



**SILC Meeting
January 28, 2016
Helena, MT**

Members Present: Mary Olson, Monique Casbeer, Karen Underwood, Lori Gaustad, Dick Trerise, Michelle Williams, Tom Osborn. Robin Idol and Rosemary Hughes attended via phone.

Staff: Jim Marks, Bill Harant, Peggy Williams

Guests: Mike Mayer (attended via phone), Tami Hoar, Bob Maffit

The meeting was opened at 9:00 PM by Mary Olson. After introductions and welcoming Mary called for a motion to approve the October minutes. Monique moved to approve the minutes and Michelle seconded. After a brief discussion the minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote.

DETD Update: Jim Marks opened his remarks by stating that the Executive Planning Process (EPP) was about to kick off in preparation for the 2017 Legislative session. He gave a brief explanation on how the EPP works. He further stated that it is expected that the upcoming legislature will be a “cut legislature” due to possible budget cuts. There is no timeline yet for the EPP but it is expected out soon.

Jim continued to speak about changes in Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) brought 100 changes to VR. Most of the changes call for a change in thinking regarding VR services. There are three themes that WIOA focuses on: youth services, competitive integrated employment, and workforce development. These require a shift from adult centric to a youth centric services. Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) have 5 required and 9 additional services that need to be supported. The overall shift is from obtaining and maintaining work to preparation to work.

WIOA requires that 15% of the VR budget be restricted to youth services. This amounts to approximately \$2.5 million. VR is now taking applications from youth as young as age 14. VR is also contracting with school districts throughout the state for transition services. In addition Montana Youth Leadership Forum (MYLF) and Montana Youth Transitions (MYT) efforts are expanding. Jim stated that currently they are having difficulty spending the restricted money. As such the unexpended funds roll over into the new budget year. It is expected that as more school districts sign contracts this overage will eventually settle

out. Some school districts remain hesitant to sign contracts, thinking that the money is only temporary. Jim said efforts are being made to help those districts understand that the funds are permanent and that WIOA is not up for reauthorization until at least 2020 and probably won't be updated until well after that. Currently 70% of high school students in Montana reside in just 7 school districts. The state has 176 school districts and at this time approximately 50 have signed Pre-ETS contracts.

Dick Trerise asked how the contracts work. Jim explained the fee schedule and reporting requirements. VR is also working with the Rural Institute to continue contract development.

The center for independent living (CIL) directors had questions about the Pre-ETS contracts, specifically how they can get them. Some have been told that they can't while others have signed contracts. Jim said that the CILs can get contracts. He went on to say that WIOA has broken through the rule gridlock that previously tied VR's hands. In doing so it has made VR a systems change agent.

Because the remaining 85% of VR funding can't meet the current needs, order of selection has been implemented. As such Category 3, the lowest level of VR services, has been eliminated. This isn't a big issue as most who fall under this category can receive services elsewhere, such as through Job Service; however Category 2 may also have to be closed because of the shortage of funding.

Karen Underwood expressed concern about school co-ops being shut out of Pre-ETS funding. She also expressed concern that some high schools aren't grabbing on to all of this. Jim stated that schools need to become more aware of Pre-ETS services and realize that it isn't going away. As far as the co-ops they will be able to contract for Pre-ETS, however as they are not local government entities, those contracts would require RFPs or Sole Source processes.

Mary Olson asked whether the SILC can help on a statewide level. Jim said yes and that SILC members should become knowledgeable about Pre-ETS in order to inform others.

Jim then shifted focus to Section 511 and sub-minimum wage employment. Efforts are being made to build a mainstream employment option. As such anyone currently working in a sub-minimum wage setting would be visited twice in their first year and annually thereafter to assess their desire to continue working in such a setting. Contracts can be made with the CILs and possibly others to facilitate this visitation and assessment. Peer to Peer mentoring will be valuable in taking the lead on this. Jim has asked Bill Harant to set up a meeting with the CIL Directors to discuss these 511 contracts. July 22 is when the 511 requirements are to kick in. Those making visits to sub-minimum wage employees will be encouraging them to apply to VR if they have not already done so. This will help break the pipeline to sub-minimum wage employment that has existed for so long.

There is also a bill currently moving through Congress that would do away with sub-minimum wages and rescind the 14(c) section of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). At this time WIOA doesn't kill sub-minimum wages and segregated employment, but it does open up some options.

The comment period is now open for the Combined State Plan. Jim will provide a link to the comment page.

Finally Jim mentioned that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is up for reauthorization.

Budget: Bill reported that the budget is a little over 10% spent. Expenses as of the last reporting date were \$980 spent in December and \$2813 spent cumulatively.

A discussion was held about excess funds in the last budget. It was suggested that how any leftover funds were to be spent should be put into the SPIL.

The CIL Directors have concerns about the indirect cost rate request that is due March 17. They are wondering how this will work with the state contracts. They are requesting that a meeting be set up with them and the division budget analysts to discuss this. Bill will set this up.

Mary will also set up a meeting with Paula McElwain from NCILS and the CIL Directors to discuss indirect cost allocation.

SILC Business: Bill presented the survey results. He mentioned that he had previously sent this information out to the council and will do so again if members want it. It was decided that the drawing for the gift cards would be held during lunch.

Bill requested approval to renew the NCIL and APRIL memberships. There was a brief discussion and information was provided for newer members about these two organizations. A motion to approve NCIL membership renewal was forwarded by Monique and seconded by Lori. The motion passed unanimously. A motion was forwarded by Karen and seconded by Lori to renew APRIL membership. This too passed with Mary abstaining.

Bill reported on his participation with other agencies and groups supporting IL. These include the Supported Employment Leadership Network (SELN), Money Follows the Person (MFP), Joining Community Forces (JCF) and others.

A discussion was held regarding holding phone meetings. In the past the council held 3 in person meetings and one phone meeting, usually in November. The consensus appeared to

be in favor of holding in person meetings with phone attendance as an option, however no decision was made and the issue was tabled until the August meeting.

Legislative day is set for January 18, 2017. The council discussed whether to hold their meeting on January 17 or 19. It was decided to set the meeting for January 17, 2017. Bill was then asked to get the date for Rally Day so the SILC can schedule a meeting around that event.

Bill then provided comments about the SILC Congress which he, Monique, Mary and Bob Maffit from MILP attended January 16-19. He stated that most of the material presented during the Congress is available on the ILRU website and pointed out the handout that contained links to additional material not on the ILRU website.

Rehabilitation Council: Tom reported that the Rehabilitation Council will meet in February. Otherwise there is not much to report on at this time.

APRIL: Mary reported that APRIL is recruiting for a youth coordinator. This could be a telecommute position for anyone interested. Not much else is going on. A question was asked about who is considered a youth. Mary stated that APRIL generally considers youth with disabilities to be youth from birth to early 30's but has no firm definition. APRIL is also working on policy issues for future consideration. Mary further stated that Montana has a good representation on the APRIL board and that Montana's work with youth with disabilities is a model for other states. APRIL's annual conference will be in Reno, October 21-24, 2016.

NCIL: Tami reported that things are slowing a bit now that the WIOA NPRM comment periods have closed. She noted that Sen. Chuck Schumer D-NY has introduced the Disability Integration Act. One thing this act will do is remove home and community based (HCBS) waiting lists. States will need to develop a plan to do this. NCIL is also watching the Ability One issue. This organization is suspected of bid rigging, and has a number of contracting controversies, all of which impact persons with disabilities whom Ability One is supposed to be helping. NCIL will be coming out with a statement on this issue in the near future.

The winter board meeting will be held in February. Congressional members, especially senators will be invited to attend. Sen. John Testor has in the past given a speech and may do so again.

NCIL has been having some issues with the IL Net and is working to correct them. As such they are planning on holding a test webinar on February 10 at 3:00 EST (1:00 MST). Tami asked if there was any interest to contact here for registration information as participation will be limited. This will be a real webinar covering disability employment.

In a brief deviation from the agenda, Jim Marks posed a question about the DSE role in the SPIL. While the SILC and CILs are the prime signatories to the SPIL, with the DSE agreeing to oversee grant and fund management, and the SPIL is supposed to be autonomous in its operations, what if the State Executive Branch disagreed with one or more of the SPIL goals and objectives? This happened with the current SPIL over the goal of surveying candidates for public office. This goal was approved by the feds, but was in conflict with state statutes. The SPIL had to be amended to remove this goal. This will be something that needs to be taken into consideration as the new SPIL is being drafted.

MYLF/Montana Youth Transitions: MYLF is currently recruiting delegates for its July conference. Both groups are moving forward under Pre-ETS with Montana Youth Transitions initiating train the trainer classes for soft skills training. Those desiring to become trainers for soft skills can sign up now for these classes.

The Youth Transitions conference in November was a record breaker with 270 persons registered. 60 youth attended. One of the classes offered to the youth was on soft skills. The demand for this class was such that a second session had to be added to accommodate all the youth who wanted to attend this training. The next Montana Youth Transitions Conference will be in Helena at the Radisson Hotel in early November 2016.

Soft Skills training is now being offered in schools around the state and is really taking off.

Montana Youth Transitions regional meetings are being held. Point of contact information for each region is offered on the Youth Transitions website.

OPI: Dick Trerise reported that the Office of Public Instruction is processing the new regulations that have replaced No Child Left Behind. They will determine how these regulations will be implemented in schools. One change will be in how students are assessed. Efforts are being made to get these assessments off the ground. Another thing that comes as a result of the new regulations is an increase in funding for special education. Additionally the new requirements for paraprofessionals and special education instructors mandate that the states will set the standards and not the federal government. The regulations also require an equitable distribution of teachers. In Montana this is difficult as there is a shortage of special education instructors and specialists.

Jim asked about funding caps and provisions for services to youth past the age of 18. Montana is the only state that doesn't fund youth education to age 21. Funding stops after age 18. This issue will likely be brought up during the 2017 legislature. The SILC was encouraged to support this. One thing moving the age limit to 21 will do is to increase Pre-ETS assistance to the schools. Another issue that this could resolve is with Project Search. Montana is the only state where this program is not presented by a school district. Currently it is supported with VR funding.

Lori spoke about a family with 3 children with disabilities that would benefit from the expanded services that would be available with this change.

The DD waiver currently has over 1000 on the wait list. The wait period is 8-10 years. Parents are being encouraged to sign up their children as early as age 2 in order to overcome the wait list.

Dick also provided information on other supports that are being provided to those with autism spectrum disabilities.

CIL Reports

MILP: Bob Maffit reported that there is a lot going on at MILP, especially in their programs. Peer support is being restructured. Lloyd Sparks is leading the charge on this. The change began October 10. They have a great group of paid and volunteer staff.

MILP is also engaged in public transportation efforts. They are working with the taxi company in Helena to change and improve accessibility to its services.

New IL staff has been hired. This is part of the change that has occurred over the last 6-8 months. A new communications system has been installed which is encrypted and will provide better security and privacy. The entire staff is working on becoming more efficient.

Lunch: 12:15-1:00: During lunch names were drawn for the 4 Amazon gift cards for those responding to the Consumer Satisfaction Survey. The winners were drawn by the CIL directors or their representative. The winners were:

Lori Green of Manhattan drawn for MILP

Nina Bryant of Great Falls drawn for NCILS

Antonia Morasko of Glendive drawn for LIFTT

Riley A. McGinley of Hamilton drawn for Summit.

LIFTT: Tami Hoar is the new Executive Director at LIFTT as of December 6. She reported that the transition has been very smooth since she is doing many of the things she did when working at MILP. There have been a few changes however.

In early January they worked on peer structure. During a peer “boot camp” they worked on updating the peer manual. More structure was also given to the program. Brent Morris is taking the lead on this.

On March 1 they will be holding a soft skills training at MSU-B. An individual named Andrew from AMDD will be giving a mental health first aid class. Living Well with a Disability and Working Well with a Disability classes are on line.

Tami has been meeting with staff individually. In a few weeks LIFTT will hold a staff retreat. Jed will be traveling to San Francisco in a few weeks to participate in auditions for Jeopardy.

SUMMIT I.L.C.: Living Well with a Disability classes are being held in Missoula and Hamilton. Working Well with a Disability classes are being scheduled. WRAP (SP?) classes are also being scheduled.

Hamilton has a new 1000 sq. ft. space called The Refuge which is located across the street from its other offices. Man Cave, Women on the Move, arts and craft classes and other groups now meet in this space. One activity that the Women on the Move group has taken up is beading, which participants are enjoying.

Joel Pedan and Mike Beers are doing transitions classes in the Hamilton High School.

In Missoula youth classes in Improv and other activities are being offered at BASE on Monday evenings. A showcase is presented which provides the opportunity to show off improv skills. In November this group did a program at the Crystal Theater which was very well received. In addition there are many other community activities that Summit peers and consumers are involved with.

Missoula has installed new hi-tech parking meters which are causing some problems for everyone but especially for people with disabilities. Efforts are being made to correct these problems.

Robin asked for more information about Women on the Move. While providing this information Mike Mayer also mentioned that a number of veterans are finding an outlet through the Man Cave.

As far as advocacy the Self Determination task force is looking toward the 2017 legislative session. Some of the areas being looked at include getting new staff at Senior and Long Term Care, addressing issues with HCBS waiver, concerns about legislation regarding personal care attendants, and Medicaid waiver payments to HCBS consumers needing to install adaptive equipment in vehicles. They will also be addressing EPP issues.

NCILS: Tom Osborn reported that NCILS is working on similar advocacy issues as Summit. In Havre they are working on long range community activities as part of a national project to measure accessibility in the community. Peers have been recruited for

this and will begin training soon. The project will target city and county commissions, schools, fairs, etc.

NCILS has done some strategic planning in Miles City. They have worked with LIFTT to do this for central Montana. NCILS has also developed a seminar on the History and Culture of Disability and have begun taking it to individual schools. They are also going to use this as an opportunity to recruit 2 facilitators, one of which will be a peer. They are also holding quarterly Living Well classes. These are very well attended. As such they will need to bring on additional facilitators.

NCILS is in the midst of revising their 3 year plan. They are considering some infrastructure changes. They are also getting more involved in job placement activities.

Nominations: Applicants/nominees are still needed. There are currently 3 applications for 4 positions on the council. Dick Trerise brought up the fact that his term is up in December. It was suggested that the SILC should consider recruiting from other state agencies such as corrections, Medicaid, Money follows the Person, Senior and Long Term Care, etc.

Monique and Michelle have submitted their applications for continued membership on the council. Karen moved that their applications be accepted and Robin seconded. The council voted to accept their nominations and their names and applications will be forwarded to the Governor's office for reappointment.

Other nominations were discussed. Bill will need to send out the applications received so far to the voting council members for their consideration.

Nominations for a new Secretary were called for since June Hermanson's term on the council has ended. Mary explained the duties of the Secretary then asked for nominations. Lori Gaustad and Rosemary Hughes each nominated themselves. Tom moved to accept their nominations and Karen seconded. A procedural question was raised as to whether both could be nominated under the same motion. After discussion and review of the bylaws and Robert's Rules of order it was determined that a friendly amendment would need to be made to accept their nominations. Karen proposed said amendment. Monique moved to accept the amendment and Michelle seconded it. A secret ballot was then conducted, with the two members on the phone emailing their votes to Council Chair Mary. The vote was in favor of Lori. Bill was asked to send Lori information on Executive Committee duties and responsibilities.

Committee Reports

Competitive Integrated Employment: Tom reported that the committee has a survey ready to send out to providers and employers. They also have emails of those to whom the survey will be sent. Their next meeting is Friday, February 5 during which they will draft a letter to the survey recipients. He went on to explain some of the other activities the committee has been involved with. He asked if the SILC would like to provide comment on the Combined State Plan. This would take into consideration the policy spirit and intent prior to the closing of the comment period and the final rule going out. Rosemary moved and Monique seconded to give the Competitive Integrated Employment Committee the authority to comment on behalf of the SILC to the Combined State Plan. The measure passed.

Consumer Satisfaction – Needs Assessment Survey: Bill went over some of the results of the Survey. A 21% response rate was noted which, was twice that of last year's survey. The results were well received by the SILC membership.

Education and Public Relations: Michelle has taken the SILC brochure developed last year and is modifying it for the Native community. She shared her work so far. She will be looking for public domain graphics to add to the brochure and will watermark greetings in various tribal languages.

There were no other committee reports.

SPIL Update: Meetings are being set up in Helena, Billings, Great Falls and Missoula to gather input for the SPIL. Bill should have the dates locked in by tomorrow and will send those dates out to the committee members. He will also get the dates added to the state calendar and write a press release to be sent out through the state public relations office. He will also be creating fliers which will be distributed through various channels. The initial meetings will take place during the first two weeks of March. Public comment on the draft SPIL will be taken sometime during the last two weeks of May. The final draft is due to the feds June 30. The new SPIL will be more concise than the current SPIL. All of the CIL directors will be added to the SPIL committee distribution list. The next SPIL Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday February 17.

Mary had to leave at this point and Monique took over to chair the remainder of the meeting.

Task Force Reports

Self Determination: The information for this task force was covered under the Summit report. The task force meets every other Wednesday at 1:30 PM

Transportation: Work is being done to with TACs and other transportation advocates to get the Taxi Tax going in the right direction. Also there is some confusion that needs

clarification regarding how TransADE is being let out. There was some discussion on Sections 5310 (Transportation for Individuals with Disabilities), 5307 and 5311 regarding the mediation process between various providers. It is tough to meet the coordination requirements of the law in Montana due to geography.

Community Living: Justice Ender and Shyla Patera have taken over the chair of this committee and are working to rebuild it.

Legislative Advocacy: This task force meets on the Wednesdays opposite the Self Determination Task Force. Both task forces are working together preparing for the 2017 legislative session and the EPP.

Native American: Again, Michelle is working on the brochure from a native community perspective. She will email her work thus far to the SILC and once the final draft is done she will get it to Bill who will work with the printing office to ensure that it ok for publication

Public Comments: Karen commented that she is impressed with all of the work the CILS are doing and expressed her appreciation for that work.

Lori, echoing Karen's comments added her thanks to Bill for the work he does on behalf of the SILC.

There being no further business it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. On a voice vote the meeting was declared adjourned at 3:40 PM.