

**Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Meeting
Wednesday, December 3rd, 2008
Sioux Falls Ramada Inn**

SILC Attendees:

Ryan Green
Larry Puthoff
Jim Simbeck
Brad Konechne
Grady Kickul, DRS

Jason Lorang
Vona Johnson
Marilyn Kinsman
Gaye Mattke, DSBVI

Others Present:

Faith Ellis, Staff
Matt Cain, PFC Guest
Amber Braithwaite, Interpreter

Shelly Pfaff, Staff
Vickie Nelson, DRS Guest
Kathy Entwisle, Interpreter

SILC Non-Attendees:

Alex Gourneau Linda Biffert Gary Wald
Jamie Mack Denise White

OPENING ACTIONS:

Chairman, Ryan Green, called the meeting to order at 1:45 pm with a welcome and had everyone introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes:

He confirmed that everyone had previously received the minutes in the mail. Ryan asked if there were any changes or additions. Upon hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve. **Motion to approve the minutes from the October meeting - Made, Seconded, and Carried. (MSC)**

Approval of Agenda:

Ryan asked for any additions or edits to the agenda. Grady asked to add an item #5 under his Director's Report –

Introduction of Future's Program participant. **Motion to approve the Agenda as amended – MSC.**

(A) DRS Director's Reports:

1. Director's Comments - Grady also welcomed everyone and thanked them for traveling in spite of the slightly bad roads in some areas. He had three things to report:

First, as of November 12th he had to put a freeze on all non-essential travel and all out-of-state travel due to budget constraints. This was done in an effort to provide funds for essential travel needed to serve consumers.

Also due to budget realities, the decision was made to cancel the Mid-Winter Conference in Pierre that was to have been next March. The Governor's Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, March 10th, 2009, will still be held at the Pierre Best Western Ramkota Hotel. The Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) and the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI) will each be holding a meeting at that time, so they may attend the Awards Luncheon. Later today, the SILC will be asked if they would also like to plan their next meeting around that March time and attend the Luncheon. If two or three boards/councils meet, there will be time scheduled for meeting together.

Secondly, on November 25th, Governor Rounds issued a freeze on hiring, out-of-state travel, and purchases of capital assets in response to the weakening economy. Grady assured the SILC that these measures would not affect how the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) serves its consumers or the SILC's activities.

Next, Grady announced that the SPIL signatories received notice from Western Resources for disAbled Independence (WRDI) in Rapid City that they are reorganizing as a cost cutting measure. They have cut three positions: an administrative assistant, an Independent Living Specialist/Advocacy Coordinator, and a janitor/driver. They are creating three different part-time positions. The SPIL signatories have requested that Ann Van Loan keep them abreast of how or if future changes impact their ability to continue serving their area consumers.

As WRDI Board President, Margot explained that these changes were not made lightly; much consideration was given to how these would impact serving consumers. She added that they are currently advertising for the three new PT positions. They've received numerous applications for the Rapid City area, but hardly any yet in the Pierre area.

2. DRS Budget Update - Grady mentioned the Governor had given his Budget Address yesterday, and his key points were that income is limited, we need to hold on to what we have, and we need to search for new ways to fund programs. By state law, South Dakota has to balance our state budget, so there is no choice but to make appropriate cutbacks when income does not match anticipated expenditures. Other regional states are having even more budget troubles, so South Dakota is grateful we have reserves we can access to cover any unavoidable budget shrotfall.

For Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) we are expecting a 1.5% inflationary increase in our allocated budgets. Grady stressed that this increase is in the Governor's budget, but it

could change once Session is underway, and if the economy takes an even worse downward turn.

Grady went on to say that the DRS operating budget starts at approximately \$20 million. Last fiscal year, ending June 2008, they came in under budget in all program areas. Currently in DRS, there are no waiting lists for any of the programs and all eligible people are being served. They are projecting sufficient resources to cover all programs in the current fiscal year. Possibly the home modifications and assisted devices programs will have a waiting list sometime soon. As for the 2010 budget, he can't make any predictions.

3. Centers for Independent Living (CIL) Financial Work Group - This group has been meeting monthly, working on defining organizational charts, gathering employee time studies, reviewing the four core services, and gathering cost reports.

Two of the four CILs have not submitted complete and accurate information as requested. Consequently, as of November 5th, they were all four notified that their November 10th meeting was being postponed until the Department has received all of the requested data. As of today, there still are some missing pieces. Grady says that DRS is providing technical assistance and support to the CILs in attempt to help them provide the needed data. When the data from all four centers is in, the Financial Work Group will resume its work. An accurate picture cannot be established with only half the information, and because a new reimbursement system will be in place as of July 1st, 2009, DHS wants all four centers to be able to say they were actively involved in the process. Grady added that in a sense, it appears that the two centers that did comply with the requests are being

punished. He assured the SILC that this is not, nor will be, the case.

A member raised a question, if some of these reporting problems were due to the new CFAL software program the CILs are using? Grady said “no”. It has more to do with fiscal/accounting record keeping, accounting for everything they’re doing/spending and how they’re serving consumers. He stated he believes it has to do with some resistance to change, and the common attitude, “we’ve always done it this way.” Grady invited SILC members to call him if they have questions or comments. He’ll keep the group posted as this process progresses.

DRS is also working on re-designing the on-site technical assistance reviews. They will involve case record reviews, fiscal reviews and policy reviews. There seem to be a lot of purchases of devices and modifications, and these practices will also be reviewed carefully. A review team will complete the reviews. The team will include the DRS IL Program Specialist as team leader, the assistant division director and a representative of the department’s fiscal operation.

Using this newer method, the first on-site review happened in Winner at the Native American Advocacy Project in September. The other dates are not set yet, but the plan is for one review in January, one in February, and the fourth and final one in March. The sites will get a 30-day notice when the schedule is set. Then 30-60 days after the review, a draft of the review report will be provided to the center, and they will then have 30-60 days to respond. The finalized report will be completed and shared after the receipt of any comments from the reviewed CIL.

4. NDEAM – Grady mentioned again how very proud we’ve been to have Mt. Rushmore representing us so prominently on the National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) poster this year. All the NDEAM activities in South Dakota have been quite successful this fall. Area NDEAM activities partnered with more employers, more agencies, and mayor committees this year, which contributed to their success. The Division is pleased with the exposure these events provide. NDEAM is making a difference in the public perception of people with disabilities, as more and more people participate every year.

5. Future’s Program Participant - As added to the agenda earlier, Grady introduced Vicki Nelson, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) Sioux Falls office. Vicki has been a rehabilitation counselor for thirteen years and is a member of the Futures Program since January 2008. This program provides opportunities for existing employees to prove their leadership abilities with extra assignments in addition to their regularly assigned duties. They have three-year terms at which time they complete their involvement in the program and others are rotated into the program.

Vicki reported that she has been active in helping to revise the Fee Schedule Program Guide. They’re reviewing all the wages employees with disabilities are receiving, the services providers are providing to consumers and the provider reimbursement fee schedules. The goal of this project is to maximize the employment potential of employees with disabilities by enticing providers to look for the higher paying jobs rather than any job or position.

(B) SDBVI Director’s Reports: Gaye reported that SBVI met in Pierre on November 14th. They welcomed new member, Robert Kean of SD Advocacy Services. Members

who attended the Focus on Success conference provided very positive feedback. The Board recommended that the next Focus on Success conference be held in 2011 in Pierre.

The Board's annual report to the Governor and the RSA Commissioner on the status of the SBVI Programs was discussed. The Director will provide the Executive Summary and highlight the 2008 accomplishments. The report includes the performance of the division, including caseload information, the number of applications, average age of the consumers at application, and closure and wage information. The deadline for submission of the report is December 31st.

Assistive Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC) - The ATAC met by teleconference on November 3rd. Current members include Keith Bundy, Deanne Curran, Chuck Fullenkamp, Bridget Stoesser, and Eric Weiss. It's purpose is to advise the Division on matters concerning assistive technology as it affects consumers in the area of employment or preparation for employment or independent living, as well as staff of SBVI who utilize AT. Ed Pinkman and Robert Kean have also volunteered to join the committee.

CCTV Program - Eight new 19" Merlin2 CCTVs were purchased and distributed in November. This brings the waiting list to a minimal number. The Low Vision Store in Rapid City has shared preliminary information about a CCTV lease program they are implementing. This program may benefit individuals who are not eligible for the SBVI CCTV program.

(C) DRS IL Program Specialist's Report: Grady reported that Denise White was unavailable to attend today, but that she had told him she had nothing new to report.

(D) SILC Staff Report: Shelly said she had three main things to mention today. First, the SILC also completes a year end report – Section 704 Report. She and Denise White are currently working on that together. It's due December 31st, and it's going well so far.

Next she mentioned that the SILC Congress is set for January 3rd – 6th, 2009 in Las Vegas. The cost is \$345 per person to attend. Shelly said she personally feels it may not be the best use of dollars right now due to ongoing struggles occurring between some states and RSA, as well as considering current fiscal realities. After discussing options, **Motion was to not send anyone this year to SILC Congress, and leave options open for the future - MSC.**

Next Shelly talked about how annually SILC has provided dollars to support a CIL staff training event. This training took place in the late spring and all four CILs sent staff. Shelly proposed another approach, dividing the money with all the CILs, and allowing the individual centers to provide training specific to their staff needs. Roughly \$11,000 is allocated for this activity. It was agreed that the need is there, especially regarding the inconsistencies of delivering the four core services as mandated by our state plan, and that the four centers could benefit from such training.

Considerable discussion followed, and in its conclusion Grady asked SILC Staff to survey the four centers on their training priorities or needs. Since this training needs to occur yet this April or May, a plan will be in place by the March meeting. If needed, the Division will provide monies to supplement the SILC training budget.

(E) CIL Reports: Margot reported on behalf of Western Resources for disAbled Independence. She explained that their director, Ann Van Loan, has been quite ill and out of the office. She's doing better and is expected to return eventually.

Their year end report states they had 460 consumers, which was 59 persons more than last year.

They're starting a holiday fund raising appeal right now, and it features a raffle. They're raffling off a \$1,400 scooter, and tickets are \$5 a piece. If members are interested in purchasing these, she has them along today, and invited them to catch her after the meeting.

Due to a blizzard in late October, the ADA/ABA Training was postponed and rescheduled for Thursday, Dec. 11th, at the same location in Rapid City.

As Grady had mentioned previously, Margot reported that WRDI has undergone some restructuring due to decreased funding levels. This is going well so far, and Margot assured SILC members that serving consumers is still priority number one at WRDI.

Matt Cain, Prairie Freedom Center (PFC) Director from Sioux Falls, reported that they are working on two upcoming conferences for next summer. The Third Annual Lighting the Way Conference on Autism is next June 11th and 12th, at the Augustana College Campus in Sioux Falls. Matt encouraged attendance to hear the two featured speakers: Dr. Jim Ball and Dr. Temple Grandin.

Next, he said they are planning the Mind, Body and Soul Conference, June 19th and 20th, at the Sioux Falls Washington High School campus. This conference is in collaboration with the MS Society. More details will be coming in the future. Matt encouraged members to please call if they want more information on this event.

Matt recently attended the National Home and Community Based Conference in Boston, MA. He said it was very good and beneficial to have gone.

PFC has undergone some staff changes in their Madison location. Rick Sterling has resigned, and they have hired Patty Bourdeaux Nelson to start on December 8th.

They've also added a $\frac{3}{4}$ time person to work on the Peer Support Services. This position will also work closely with Heather Bonander, their executive assistant.

Next, Matt reported that they have contracted with the private consulting firm of Hinken & Schultz, out of Sioux Falls, to help PFC create a new mission statement, new logo, and new name. They feel they need a name that more properly reflects what it is they actually do. Matt admitted this is an expensive undertaking, but that it is all being covered by a large private donation they received.

On the topic of funding, Matt added that they recently partnered with Timber Lodge Restaurant on, "Timber Lodge Night Out". On that one given night, Timber Lodge donated 15% of sales tied to PFC. He said it only raised \$320, but was a no cost project, and a great promotional opportunity.

Another cost free promotion that PFC did was with the Hyvee Food Stores and their Operation Helpful Smile. They

placed change/cash donation drop boxes at all their checkout lanes and raised \$1,120 during one week. Again this was a cost free effort and great promotional opportunity.

PFC is also doing a Christmas appeal letter. This year they tried a new approach including a testimonial letter sharing how PFC's services positively affected an individual's life. Chris Olson is a person with a disability who once was served by PFC, and is now a professor in Madison.

Matt continued by saying that they have two new board members: Travis Arenson and Sharee Raymond.

Matt reported that this past year PFC served 1,065 consumers, which was actually 35 less than last year. They weren't concerned about this number having gone down a bit since they were short one staff person for the majority of the year. Their goal to serve in the coming fiscal year will be 1,200 consumers.

Matt finished with how PFC has restructured their IL specialist job descriptions so that they are all doing the same thing - generalists vs. specialized positions. It has been working out well, and to date, they have no waiting list for consumers to get services.

(G) SD Housing Development Authority (SDHDA) Update

Vona Johnson started by talking about the home mortgage crisis that's occurring in our nation right now. This did affect them some and for a while they did not issue any bonds. Things are a tad better already and they now can again issue bonds. South Dakota is currently one of only two states in the nation where home values have actually increased, not decreased. She advises not letting the

national media coverage scare people away from home ownership.

In response to job layoffs that are happening, SDHDA has collaborated with Citi Bank to implement the SD Mortgage Crisis Hotline to help answer consumer questions on credit, renting, foreclosures, etc. There are two numbers, East River call 1-877-832-0163, West River call 1-877-832-0161. Their website, www.sdhda.org also has these Mortgage Crisis Hotline numbers, more detailed information and additional links to assist people. Vona asked SILC members to please share this information with anyone they may know, stressing to people that they need to act early if they feel they're not able to make home mortgage payments, don't wait. Brokers really do want to help people to stay in their homes, not foreclose on them.

With the Federal Bailout Bill, SDHDA should be receiving approximately \$19.6 million to assist people who already have been foreclosed on homes or even abandoned places. This assistance will target the very low income. The draft plan is on their website. *(listed above)*

Vona said that at their November SDHDA Conference in Pierre, they unveiled their new Rural Housing Playbook. It is a detailed road map of sorts to assist small communities in addressing their unique housing needs. Copies are available; again, please visit their website for contact information.

Vona shared with members a copy of their newly printed SDHDA 2008 Annual Report, believing it should be of interest to them.

Shelly asked Vona if she could share with SILC members about the Poverty Simulation that they used as a pre-

conference session at their recent event in Pierre. Vona explained that the Poverty Simulation is a large role-playing opportunity, where individuals are assigned to be a person in a poverty situation, and then given coupons they have to use to spend on transportation, utilities, groceries, doctor visits, etc. They're put on a tight time schedule and go to work, pay bills, pick up the kids, get to appointments, basically going through life and experiencing the troubles the way people in poverty experience them. It tends to be quite the eye-opener for people who aren't familiar with the extra problems that just happen to people living on very limited budgets and the extremely tough choices they face.

Shelly proposed using this Poverty Simulation as a training opportunity for agencies or providers of services to people with disabilities, i.e. VR, IL, DSS. The members seemed to be in agreement and suggested investigating it further. Vona provided contact information: Barb Garcia, Community Development in Rapid City, at 394-4181.

(F) Department of Social Services (DSS) Report - Marilyn Kinsman explained that the Medicare Part D Open enrollment period is open now for consumers who need to change or update their plans. DSS plan finder program, being supported by SHIINE, had 55 people visit them their first hour open. South Dakota is projected to provide 5,000 one-on-one counseling sessions helping consumers through this process. DSS is running both TV and radio ads to spread the word about making the right choices. To date, these ads seem affective because calls in to the SHIINE office have really increased. SHIINE volunteers are documenting all information gathered into one database for future analysis.

DSS is working on a Domestic Violence Conference set for Sioux Falls, next September. The target is to host approximately 300 people, including counselors, agencies, providers, shelters, and lawyers, etc. The question was posed, “will there be sessions specifically on violence against people with disabilities?” Marilyn answered she thought there was consideration of such a session by the planning participants.

Marilyn told the group that the new traumatic brain injury (TBI) site, Sunrise Villa in Irene, is going good. It opened August 18th, 2008, and has eight people living there already. These are eight people who were living at out-of-state facilities, and are now home in SD. She said the families are enjoying greater closeness to their injured family members, and the individuals themselves, are progressing well. Sunrise Villa was made possible by a partnership with Avera-McKenna and Ability Building Services out of Yankton. Marilyn was asked if there is an age limit on residents there, and she said, yes, ages 22 and up. Marilyn added that there are an additional nine South Dakotans with TBI currently placed out-of-state in acute rehabilitation facilities.

Marilyn shared a report from the Governor’s Healthcare Taskforce regarding the care needs of the elderly. In 2006, House Bill 1156 authorized this study. DSS hired Abt Associates to conduct the study, and the findings are bleak. SD has a large, growing population of elderly; these aging individuals are guilty of poor planning for their own long-term care; our labor force is not growing fast enough to replace these workers, especially in the healthcare industry; we have a shortage of long-term care facilities to care for them; and the actual facilities we have are getting old themselves. DSS is going to work hard to follow the most aggressive

approaches that Abt Associates has prescribed, but these steps will take time, money and patience. Marilyn then reviewed the document in detail with the group.

CLOSING ACTIONS:

Next Meeting:

The next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, March 10th, 2009, to be held in conjunction with the Governor's Awards Luncheon, at the Ramkota Hotel, in Pierre.

Future Agenda Items:

Jim Simbeck suggested that possibly the SD United for Hope and Recovery be an agenda item at the next meeting. Gaye agreed, and suggested that this could be a good topic to share with the other Boards, too.

Adjournment of the Meeting:

Motion to adjourn at 5:05 PM - MSC.

Ryan and Grady both thanked everyone for their attendance and wished them a good evening. The SILC reconvenes here again tomorrow morning at 8:30 AM.