

MTSILC Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2024

Virtual Meeting

Summary

Attendees:

- Council Members: June Hermanson, Tami Hoar, Jean Schroeder, Tom Thompson, Julie Williams, Scott Williamson, Melanie Beagle, Chris Johnsrud, Nichole Lowrance
- Absent: Savannah Smith, Mike Manhardt, Hannah Thompson, Heather Giese
- CIL Directors: Tami Hoar (& Council member), Margaret Keener, Carlos Ramalho
- DET Staff: Julia Arnold, Lacey Conzelman, Anna Gibbs, Chanda Hermanson, Hannah Stokes, Alice Lewis
- Attendees: Tom Osborn

Budget Report:

- Report given by Hannah Stokes.
 - FY24 Budget: \$9,380.00
 - Consulting - \$0
 - Supplies/Materials - \$0
 - Travel - \$5,523
 - Honorariums - \$2,500
 - Meetings/Conference Costs - \$350
 - Education/Training - \$0
 - Communication - \$200
 - Printing/Publications & Graphics - \$409
 - Repair / Maintenance - \$0
 - Other Expense - \$398
 - % of Budget Spent YTD: 43%
 - FY2024 Budget: \$21,823
- FY25: 0% spent
- Part B Contracts are 0% spend as of October 31st, 2024.
- General Fund contracts are 7% spent as of October 31, 2024.
- IL Program Manager Administrative Costs \$5,795

Reports/Planning:

- Molly Kimmel from the Rural Institute presented an overview of the Institute. She indicated the RIIC is one of 67 University Centers on Disabilities, facilitates 50+ programs annually, and have 60+ staff members that work for the RIIC. Additionally, several staff members presented information on numerous programs the RIIC facilitates. These presentations included Decision Making Strategies, DeafBlind and Transition Project, Rural School Outreach, Family 2 Family and Peer Support, RTC: Rural Happenings in Plain Language, MonTECH, Evaluations Activities, and the Montana Disability & Health Program.

- Jean Schroeder and Julia Arnold gave a report on the ADA Resource Fair held in Poplar, MT. Both indicated it was a great success and are planning several more in Eastern Montana in the spring.
- Julia Arnold shared information on the new banner that was ordered.
- Committee attendance was discussed and encouraged. The Committee list was reviewed and several changes were made by members.
- Discussion was held regarding the upcoming August meeting. Jean Schroeder asked that we look at a location with activities. Tami Hoar suggested asking the CILs to determine if a local activity was taking place and visit that area.
- Chanda Hermanson, Administrator of Department of Employment and Transitions (DET), updated members on both Federal and State issues that were pertinent to the SILC and DET. She highlighted the Administration change, lack of ability to hire individuals to provide disability determination, the Governor's funding recommendations for the upcoming fiscal years, potential new positions in VR, a new Vision Tech position, and the contract with the Harkin institute to reduce and/or eliminate sub-minimum wages.

Motions:

- Motion to Approve minutes from the September 9, 2024 meeting was made by June Hermanson, Jean Schroeder made the second, and an all in favor vote was cast.
- A motion to appoint Chris Johnsrud was made by Scott Williamson to serve as Chairman was made, Melanie Beagle made the second, and an all in favor vote was cast. This is a two-year position.
- A motion to appoint Scott Williamson was made by Chris Johnsrud to serve as Vice-Chairman of the SILC was made, Jean Schroeder made the second, and motion passed. Two Board members abstained from casting a vote. Scott is replacing Mike Manhardt and will serve one year.

SILC Committee Reports:

- Executive Committee- Scott Williamson and Julia Arnold collaborated on topics discussed recently in the Executive meetings. These topics included sharing information related to the Rural Institutes' Focus Groups, the Policy & Procedure manual and the differences between the manual and the by-laws, and the present lack of Technical Assistance that was previously provided by the ILRU.
- Olmstead Committee- Tom Osborn shared an update on the happening of the Olmstead Committee. Letters have been written to Department Directors, but the Committee has decided to wait to send them due to the rapidly approaching Legislative session and the potential change of appointments.
- HB872 Working Group- Tom Osborn indicated that this committee has met, evaluated the recommendations in HB872 and if they were directly related to Olmstead. Once the committee meets again it will evaluate those recommendations that are correlated with Olmstead are funded. Once this is determined a letter will be sent to the Director of DPHHS.
- Membership- Julia Arnold indicated there has been very little attendance on this committee meeting. The next meeting will be held December 23rd.
- Policy & Procedure- Julie Williams asked Julia to share regarding this Committee. She reported a lot of work has been completed on reviewing the Policy and Procure manual with potential

updates. Julia indicated that potentially it might be wise to review these updates at the January meeting.

- IL Symposium- Julia Arnold shared 22 individuals submitted evaluations of the symposium. This data was reviewed and discussed. The total cost was reviewed and several comments from those that attended indicated the Symposium was very useful and empowering.

