

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL MEETING  
NOVEMBER 19, 2013- 9:00AM-4:00PM- WILDERNESS ROOM  
NOVEMBER 20, 2013- 9:00AM-1:00PM- BOARD OF INVESTMENTS ROOM  
2401 COLONIAL DRIVE, HELENA, MONTANA

Members in attendance: June Hermanson, Chairperson; Michelle Williamson, Tom Osborn, Courtney Damron, Mary Olson and Dick Trerise.

Members in attendance by phone: Jim Brown, vice-chairperson; Chris Cragwick, Astghik Iknatian and Troy Spang.

Staff in attendance: Jim Marks, Peggy Williams, Julie Clay and Kathy Brook

Others in attendance: Bob Maffit, Tami Hoar, Scott Williamson, Cynthia Hollimon and Marilyn Daumiller.

Others in attendance by phone: Mike Mayer and Joe Burst

Members absent: Donell Neiss, Amanda Haley and Melissa Kase

**Introduction and Welcome:** June Hermanson, SILC Chairperson, welcomed and introduced Mary Olson and Astghik Iknatian as the newest SILC members. June thanked Marilyn Daumiller and Cynthia Hollimon for coming.

**Review and Approval of August 14, 2013 SILC meeting minutes:** A motion was made by Tom Osborn and seconded by Jim Brown to approve the minutes from the August SILC meeting. All were in favor.

**Update of Disability Employment and Transitions Division:** Jim Marks, DETD Administrator, updated the members regarding local, state and national issues relating to Independent Living (IL) and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). The VR will be going into the Order of Selection process and he described the process. The public hearing comments for the Order of Selection was scheduled on January 9, 2014. Jim discussed the new Promise Grant which Montana, Utah, North and South Dakota, Colorado and Arizona are involved in to help with youth transitions during a five year period. The goal is to serve 600 students in all six states with Montana serving approximately 70 students.

Jim informed the group about a collaboration project that Minnesota VR and IL staff are working together to increase the employment outcomes of VR clients. He would like to have Montana develop a pilot project to establish a collaborative relationship between IL and VR work together to enhance services. Traditionally, VR focuses on providing employment services and centers for independent living (CILs) provide a broad scope of skills to enhance their consumers' abilities and opportunities to live in an accessible community. Through the collaboration of services, the goal is the consumer/client will receive improved services leading to increased employment outcomes.

Jim mentioned that the SILC needs to identify their funding priorities for the upcoming year and develop a plan to present their priorities to the legislature.

He also suggested that the SILC have a representative on the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN). Courtney Damron and June Hermanson volunteered to participate in the meetings and Julie Clay will participate in the meetings held in Helena.

**Old Business:** June Hermanson, SILC Chairperson, lead a discussion regarding the IL program budget and historical review. There is a deficit of \$17,000 at the end of September 2013 which the VR resources will be able to cover. Beginning October 1, 2013, the IL budget is \$59,000 with current expenses for the IL program at \$85,000. Ideas were discussed regarding which projects and/or activities could be eliminated, such as the satisfaction survey. Dick Trerise suggested that the CILs could conduct their own surveys or partner with the SILC regarding the cost of mailing the surveys to consumers. Mary Olson suggested trying an electronic survey. June asked if the survey is included in the new SPIL. A committee was established to research and develop a plan. Members who volunteered to be on this committee were Dick Trerise, Courtney Damron and Mary Olson. Another suggestion regarding the IL budget cuts was to combine CIL site reviews with RSA visits.

The SILC members were given a handout which reflected the budget decrease of the CILs with 2%, 3% and 4% options. The DETD fiscal staff has equalized the funding for all CILs within these options. The centers' funding reduction due to the sequestration will have an effect on services. Each center will receive decreases to their 2013 Part B contracts.

A motion was made by Michelle Williamson and seconded by Mary Olson to decrease the CILs budget by 4% and the IL staff time by 25%. The motion passed. The SILC Executive Committee will decide how and where to make the reductions. The reduction of IL program time will be used and paid for by VR.

**SILC Nominations:** June Hermanson and Julie Clay led the discussion. A motion was made by Mary Olson and seconded by Michelle Williamson to recommend to the Governor's office that Dick Trerise, Tom Osborn and Troy Spang be considered to continue serving the SILC for a second term. All were in favor and the motion passed. Julie will forward these names to Jim Marks.

June asked for nominations and/or volunteers to serve as the SILC secretary. Mary Olson volunteered to serve in the position. All members were in favor.

**Lunch and IL Training:** IL Symposium outcomes were shared by Tom Osborn and Mike Mayer. Each task force and its priorities and activities were described. One of the outcomes of the symposium was some new task forces were developed. The current task forces include: Self-Determination, Community Living (Housing), Public Relations, Youth and Employment and Native American Task Force (NATF). Other committees and workgroups include: Legislative/Advocacy, Funding, Technology, and Governor/Leadership. A vision and mission statements were developed during the symposium. Vision: "We envision a world in which people with disabilities are valued equally and participate fully". Mission: "We advance independent living and the rights of people with disabilities through consumer-driven advocacy". Tom will provide a written summary report to the SILC.

A suggestion was made to use the task force structure to develop goals and a work plan for the 2015 Legislative Session. Areas of discussion were: Olmstead Act, eligibility issues and funding, sheltered workshops, marketing and branding of IL and 501 C 4 regulations.

Michelle Williamson and Troy Spang, co-chairpersons of NATF, reported that they had presented the “Visitability” power point to the Confederated Salish/Kootenai tribal housing representatives on the Flathead Reservation. The Native American and Community Living (Housing) Task Forces have been working together on this issue.

The topic of transportation came up during the discussion. This is an ongoing and important issue for the SILC because of the rural environment throughout most of Montana. The lack of transportation, especially accessible transportation, has an effect on the independence of people with disabilities. Transportation concerns that are being addressed include: the lack of intrastate bus systems, accessible taxi’s and 24 hour availability.

**New Business:** June Hermanson invited members to join a SILC committee and reminded them that other people besides SILC members are eligible to serve on these committees.

Nominations and Training Committee: Courtney Damron, Joe Burst, Troy Spang and Bob Maffit

ByLaw-Budget Committee: June Hermanson, Jim Brown and Mary Olson. A motion was made by Tom Osborn and seconded by Michelle Williamson to move the Budget Committee to the Executive Committee. All were in favor and the motion passed. The SILC will vote at the next SILC meeting to change the Bylaws.

SPIL Evaluation Committee: Mary Olson, Courtney Damron, Astghik Ikhnatian, Mike Mayer and Tom Osborn. Note: A quarterly report is needed a month before each SILC meeting.

Legislative Advocacy Committee: Michelle Williamson, Tom Osborn and Mike Mayer

NATF and Youth Committee: Michelle Williamson, Troy Spang, June Hermanson and Tom Osborn

**SPIL- Statewide Plan for Independent Living 2014-2016:** Julie Clay reviewed the goals and objectives that need to be met during the first year of the SPIL. The SILC can assist in developing activities they would like to accomplish to meet the goals and objectives.

**Senior Companion Presentation:** Ruthie Hill, Program Coordinator, Senior Companion, Rocky Mountain Development Council (RMDC), talked about the Senior Companion Program and how it helps people to live at home. She disseminated materials for members to take home and share.

**Training:** Julie reviewed a handout describing the duties and responsibilities of SILC members. This handout included website listings of available training opportunities. Discussion regarding training and how it is an ongoing process of learning, led to the following suggested activities: SILC members visiting their local CILs and attending the centers’ activities, and/or becoming involved as a youth or peer mentor. Also, having input from CIL directors during a SILC meeting on how they train their staff can be

a helpful learning experience. June suggested that during the February SILC meeting, members could identify the types of training they are interested in. Then methods and goals can be established regarding SILC training. Suggested topics for training were: Money Follows the Person (MFP), SELN and a veteran's group presentation.

**Public Comments:** None

**EPP:** The SILC needs to have a list of priorities for Julie to present to the DETD. Please bring your ideas and suggestions to the February SILC meeting.

**Governor's Reports:** Discussion lead to changing the format of the 2013 Governor's Report to include: focusing more on advocacy activities which lead to community change, instead of focusing on the demographics of the CIL consumers served; use electronic distribution of the report with a few print copies; include photos which represent the CIL activities and advocacy efforts that lead to individual and/or community change; delete the list of SILC members and add task forces with their priorities. Also, include activities that show how the objectives and goals of the SPIL were met.

**Site Reviews-NCILS and LIFTT:** Julie Clay reported on the site review process and the instrument used to conduct a survey. Joe Burst, LIFTT and Tom Osborn, NCILS added their comments to the discussion and answered questions from SILC members. Copies of the final site review reports will be sent to SILC members.

**Sheltered Workshops:** June and Courtney will attend the SELN January meeting regarding the dialogue of integrated employment and report to the SILC at the next meeting.

**Money Follows the Person (MFP) and Community First Choice Option (CFCO):** Traci Clark, the new MFP administrator was introduced by James Drigger, Bureau Chief, Community Services Bureau. James gave an overview of the transitions process of people living in various institutions, including nursing homes. Various identified populations can move into community living arrangements with assistance of waivers and the Housing Bridge. He feels that system change is needed regarding these important housing issues. James provided handouts describing the programs in more detail.

**Pay Invoices for APRIL and NCILS:** A motion was made by Tom Osborn and seconded by Troy Spang to pay the yearly subscriptions for these national organizations. All were in favor and the motion passed. Julie will process the invoices.

**Interviews:**

Interviews for SILC member positions were held over the phone. Those being interviewed were as follows: Quentin Johnson, Helena; Jerry Clark, Denton; Lori Gaustad, Billings; Robin Idol, Whitefish; Elizabeth Varnum, Hamilton; and Monique Casbeer, Missoula.

After the phone interviews, the SILC members discussed their recommendations for nominees and the following names of applicants will be forwarded through the nomination process to the Governor's

office for his appointment: Jerry Clark, Denton; Quentin Johnson, Helena; and Lori Gaustad, Billings. SILC members felt it was important to have representation from the eastern part of the state.

A motion was made at 12:40 pm by Mary Olson and seconded by Michelle Williamson to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned. The next SILC meeting will be a teleconference on Wednesday, February 19, 2014.