



Thursday, August 29, 2019
Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
100 North 15th Ave, Suite 104, Phoenix, AZ 85007

Meeting was available via
videoconference/teleconference.

AZSILC Board Members Present: Dr. Danita Applewhite, Laura Duval, Scott Lindbloom, and Randy Russell (All members attended via teleconference.)

AZSILC Board Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Sara Ann Joehnk, Sarah Kader, Melissa Ann Santora and Tahneesha Smith

Public Present: None

Welcome and Introductions:

Dr. Danita Applewhite, AZSILC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:26 am. Welcome and introductions were completed.

Public Comment on Agenda Items Only:

Dr. Danita Applewhite called for public comment. No public comment was received.

Report of the Board of Directors Chair:

Appointment of Vice Chair:

Carla Shelton resigned as AZSILC Vice-Chair. Susan Molloy was appointed as the new Vice-Chair.

Approval of APRIL Conference Attendance:

Melissa Ann Santora stated there were three individuals interested in attending the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) Conference in October 2019. Two training and development request forms were submitted by AZSILC Council Members, Audra Paletta and Scott Lindbloom. Paletta indicated on her submission that she had been asked to present at the conference. Lindbloom indicated that he had never attended an APRIL Conference. His desire is to return from the conference with useful information that will help residents in rural Arizona in which he lives. The travel expenses range from \$750 - \$1,000. A verbal request had also been received by Dr. Danita Applewhite. There was a miscommunication regarding Dr. Danita Applewhite's submission. Dr. Applewhite's associated costs would exceed the aforementioned amounts.

Melissa Ann Santora stated that Dr. Danita Applewhite had submitted a proposal which was accepted for the conference. Santora explained her concerns surrounding the proposal which referenced the Morrison Institute Survey. The survey has not been conducted yet.

Dr. Danita Applewhite explained that she was referencing the survey conducted by Arizona State University in previous years and erroneously named the Morrison Institute in her proposal submission.

Melissa Ann Santora continued to express concerns with Dr. Applewhite's proposal surrounding the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) objectives involving veterans. This particular topic may lead to a conflict of interest for Dr. Danita Applewhite, Founder of the White Apple Institute (WAI).

Dr. Danita Applewhite explained her position on her proposal submission. Dr. Applewhite stated her goal for attending the APRIL Conference was to represent AZSILC and share what it is doing for veterans with others.

Sarah Kader expressed her apprehensions regarding Dr. Applewhite's topic and appropriately representing AZSILC at the APRIL Conference. It is extremely concerning to AZSILC if the topic does not align with what the organization is currently doing to assist veterans.

Dr. Danita Applewhite reiterated her position. She shared that her primary reason for becoming heavily involved in AZSILC was to help veterans with disabilities. Dr. Applewhite's stated that she did not join AZSILC to promote her personal organization.

Melissa Ann Santora stated that relevant information and data needed to present at the APRIL Conference should be acquired from AZSILC Staff if Dr. Applewhite plans to represent the organization. Santora stated that Dr. Applewhite's proposal had been accepted the evening prior to this meeting. Santora attempted to speak with Dr. Danita Applewhite to discuss her concerns prior to the meeting but Dr. Applewhite was unavailable.

Melissa Ann Santora also stated an official training and development request form had not been received from Dr. Applewhite for formal consideration. Melissa Ann Santora apologized for any miscommunication regarding her form submission. Santora also shared her concern regarding a potential conflict of interest.

Dr. Danita Applewhite called for opinions from other AZSILC Board members.

Laura Duval explained that as an AZSILC Board Director (and other roles within the organization) and CIL Executive Director, she has to always separate the two roles. Duval's duties and decision on the AZSILC Board of Directors has to align with the SPIL and how it would affect the organization. Laura Duval believed a courtesy regarding Dr. Applewhite's proposal submission should have been provided to the AZSILC Executive Staff.

Dr. Danita Applewhite emphasized her concerns for serving the underserved in Arizona, specifically veterans that are underserved which is an objective in the SPIL.

Melissa Ann Santora read Dr. Applewhite's proposal to the AZSILC Board. The potential presentation was entitled, "Are Rural Veterans Considered Far Out."

Laura Duval shared her perspective as a CIL Director of Dr. Applewhite's proposal which was targeted to veterans only. Duval expressed that when attending conferences, she is seeking to find out how an organization has already successfully implemented the items they are presenting.

