JCIL for a place to meet with their consumers but also open to the community. They have outfitted an office with equipment to be accessible. One fun thing as part of deaf awareness an interpreter went to the library to sign a book. It was so popular she is going weekly, and it has turned into a parent/child ASL class.

MCIL: Sandi said MCIL is planning this Thursday we are having a hybrid wreath/ornament class. Many consumers are excited to see people again. This class will involve stress management and we are calling it our Stress relief with Christmas class. Our silent holiday auction is coming up. For the second year it will be online through 32 Auctions. There are numerous baskets and gift cards so people anywhere can participate. In January we have exciting plans. We have peer emerging support groups, one for parents. We have a board member who also works for the Coalition. She will be doing some virtual groups with other parents. We want to start a housing support group because of the difficulties with accessibility and because of the monetary practice of 3x income. So maybe we will do a group on how to find a roommate. We are doing this all from home. The Board and I have agreed that is next year's task, but it needs to be the perfect location for staff and consumers. There will not be a jump in a stop gap. The staff are phenomenal working from home. There are big hopes on naming and branding.

Kathy Foley interjected that she is so in awe of the work everyone is doing. And as a part of the training, it is ok to say no to friends.

Denise Wardle said she has learned that staff will overwork from working at home. Remind your staff to get up and move around.

TRAC: Mark Woolfall said he would like to collaborate with MCIL with best practices and ideas because 70% of consumers have had their rent raised astronomically. It is a big crisis. They say they are seeing a minimum of a 30% increase. We have been helping people with the rental assistance program. Another issue is transportation requests are increasing. Paratransit in our area does a good job but there have been many unique requests for transportation out of the zoned barriers paratransit is closed to. There is another provider available, but they are experiencing issues with being shorthanded. So we are looking at many other options to aid filling in the gaps. Also, assistive technology requests are on the grow to use a computer. Our food program continues to help in the time of COVID. Chattanooga had a tornado. I was at ground zero when it hit. I got to witness the first responders and they were overwhelmed. They would not be at one place 30 seconds before getting another call. Watching that from ground zero was a life changing event. We also had flooding in August. Water did crest and go into people's homes. Next year we will have a huge celebration for TRAC. TRAC will be 35! Please come celebrate the event.

DSU Membership Report, DSE Report & Update:

Cindy Miles membership report... Dora touched on some of it. I want to thank Dora for submitting packets timely and also getting any corrections back timely. They were submitted to the Governor's Office for the 12/15/2021 ending terms. Cindy said that Clarissa Williams, Rhonda Crenshaw, Sidney McDonald and Nicole Craig resubmitted applications and unfortunately Edward Mitchell will be finishing his second term. Mr. Jennings has resigned and applications for that spot have been turned in.

- VR applications: SFY: 1453, inclusive of 750 sensory individuals.
- Average Caseload size: Region 1-9: 113
- Sensory Average Caseload 80
- Successful Closures count: SFY: 450

Cindy said she would like to give a shout out to Dora, Sandi, and Nicole for getting the PPR into Q90 timely.

Announcements/Public Comment

Denise wanted to take a minute to thank Beth James for all she does. She is amazing and helps everyone. She has been festive and has baked and decorated even in the wake of losing her mom and her son.

Jack said he has a new project going on. He is doing an informal needs assessment for ADA needs as asked by the mayor. He got them to fix a sidewalk in front of a building where elderly meet daily.

Denise stated that JCIL/TARP did jointly have a wreath making class that was a hybrid meeting. It was fun.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 12:38 p.m. CST. Jack Spencer made the motion to adjourn. Sandi Klink seconded the motion. Unanimously approved by voice, zero opposed, meeting adjourned.