

UNAPPROVED MINUTES



Wednesday, June 3, 2020 at 1:00– 3:30 pm PST
Videoconference/Teleconference ONLY

Council Members Present: Shawnique Cotton, Laura Duval, Scott Lindbloom, Susan Molloy, Suann Moore, Randy Russell, Wendy Swager, and Kristen Mackey (Ex-Officio).

Council Members Absent: Dr. Danita Applewhite, Joy Johnson-Pearson, Eileen Tohonnie, Paula Seanez and Audra Paletta

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

Public Present: None.

Welcome and Introductions:

Susan Molloy, AZSILC Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:07 pm. Welcome and introductions were completed.

Public Comment on Agenda Items Only:

Susan Molloy called for public comment. No public comment was received.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Susan Molloy asked if the committee members have all received and read the meeting minutes from March 30, 2020. Susan Molloy brought up the following edits: SILC is misspelled. Challenging was misspelled. Report doesn't list range of gender identifications. And check on Shawnique Cotton's name. Laura Duval noted she was at the meeting. Scott Lindbloom moved to approve the minutes with those changes for the March 30, 2020 meeting. Shawnique Cotton seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None opposed. No abstentions. The motion carried unanimously.

Report of the Treasurer:

Laura Duval reported that the April financials and May 2020 budget amendment were approved by the AZSILC Board of Directors as presented.

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Report of the Chairperson:

Susan Molloy reported that she has read the new State Plan for Independent Living. Some of her concerns have been addressed with staff and some issues were resolved by the new tool.

Approval of State Plan for Independent Living

Sarah Kader asked if there were any comments regarding the new State Plan for Independent Living. No comments were made. Scott Lindbloom moved to approve the new State Plan for Independent Living for 2021-2023 as written. Wendy Swager seconded the motion. Kristen Mackey brought up a formatting issue on Page 9 that seemed to be only on her computer or resolved. All voted in favor. None opposed. No abstentions. The motion carried unanimously. Laura Duval mentioned that at the IL Network meeting, all five Centers for Independent Living agreed to sign off on the new SPIL. Sarah Kader concurred, adding that the minimum needed is three, but we are proud to have all five in agreement with the newly drafted State Plan.

Election of Officers

Susan Molloy presented and nominated the Slate of Officers that was selected at the Board of Directors meeting for election. The slate included Shawnique Cotton for Chair, Audra Paletta as Vice Chair and Laura Duval as Treasurer. All voted in favor. None opposed. No abstentions. The motion carried unanimously.

Report of the AZSILC Staff:

Director of Operations Report

Sarah Kader presented the Director of Operations Report. Sarah stated she wanted to take a moment to acknowledge two things: 1) That the pandemic has caused very trying times for everyone, with illness and death, isolation, and uncertainty. She expressed her concern for everyone and presence to support the Council. Sarah also expressed her sadness at the death of George Floyd, and acknowledged pain that the Black community is experiencing at this time.

Sarah went on to explain that all is well with AZSILC. Sarah has been working on the end of the year financials, budget amendments, and keeping up with all logistics and operations. Since Tahneesa Smith's departure, Sarah has taken over all of her duties, and all continues to run smoothly.

Director of Innovation Report

Melissa Ann Santora presented the Director of Innovation Report. Melissa reported that she has been working on two main things: AZYLF (AVYLF) and the new SPIL. She has spent most of her time getting AVYLF off the ground. She had their first virtual learning session on Saturday. There will be four sessions all on Saturdays, and then three sessions Monday through Friday. Also two statewide conferences in person, as of now, at ASU and UA in July. The universities so

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far have said they will be in person, but that individuals cannot have roommates. They plan to get specialized mics and branded masks among other things. She added that the new SPIL is done and she thanks AZSILC for the support.

Disability Integration Specialist Report

Sara Ann Joehnk shared the Disability Integration Specialist Report. Sara Ann stated that AZSILC hired two new interns, Grace and Tyler, for the summer. There have been three emergency training courses regarding COVID-19. Attendance was low but the online feedback has been good. The interns watched the course and then conducted it themselves at a later date. It has been two weeks since the State of Arizona has opened, and given it takes 2-14 days to develop symptoms of COVID-19, the next few days are important in seeing if there is a spike and if so how big.

Report of the AZSILC Committees:

Sara Ann Joehnk and Scott Lindbloom, Emergency Preparedness Committee Chair, provided a committee report. Some of Sara Ann's report was in her report as a staff member. Scott added that they are working with Kathy Basha of the Behavioral Health Planning Council regarding mental illness and emergency shelter. The committee is also working with the World Institute on Disability, working on the Partnership in Preparedness Summer Series.

Audra Paletta, SPIL Evaluation Committee Chair, was not present for the meeting so Sarah Kader gave the report. Sarah indicated the committee had met last quarter, and that all was progressing well. Sarah had sent the SPIL Evaluation Report to the Council prior to the meeting and asks if there were any questions. There were none. Sarah asked Melissa if she had anything to add and she did not.

Susan Molloy, SPIL Development Committee Chair, provided a committee report. Susan Molloy expressed confusion over section 2.3 in the new 2021 – 2023 State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). Melissa Ann Santora explained that this section was about the Plan for Coordination of Services and it included the geographical areas that Centers for Independent Living are working to provide services in. Melissa stated that this section is a new part of the State Plan for Independent Living. Susan commented she is overall happy with the readability the new State Plan for Independent Living.

Melissa Ann Santora thanked the designated state entity, Arizona Rehabilitation Service Administration (AZRSA), and Kristen Mackey in particular, for all the assistance and input they gave in drafting of the new State Plan for Independent Living. The new SPIL tool from the Administration on Community Living asked more detailed funding questions than in previous years.

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Report of the AZSILC Partner Agencies:

Laura Duval stated there was an IL Network meeting the morning on Wednesday, June 3. Some of Arizona's Centers for Independent Living have reopen, but some continue to work remotely.

Each of the Centers discussed the CARES act funding and how they were each able to use the funding for provide services to consumers. Each Center has purchased gloves, masks, and other necessities for working with consumers or in their officers during COVID-19.

Arizona Centers for Independent Living are providing Core Services as best as they can. The Centers for Independent Living remain optimistic that the COVID-19 pandemic will get better and all the Arizona Center for Independent Living will be open to the public once again.

Every Arizona Center for Independent Living, expect SMILE in Yuma, has drawn down funding from the CARES Act. Laura explained their Center is waiting for a report from their financial manager before drawing down these funds.

Kristen Mackey stated that all Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services and their business center has moved virtual due to COVID-19. Their offices are not open to the public and this is consistent with most state offices right now. Due to the events surrounding the George Floyd murder, AZRSA was warned that government buildings could be targets. It was recommended they do not remain at the office past 4pm, if they are at the office at all. In addition, they are not supposed to encourage clients to come to the physical office at the time.

Kristen Mackey explained that AZRSA is unsure what Arizona State Government funding will look like next fiscal year, due to the impact of COVID-19 to the state budget.

Kristen Mackey commented that AZRSA has worked to take in consideration the hardships related to COVID-19. They are avoiding quickly cutting off anyone from their services. Even after 91 days of work, VR will typically stop services, because you are considered to have job stability, but the state government has decided to continue these supports for people during this hard time.

Kristen Mackey mentioned that she has been looking for opportunities to support clients and staff at the time, but that don't also add to the workload by requiring additional approval from the government.

Kristen Mackey stated that AZRSA is working on activities that improve the number of clients that have skill gain before exiting the VR program. She explained that Arizona At Work is the statewide work development program that VR has never been successful lopped into. This partnership has been a top priority. AZRSA strives for the need for work force development to also serve the individuals in the community. AZRSA is working on their four-year plan, which is under review right now. Kristen anticipates signatures in early July.

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Scott Lindbloom asked if VR was assisting individuals with their Unemployment Insurance Claims, especially now that Unemployment is so high with COVID-19. Kristen Mackey answered that about 20 people at the VR are currently working to assist individuals with their Unemployment claims.

Shawnique Cotton asked Kristen Mackey if she thought there were any jobs available. Kristen stated yes, but it is only certain industries that are looking for new employees right now.

Scott Lindbloom mentioned that many businesses were not hiring new employees due to COVID-19, and it is particularly difficult for those who are vulnerable to COVID-19.

Kristen Mackey responded that in general, restaurants and retail were not searching for new workers currently due to COVID-19, but there has been an increased demand in help desk support job.

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Report was provided by Scott Lindbloom. Scott had no new updates to report.

Sarah Kader, Arizona Disability Coalition (ADC) Chair, provided an ADC report. Due to COVID-19, ADC has not met. Sarah Kader has reached out to the ADC Board but no one has responded. Sarah will continue to try and reach out to the Board so that an ADC meeting can be scheduled in the near future.

Announcements:

Shawnique Cotton shared additional information regarding the United Spinal Association of AZ, just received a grant for individuals with spinal injuries or disorders. Interested individuals are asked to email a one paragraph story to UnitedSpinalAAZ@gmail.com.

Call to the Public:

AZSILC Chair, Susan Molloy called for public comment. No public comment was received.

Adjournment:

Scott Lindbloom moved to adjourn the meeting. Laura Duval seconded the motion. Susan Molloy adjourned the meeting at 2:31 pm.