

## **Statewide Independent Living Council – Full Council Meeting**

Unapproved Minutes for Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016 (9:00am – 2:00pm)

AZSILC Board Room and Teleconference

5025 E Washington Street, #214. Phoenix, Arizona 85034

**Council Members Present:** Dara Johnson, Dr. Danita Applewhite, Scott Lindbloom, Pete Weaver, Joy Johnson Labarge, Paula Seanez, Eileen Tohonnie, Laura Duval, Randy Russel, Peter Fischer

### **Council Members Absent:**

Larry Clausen, Wendy Swager, Meghan Cox

### **Staff:**

Larry Wanger, Melissa Ann Santora, Lilia Zacchia

### **Public:**

Karen Thompson, Teresa Ehnert, Christine Worley, Anya Carrillo, Georgia McLaughlin, Logan Wimer, Susan Vorel

### **Welcome and Introduction:**

Dr. Danita Applewhite, Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m. Ms. Applewhite welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were completed.

### **Action; Presentation of meeting minutes (meeting of June 9, 2016):**

Dr. Danita Applewhite asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes for the June 9, 2016 full Council meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Pete Weaver. Laura Duval seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, passing with 11 voting in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstaining.

### **Action; Presentation of monthly financial statements and Treasurers Report (June, 2016 – October, 2016):**

Dr. Danita Applewhite asked for a motion to approve the June 2016 – October, 2016 financial statements. A motion to approve the statements was made by Laura Duval. Pete Weaver seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, passing with 11 voting in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstaining

Larry Wanger provided the Treasurers Report stating that the meeting packet provided to Council members includes: a monthly balance statement, an RSA billing summary, as well as a profit and loss statement for the months of June 2016 - October 2016. He provided an overview of SILC account balances. Larry Then announced to the Council that the Arizona Statewide Independent Living Council recently became the fiduciary for the Arizona Disability Coalition (ADC) and that the SILC will be providing administrative and fiduciary support to the coalition.

Larry stated that the SILC is tracking along well financially and that there are presently no outstanding issues related to the budget. However, he noted that the SILC has exceeded the budgeted amount for website costs due to a malware attack that brought down our websites in August. He stated that we had a professional address the issue and that we have recently upgraded our website hosting (which costs an additional \$50-\$60 per month). The website hosting expense increases the over-all cost of this line-item. He indicated the SILC has also exceeded budgeted costs in staff travel. The extra expense came from Melissa and Larry attending a conference in Houston, Texas. Larry stated that the staff-travel account is currently approximately \$400 in the negative, but affirmed that the SILC has funds to cover such an expense.

Dr. Danita Applewhite asked whether there are administration fees being charged for the Arizona Disability Coalition (ADC). Larry stated that the SILC does not currently charge administrative fees for ADC as administrative support is covered under a SPIL objective. Currently, ADC has very few assets, so the financial report is not extensive. Additionally, ADC covers their own website costs each month.

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Dara Johnson asked whether the current fiscal year budget is consistent with the budget for years prior. Larry stated that the budget of \$266,000 for this fiscal year is the same amount from FY2015.

### **Chair's Report:**

#### *A. Council appointments*

Dr. Applewhite asked that Larry review the current situation with Council appointments. Larry stated that the SILC currently has two pending Council member appointments. Both potential Council appointees have significant experience in the Independent Living field.

#### *B. Committees*

Dr. Applewhite then indicated that appointments would be made to committees, asking Larry to remind Council of the standing committees in addition to those established under the new SPIL. Larry stated that the policy and advocacy committee and the resource development committee are both established under the new authorities for SILCs included in the new regulations.

Dara Johnson asked whether the SILC presently has an evaluation committee. Larry stated that the SILC will have an evaluation committee; but that presently, there have been no official sub-committee appointments. Dr. Applewhite stated that SILC sub-committees will be meeting on a monthly basis and that the full Council meetings will be held quarterly. At the Full-Council meeting, each sub-committee will present a report. Additionally, we will have a significant increase in the number of presentations that will occur at Full Council meetings.

Scott Lindbloom suggested the creation of a healthcare committee. Danita stated that the SILC will develop a resource development committee and that such a committee can maintain a focus on health as one of the resources that shall be developed.

### **Executive Director's Report:**

#### *A. Final IL Program regulations from ACL*

Larry announced that the Final Independent Living Program regulations from the Administration for Community Living were released in October. He stated that there are no significant changes between the present regulations and the draft regulations that came out one year prior. Larry stated that the upcoming 2017 SILC Congress will provide training on the updated program regulations.

Larry additionally indicated that significant language modifications will need to be made in our bi-laws regarding the make-up of the Council and the development of the State Plan; as the language no longer fits and needs to remain consistent. Larry announced to the Council that the executive committee will be working on changing the bi-laws and the executive order and that, in March, the committee will come back with some proposed bi-law changes.