Scott Lindbloom stated there were veteran sessions at previous NCIL conferences. Lindbloom recommended that Dr. Danita Applewhite review what other SILCs have done to incorporate veterans with disabilities.

Laura Duval explained that current SPIL addresses the underserved and unserved which includes all individuals with disabilities. Duval urged Dr. Applewhite to get more veterans involved so they can be properly included on the next SPIL so they can receive better services.

Melissa Ann Santora stated that currently Arizona does not have the expertise to present on the topic in which Dr. Danita Applewhite submitted to the APRIL Conference.

Sarah Kader agreed.

Dr. Danita Applewhite asked what conclusion is needed to move this discussion forward.

Melissa Ann Santora stated that Dr. Applewhite's proposal cannot be directly related to AZSILC.

Dr. Applewhite asked for clarification on how to submit an alternate proposal.

Dr. Applewhite stated that it was not her intention to convey that AZSILC was an expert on the matters she submitted in her proposal to APRIL.

Melissa Ann Santora agreed to assist Dr. Danita Applewhite to amend her proposal.

Dr. Danita Applewhite stated that her professional background is in disability management. Dr. Applewhite further explained that she had been involved in the Independent Living movement for 40 years. She joined AZSILC to increase awareness of Independent Living services among veterans with a disability.

Laura Duval suggested Dr. Applewhite's proposal be amended and resubmitted for approval to APRIL conference. A decision cannot be made on this matter today.

There was discussion regarding the time needed to resubmit the proposal for approval.

Dr. Danita Applewhite withdrew her request to attend the APRIL Conference funded by AZSILC. Dr. Applewhite stated she was going to attend the conference regardless of her presenting or not.

Laura Duval suggested to table this agenda item.

Dr. Danita Applewhite agreed to make amendments to her proposal to present at the APRIL Conference.

Sarah Kader stated there was enough information to make a decision for the two official requests received.

Randy Russell joined the meeting at 11:10 am.

There was a brief conversation regarding conference travel costs and accommodations as it relates to the AZSILC fiscal budget. The cost per individual should not exceed \$1,500.

Melissa Ann Santora stated that Audra Paletta would attend the APRIL conference regardless if her request was approved or denied by AZSILC.

Dr. Danita Applewhite stated she had the same position regarding her conference attendance.

Laura Duval made a motion to approve Scott Lindbloom's request for attendance to the APRIL Conference in October 25-28, 2019.

Randy Russell seconded the motion to approve the request.

Laura Duval, Scott Lindbloom and Randy Russell all voted in favor. No oppositions or abstentions. The motion unanimously passed.

Sarah Kader stated that she and Melissa Ann Santora will meet with Dr. Danita Applewhite soon to assist with the amendment of her conference presenter's proposal.

Melissa Ann Santora explained that time was of the essence in securing hotel reservations and other accommodations for the upcoming APRIL conference.

Scott Lindbloom volunteered to assist Dr. Danita Applewhite if needed at the airport.

Dr. Danita Applewhite shared that she would like to attend the APRIL Conference regardless if she presents or not.

Melissa Ann Santora asked for clarification regarding her interest in still attending the APRIL Conference.

Sarah Kader stated that Dr. Danita Applewhite expressed earlier in the meeting that she would attend regardless if AZSILC funded the trip or not. A precedent was established that if members can otherwise afford their costs to attend the APRIL Conference, in the case of Audra Paletta, then no funding would be provided by AZSILC.

Laura Duval abstained from making any further comments or vote on the current agenda item regarding APRIL Conference attendance.

Dr. Danita Applewhite stated that she would abstain from going if there was another AZSILC member that wanted to attend.

Melissa Ann Santora reiterated the previous vote that was taken to approve Scott Lindbloom's request to attend the conference and to defer any further conversation.

Sarah Kader recommended that the AZSILC Board take action on the Report of the Treasurer Report only prior to adjournment. She deferred to Laura Duval regarding the Personnel Committee Report. Kader explained that Organizational Affairs would be discussed at the upcoming AZSILC meeting.

Report of the Treasurer:

Laura Duval, AZSILC Board Treasurer, stated that the report appeared acceptable upon her review.

Scott Lindbloom made the motion to accept the May-July 2019 Financial Statements.

Randy Russell seconded the motion to approve the request.

Laura Duval, Scott Lindbloom and Randy Russell all voted in favor. No oppositions or abstentions. The motion unanimously passed.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Call to the Public:

AZSILC Board Chair, Dr. Danita Applewhite, called for public comment. No public comment was received.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 am.