

Statewide Independent Living Council Minutes Teleconference March 7, 2013

Members present: June Hermanson, Monica Garrahan, Tom Osborn, Jim Brown, Jim Morrison, Donnell Neiss, Melissa Case

Members not present: Chris Craigwick, Amanda Haley (excused), Dick Trerise (excused), Troy Spang (excused), Courtney Damron, Michelle Williamson

Staff present: Peggy Williams, Jim Marks, Julie Clay

Visitors present: Mike Mayer, Bob Maffit

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 and members introduced themselves. There was no public comment.

Independent Living Center Directors' Reports

Tom Osborn, North Central Independent Living center director, talked about the youth transitions resource fairs that NCILS has been participating in. They are working with Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Services, Children's Mental Health, Opportunity Resources, Job Corps, and Center for Mental Health. They started offering door prizes and have gotten more people visiting the booth. He will talk to other partners to see if this resulted in more people asking for services.

Bob Maffit, Montana Independent Living Project center director, talked about a national project they are working on dealing with employment and working with American Job Centers. The thought is that the centers for independent living might be a good resource for advocacy with people with disabilities at the American Job Centers. Five independent living centers across the United States are involved in the project. They will work with ten people in the next year.

Mike Mayer, Summit Independent Living Center director, talked about how their peer advocate program has been revamped. They used to train peers at a large workshop once a year, and now they work more individually with potential peers. A peer needs some experience with Summit which can include being a consumer and taking classes. Summit staff gets to know the person before they are officially considered a peer.

Governor's Report

Monica has volunteered to write the Governor's Report this year. She has gone through the 2011 report and is trying to pare it down to just a few pages, because the SILC thought the last report was too long for the Governor to have time to read. We want to be more specific on activities conducted and people served. Some of the larger areas that centers work on are housing and transportation. Julie will go through the quarterly reports and list off activities that centers

reported on, and Monica will pluck out a few to highlight. Julie will also go through the centers' 704 reports and pull out advocacy reports. These will be done the week of March 11. The Executive Committee discussed meeting in person with the Governor, either having him come to a SILC meeting, or having people meet with him directly. In the future, the SILC would like to get the Governor's Report completed in January to make it more timely.

State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL)

The SPIL is written every three years, and this is the year. It is due June 30. Peggy has collected copies of SPILs from other states in our region, and she will send out summaries of the goals to the SPIL Committee the week of March 11. Peggy also compiled the needs assessments and public hearing comments from the last three years. Mike Mayer stated that Summit has done a needs assessment recently, and he will send Peggy a copy. MILP and NCILS have not done surveys recently. In the past, we have based the new SPIL on the previous version. This year we will start from scratch and try to make the SPIL meaningful and easy to measure. The SILC has not been monitoring the current SPIL quarterly because it is too involved. By simplifying the goals, but still making them meaningful, we hope to make it a better document.

Independent Living Budget

The budget projections for Part B Independent Living funds show a deficit this federal fiscal year of about \$21,000. The Part B budget is composed of (1) SILC expenses, (2) administration expenses, (3) IL center contracts, and (4) indirect costs.

- The SILC expenses are expected to increase this year, because for the past couple years expenses have been very low—fewer face-to-face meetings were held and ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) funds paid for some of the meeting costs. This year, SILC expenses are projected to be about \$23,000, about \$11,000 of which are paid by Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Administration costs are projected to be comparable to previous years—about \$90,000. These costs include salaries, rent, phone, etc. The budget for these expenses, though, is about \$30,000 less than the projected costs.
- IL contracts are projected to remain the same as last year at about \$250,000.
- Projected indirect costs of about \$35,000 are a decrease from previous years. The entire IL budget is approximately \$875,000 (not including the indirect costs).

Sequestration and a potential pay raise factors have not been factored in and could cause a deficit of another \$10,000. In addition, sequestration of Part C funds will affect the centers, who do not all receive the same amount of Part C. But the Part C fund reduction may not take effect until October.

The SILC discussed possible solutions for the deficit. One idea was to cut back on staff time—years ago, the IL program manager was part time. Jim Marks stated that this federal fiscal year Vocational Rehabilitation is in good shape, because the Social Security reimbursements are higher than normal, and VR could make up the deficit with Social Security. It was suggested that VR use Social Security reimbursements to help out IL in the future, and Jim said that Vocational Rehabilitation could not commit to pick up the expenses in the future, because VR is also being affected by the sequestration and other variables. The SILC has two places to cut—

administration and contracts. Jim said that he felt that accommodations should be picked up by the larger agency (VR), and he will stand by these principles.

June stated that the Executive Committee would discuss a plan of action and bring it back to the full SILC for a vote.

Next Meeting Date

- The next meeting will be May 9 in Helena. The meeting will start at 9:00, and will end at 4:30. The SILC will meet jointly with the VR Council in the afternoon.
- The next Executive Committee meeting will be April 3 at 11:30.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15.