#### *B. Action; Request to modify staff job descriptions*

Larry reminded attendees that organization policy dictates that job title and job description changes must be presented to the full Council for approval before any official modifications occur. Due to changes in organization structure and overall staff duties; Larry proposed that Melissa's title be modified to Director of Administration and Youth Initiatives and that Lilia's title be changed to Projects and Communications Coordinator.

Larry stated that he is requesting the authority to increase the Projects and Communications Coordinator position to 28-32 hours per-week if needed as the SILC begins work on the 2017 – 2019 State Plan for Independent Living. This position would become full-time if increased to 32 hours per SILC policies meaning the employee would become eligible for benefits, mainly health-insurance.

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Dr. Danita Applewhite asked for a motion to approve the new job titles and job descriptions. A motion to approve the updated titles and descriptions was made by Laura Duval. Scott Lindbloom seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, passing with 11 voting in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstaining.

### *C. Action; 2017 health insurance coverage for SILC employees*

Larry stated that the SILC has received health-insurance quotes for the upcoming year from Health-Net and that there has been a significant rise in health-care premiums. Presently, The SILC has been covering 100% of staff health-insurance premiums. The expected monthly premium for employees currently using the health insurance is \$1,372. The rise-in-cost is approximately \$200 per month.

Danita asked whether the increase in cost would include Lilia's health insurance if the position is increased to 32 hours. Larry stated that the quote from the broker estimated that the total for Lilia's health insurance would cost less than \$400 more per month.

Dr. Danita Applewhite asked for a motion to approve the purchase of health insurance for SILC employees. A motion to approve the purchase of health insurance for SILC employees was made by Pete Weaver. Laura Duval seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, passing with 11 voting in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstaining.

### *D. SILC Congress attendees*

Larry stated that the SILC has presently registered several Council members for the 2017 SILC Congress (as early registration ends today). He announced that he will be contacting Council members to confirm their attendance. Larry specified that priority will be given to newly appointed Council members, as they have not attended SILC Congress previously.

### *E. Action; Request to endorse Arizona Disability Coalition statement opposing changes to the Arizonans with Disabilities Act*

Larry provided an overview of what has transpired over the past year related to the AZDA, legal issues that small businesses have faced because of thousands of disability access claims being filed against businesses and the certainty that legislation will be introduced in the 2017 session that will result in limitations and barriers being placed on people who have disabilities. Specifically, issues related to the likelihood of a cure period and other delays if someone encounters discrimination and or barriers to access. Larry asked that the Council consider taking a position on the issue given the new authority of advocacy granted to the Council in the federal regulations. However, after significant discussion of these issues, Council members expressed concerns about taking this step, especially in relation to potential for the Governor to take a public position and the possibility that we might find ourselves at odds with his statements.

### *F. Office updates*

Larry provided the Council with a brief office update; stating that the SILC is currently operating under last year's contract from Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). This is in relation to the Innovation and Expansion funds we receive. Additionally, we do not yet have a contract in place to receive and distribute the Part B funding as outlined in the new SPIL. This has resulted in significant delays in implementation of SPIL related activities. Larry stated that he has a meeting with Kristen Mackey on the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month to discuss the delayed contract.

### **Action; Selection of firm to provide audit services:**

Larry explained to the Council that he has a number of concerns related to the auditor that we have been using and that he wishes to move to identify and select another firm. He notified the Council that for Fiscal Year 2016, our Audit was required to be completed by November 15, 2016. However, we have filed an extension to February 15<sup>th</sup>.

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2017. Larry stated that the SILC put out a request for proposals on our website and sent it to a number of firms. We received a response from Steven Peterson of the Rafferty Firm. Larry recommended the Council strongly consider this bid as we have worked with this firm from time to time to review our books and that he is very confident in their work.

Dr. Danita Applewhite asked for a motion to approve the selection of the Rafferty firm to provide audit services. A motion to approve selection of the Rafferty firm to provide audit services was made by Pete Weaver. Laura Duval seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, passing with 11 voting in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstaining.

### **Action; Possible relocation of the SILC office:**

Larry began the conversation by reminding everyone of the discussion related to this issue during the April Council meeting. He reviewed the outcome of the prior discussion and highlighted several points for consideration related to maintaining a physical office versus allowing employees to move to a remote office environment. This included discussion related to the very limited foot traffic we see because we are not an individual service provider, the fact that many of the tools needed to move to a remote environment are already in place, and the significant cost savings that would be realized. He then discussed logistical issues such as phones, computer/Internet access, Etc. Finally, he shared that he has had conversation with other SILCs that have adopted this approach across the country.

Dara Johnson asked about the lease term and if we would be permitted to exit without penalty. Larry stated that the SILC is technically under lease with Ability360 until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018 but that he has spoken with Phil Pangrazio, CEO of Ability360 and been told that his board has authorized him to allow us to exit the lease.

Pete Weaver asked what the monthly savings would be for the organization. Larry stated that the SILC currently pays over \$26,000 in rent each fiscal year and this would be the minimum amount saved from this transition.