CIL Reports:

- **Tami Hoar, Summit**

Tami Hoar, Summit Executive Director, reported that mid-summer Summit held their ADA Celebration about a month early to get people excited about the summer and the adaptive equipment available in the area for individuals to use.

Summit purchased a building in Missoula and in the process of doing renovations so we can move in at the first of the year. She shared Summit is excited for the move and noted that they will be able to move out of this rented office space that Summit has occupied since the late '80s.

In mid-September we held a Disability Roots event in Missoula and partnered with ZAC, a local theater. We worked with Tom Orland to display his amazing photographs that document the disability movement over the past 40 years. This evening event was not a fundraiser, but a way to connect with the community and our IL history. Over 100 people attended as well as one of the local high schools come through earlier in the day to learn about IL history. It was an empowering and impactful event.

Summit moved their Ronan office to Polson at the end of July. Since opening in Polson, the walk-ins, the programming, the beginning of the IL service process has nearly doubled the number served. We had to hire another part-time person in Polson just to help the full-time staff person there because it's gotten so busy with walk-ins, and people realizing what Summit is and what we do.

Our Aging and Disability Vaccination grant will be completed in January. We have a several clinics happening this week all throughout our service area. This was a collaborative grant with Ability Montana. As always expanding our film program, weekly classes, and those kinds of things continue to be important. We did a film festival with the Roxy. We held two showings at the festival and had over 100 people. Lots of great things happening.

- **Margaret Keener, NCILS**

NCILS over the past year worked with 409 individuals using their Part B funds and provided over 1200 services. Many of these people we met with multiple times depending on what their goals.

Shortly after the IL Symposium, I requested my staff to each join one of the Task Forces if they haven't already been on one. All the staff are participating with a Task Force now. We also participated in the ADA Resource Fair in Poplar and had a great turn out for that.

We are happy to announce that today is moving day for us. We are closing one office and opening another, so the movers have gone up and gotten furniture from the Conrad office and are moving this office to Heart Butte. We now have roots -- we are excited now to have Tracy up in our new office.

We are having a Living Well reunion on December 3rd and we are combining that with our legislative luncheon. So, we decided in our last Living Well Rendezvous and to have people circle back and see how they're doing in the workshop series. A big part of these meetings

focuses on advocacy, and we wanted to start preparing people for Legislative Day as well. We have invited about 10 local legislators in our area. We have several newly elected legislators so it's a good chance to get to know them. After the reunion piece people will attend the Legislative Luncheon to start talking about that systems advocacy. It's been a very busy couple of months.

We have our two new staff members under Part B and General Fund who will be doing general benefits training by the end of the year. They're also trained as living well facilitators so we will have (including myself) will have 4 benefits planners and 5 living well facilitators.

This month we hosted the Montana Youth Transitions Conference in Great Falls. It was a great conference. We had close to 200 participants and record number of youth attend this year. The highlight of this conference was our trip to MSU-Great Falls. The college did an amazing job, and students were able to explore a variety of options that maybe they had not considered in a college previously and/or not traditional 4-year college options.

- **Carlos Ramalho, LIFTT unable to attend, report was sent.**

During the 2023-2024 fiscal year ending on September 30, 2024, LIFTT served 853 consumers, representing a 6.45% increase from the previous year. By refining our strategies, expanding our staff, and focusing on service goals, we achieved an 87.55% increase in services provided and a remarkable 134.78% growth in consumer goals accomplished. Additionally, our Information and Referrals (I&Rs) rose by 38.62%, reflecting our commitment to broadening outreach and accessibility.

On July 26, 2024, LIFTT celebrated the 34th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) at our new headquarters in Billings and Glendive.

LIFTT is working tirelessly to develop an ADA Accessible Rural Transportation Program within its service area. This initiative aims to address the unique transportation challenges faced by rural communities, fostering greater independence and accessibility for residents.

LIFTT's advocacy efforts have also been instrumental in addressing community needs. Notably, we partnered with Billings TrailNet to improve trail accessibility and supported initiatives in Dawson and Yellowstone counties to expand access to assistive technologies and essential health resources.

Thanks to a grant from USA Aging and the Administration for Community Living, LIFTT, in collaboration with Pharm406 and county health departments, organized vaccination clinics across all 18 counties of our service area.

LIFTT's efforts to promote digital equity and inclusion across its service area have garnered national recognition from the Federal Telecommunications Agency. This acknowledgment underscores LIFTT's commitment to bridging the digital divide and ensuring that individuals with disabilities can fully participate in an increasingly digital society.

As we look ahead, LIFTT remains steadfast in its mission to eliminate systemic barriers, foster inclusion, and promote independence for all individuals with disabilities. Our progress reflects the dedication of our team and partners and reinforces our vision of empowering individuals to LIFTT themselves above the barriers of life.

- Ability, no report given

Public Comment:

- None

3:00pm Meeting adjourned, Next Meeting: January 27-28, 2025 in Helena, MT