Dr. Applewhite stated that she is excited about the changes and reminded the Council that remote office environments have proven to be extremely successful for other state's Independent Living Councils.

Scott Lindbloom asked whether the SILC will still provide a phone-conferencing option. Larry stated that we will still have phone conferences and that the SILC will ensure provision of accessible meeting spaces for those attending the meetings in-person.

Scott asked whether the SILC would be able to host meetings in various Arizona Counties. Larry responded by stating that the Council can look into this option.

Dr. Danita Applewhite asked for a motion to approve the relocation of the SILC office. A motion to approve the relocation of the SILC office was made by Scott Lindbloom. Eileen Tohonnie seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, passing with 11 voting in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstaining.

### **IL Network Report:**

Eileen Tohonnie, Director of Assist to Independence (located on the Navajo reservation Tuba City AZ) provided an IL network report. Ms. Eileen Tohonnie began her report by providing an update on up and coming IL Network projects. Ms. Eileen Tohonnie reported that the majority of Assist's current staff was newly hired within the past 4-5 months. Furthermore, Assist is working on a transportation program and is contracting with Indian Health Services for program costs. Additionally, Assist is making steps towards educating community tribal leaders on accessibility issues. Assist also recently received a trust-fund grant to build fifteen accessible homes on the Navaho reservation per year. Lastly, Assist is working towards serving underserved areas, as well as serving the youth of the Navaho

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nation. Assist has begun working with Community of Practice in Flagstaff in order to move youth-related efforts along.

### **State Rehabilitation Council report:**

Danita Applewhite provided a brief State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) report. Danita stated that several SRC council members have left the State Rehabilitation Council and that the SRC is currently not looking for replacements. Danita stated that RSA is presently servicing over 20,000 consumers and 68% are dealing with mental and psycho-social issues.

### **Tribal VR/Project 121 report:**

Paula Seanez provided a very brief Tribal VR/ Project 121 report. Paula stated that a scheduled quarterly meeting occurred for Project 121 Arizona, but many attendees were unable to participate.

### **Emergency Preparedness Presentation:**

Teresa Ehnert presented information on Emergency Preparedness in Arizona with emphasis on efforts the state has undertaken over the past few years to better accommodate individuals with access and functional needs. Teresa highlighted accomplishments of the Arizona Department of Health Services. Accomplishments included: improving independent living within shelters, gaining a 3000 sq. foot storage space full of accessibility equipment (with wheelchair ramps, assistive technology, canes, etc), and integrating a streamline planning process.

The Arizona Department of Health Services previously hosted workshops in partnership with the Arizona Center for Disability Law. Workshops focused on training the Northern region of Arizona on issues related to emergency preparedness. Through this initiative, 110 developmentally disabled Arizonans, using a train-the-trainer model, taught other developmentally disabled individuals emergency preparedness planning tools. Teresa stated that the organization is once again planning to host the Partners in preparedness Conference, an event they hold roughly every 18 months. This event brings together individuals from across the state to address emergency preparedness and AFN related issues.

Finally, Teresa discussed the Access and Functional Needs Taskforce and the mission of this group. Further, she indicated that much work remains for the participating organizations. She mentioned some of those organizations and specifically requested that she would like involvement from the SILC. She is hopeful that someone from the organization can continue to be involved in the effort.

### **AZYLF Alumni Association update:**

Melissa Ann Santora provided Council members with a copy of the 2016 Arizona Youth Leadership (AZYLF) Summary Report, detailing accomplishments that occurred during the 2016 forum. Anya Carillo provided Council members with a report on the AZYLF Alumni Association and summarized accomplishments of the association.

Anya presented the AZYLF Stick it to Stigma pledge, which was introduced on a National Level in Reno, Nevada during the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) conference. Stick it to Stigma is a grassroots advocacy campaign initiated by the Arizona Youth Leadership Forum (AZYLF) for Students and Transitioning Young Adults Who Have Disabilities.

### **Employment First in Arizona:**

Susan Vorel of the Sonoran UCEDD presented Employment First of Arizona, an initiative whose mission is to create employment opportunities for individuals who have disabilities in the state. Susan provided a report of recent activities of Employment First in Arizona as well as an overview of the mission and philosophy of the effort. She highlighted ongoing efforts related to WIOA, work with the Department of Education, and sub-minimum wage

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issues for people who have disabilities.

Susan stated that Employment first applied for a grant in July from the Administration on Community Living but they were not successful. However, the effort helped to establish a five-year plan for the Employment First initiative in our state.

### **Announcements:**

Scott Lindbloom asked when the next Full Council meeting will be occurring. Larry stated that meeting dates have not been confirmed for next year, but the meeting will likely be in March. Danita stated that she will be in touch with Council members regarding sub-committee appointments.

### **Call to the Public; non-agenda items**

No comments were received.

### **Action; Adjourn:**

Danita Applewhite asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dara Johnson. Pete Weaver seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, passing with 11 voting in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstaining.