

**Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Meeting  
June 22 and 23, 2010  
Ramkota Best Western – Pierre**

**SILC MEMBER ATTENDEES:** Linda Biffert, Larry Puthoff, Patrick Czerny, Margot Burton, Ann Fortin, Matt Cain, Grady Kickul and Gaye Mattke. **SILC MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:** Brad Konechne, Jim Simbeck, Vona Johnson, Philomine Moran, Jason Lorang, Ryan Green, Monte Tschetter and Marilyn Kinsman. **OTHERS PRESENT:** Ann Van Loan and Natasha Beierle, WRDI; Denise White, DRS staff; Shelly Pfaff, SILC staff; Julie Paluch, Interpreter; and Alecia Osburn, Interpreter.

The SILC began this meeting by participating in a joint meeting with the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired. This meeting ran from 11:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. A luncheon was served following a few opening comments by Gaye Mattke, Director of the Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) and a blessing of the meal by Rita Weber, Board of SBVI member.

The afternoon agenda included a facilitated panel on service coordination between vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs and a facilitated conversation on tasks/functions that all three groups carry out and efforts to coordinate these in the past, as well as identifying how to strengthen or build upon them. The final topic of the afternoon was an explanation of employment initiatives supported by the Division of Rehabilitation Services i.e., employer resource network, business resource network, Project SEARCH and The NET.

A break was taken from 5 to 5:30, followed by a presentation on the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) by Bob Jahner

and Joe Mathews, consultants working with the two divisions to carry out an assessment.

The joint meeting was a time for members of all three groups to meet and network with one another, to learn about each other and the system with which they most closely interact, and to identify collaborative efforts for the future.

### **SILC BUSINESS MEETING – OPENING ACTIONS:**

**Meeting Protocol** - Linda Biffert, Chairperson, called the SILC meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. She welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for being here. Linda reminded participants of the meeting protocol, and she requested all to please participate in an orderly fashion.

**Feedback on Joint Meeting** – SILC members commented on the value of this meeting and the value of being seated with individuals from other boards/councils, which forced them out of their comfort zone. Generally, the comments were very positive. There were some comments that late afternoon/early evening session felt long, and there had been an expectation that more dialogue was going to be a part of the joint meeting.

**Approval of Agenda** – Linda confirmed that everyone had received a copy of the agenda. She asked if there were any changes or additions. Shelly asked to add one topic under SILC Staff Report. Due to a lack of a quorum, consensus was to accept the agenda as amended.

**Approval of Minutes** – After confirming everyone had received a copy; Linda called for any changes or additions to the March SILC minutes and May 5<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee minutes. Again, due to the lack of a quorum, consensus was that the minutes were acceptable and needed no changes.

**Public Comment Time** – Linda called for any public comment. Shelly asked the Chairperson’s permission to step out of her SILC role. Linda approved her request. Shelly, as COALITION staff, spoke to having several copies of the 2009 rural and specialized transportation services report. She offered it to attendees, and she also invited them to go to the DOT website to access the report electronically.

At this time a brief break was taken.

**SILC STAFF REPORT:**

**2010 CIL Staff Training Report** – Shelly shared highlights of the CIL staff training agenda, and feedback received through the completed evaluations. She reported that about 25 people participated in the training. It was held at the AmericInn of Ft. Pierre. She explained that staff would be looking to book facilities for next year’s training soon, so we can hopefully get all participants at one location. Gaye reported that “Focus on Success” will be held at the Ramkota in Pierre during April of next year, and she encouraged that all – divisions and boards/councils – consider how they might coordinate or collaborate on training. By doing so, she suggested we might all know more about the larger systems, which consumers are accessing.

**Survey Final Reports** – Shelly had sent out these reports to SILC members earlier, and at this time she spent a little time describing the two different surveys and an overview of the responses. She proposed the possibility of the SILC completing a consumer satisfaction survey on an ongoing basis, similar to how DRS carries out their survey. There was good discussion on how CILs and the Older Blind program complete consumer satisfaction surveys. At the conclusion of the conversation, consensus was to establish a work group involving SILC members, Division and SILC staff and a couple of CIL directors to further explore options and bring recommendations to the SILC. People who volunteered, or were designated to

participate, on this group were Matt Cain, Ann Van Loan, Ann Fortin and Gaye Mattke. Matt asked to possibly have Vicky Kerkvliet serve in his place, and Gaye asked that Sandy Neyhart be her representative. SILC staff will work on scheduling a conference call to begin the work.

**Staff Support Agreement** – Shelly reported that an agreement is in place for the provision of these services. She shared that she is thinking about a different process for feedback from the SILC and BVR so all members have an opportunity to participate in this process, rather than only the Chairpersons and DRS Director. She doesn't have a specific approach in mind, but once she does, she'll visit further with the involved parties. She also explained that she had been thinking that it is important to provide the SILC with a regular report on the funds within the agreement that are the SILC's budget – CIL Staff Training, SILC Member Travel, SILC Staff Travel and Strategic Planning. There was a variety of discussion on this, and it was agreed that staff would bring a report to the next meeting and the SILC would continue conversation on it at that time.

At this time a break was taken. When all had returned, prior to officially reconvening the meeting, Shelly was invited to share why several members were not able to be in attendance. She shared the input she had received from the absent members. She then went on to share that Ryan Green and his family will be moving out of state – to Oregon. SILC members spoke to the impact Ryan has had on issues impacting South Dakotans with disabilities, and they spoke to their thanks for his work and their wishes for every success in this new venture.

Shelly was asked about the Dare to Dream Conference held last week. She reported that it was very successful with approximately 250 adults and 60 children in attendance, of which about half of the adults were self-advocates. Shelly also reported on the Gubernatorial Candidates Forum held at Dare to Dream, which was moderated by the League of Women Voters. It was the first such event to happen

following the primary election. She indicated that the next Dare to Dream Conference will be held in 2012, and the location is yet to be determined. A face-to-face debriefing session of the planning committee will be held on July 8<sup>th</sup> in Chamberlain.

**Thank You Letters/Notes** – Shelly read two “thank yous” received by the SILC. One was in response to their financial support of the 2010 Youth Leadership Forum. Staff will explore the possibility of YLF attendees coming to the next SILC meeting to talk about their experiences. The second one was from Matt Cain. The first portion was in regard to the SILC’s financial support of ILC’s new marketing video. The second portion was on behalf of ILC, WRDI and OIL in regard to the SILC’s financial support of the IL cost-effectiveness study.

### **CIL DIRECTOR’S REPORTS:**

Linda introduced this portion of the meeting by reporting that following their last meeting she had written a letter to Marla Bullbear of the Native American Advocacy Project, encouraging their participation at the quarterly SILC meeting. She reported that Marla had responded via correspondence, expressing concerns of financial and staff costs to present a five-minute report at the meetings. Linda was back in touch with Marla, expressing her understanding of Marla’s concerns and encouraging that if they are not able to be present, they would send a written report to SILC staff for distribution at the regularly scheduled SILC meetings.

**Independent Living Choices (ILC)** – Matt reported that ILC was one of the conference planners/sponsors of the Lighting the Way Conference on Autism. It was very successful, and he envisions them continuing their involvement in this yearly event. Matt shared that ILC set a goal of serving 1200 individuals in the current year. As of June 1<sup>st</sup>, ILC has served 800 individuals, so he believes they will meet or exceed their goal. Matt then reported on staff changes that have occurred at ILC – Maggy Morrow and Katy Blancher have left ILC;

Kellie Anderson and Michelle Klemens have joined their staff. Sara Jo Ferguson, their receptionist for the past three plus years, has been promoted to full-time Peer Support Coordinator. She has a Masters degree in counseling, and Matt expects the Peer Counseling will at least double under her leadership. He is presently interviewing for one position, and he has three, second interviews this week. He was asked how many staff he has serving the 800 individuals, and he responded with seven. They continue to have services out of Sioux Falls, Mitchell, Madison and Yankton, with outreach to the Chamberlain area. Linda asked Matt to tell his staff “thanks” for all their work in serving South Dakotans with disabilities.

**Opportunities for Independent Living** – No representative from OIL was present, and a written report had not been made available to staff.

**Western Resources for dis-ABLED Independence (WRDI)** – Ann Van Loan provided this report. She started by handing out a brochure on the Tribute to the Americans with Disabilities Act event (see attached), and she reviewed the schedule for that day’s events. She also reported on an event to be held on July 28<sup>th</sup>, which also relates to the ADA anniversary celebration. Ann then reviewed a written report, which she had prepared for her Board of Directors in May (see attached). Having joined the meeting a bit late, Denise asked a question about whether the report had been handed out to all in attendance. Hearing that it had been, Denise clarified the “State” did not “cut off funding for the Home Modifications Assistive Devices Program in mid-year of the contract. The Division had made an error in awarding contracts, and they over-obligated funds for this program by approximately \$7,000 for the entire program. Rather than have this adjustment impact FY11, when ARRA funds will end, they adjusted it for the FY10 budget.

Linda asked Ann Fortin about the Aberdeen Mayor’s Committee and their efforts in support of an ADA Anniversary Celebration, as well as their work on improving accessibility on a daily basis. Ann reviewed

the planned events for the ADA Anniversary. She also spoke of their campaign to have Aberdeen accessible in 2010. Linda commended the Aberdeen Mayor's Committee for their efforts, and she commented on the changes she has seen as a result of their efforts. Shelly then shared that the COALITION is listing known ADA Anniversary Celebration events on their homepage. Margot added that the COALITION has also included links to the Gubernatorial candidates' websites on their homepage.

**Third Party IL Cost Effectiveness Study** - Matt reported that they are working with the USD Government Research Bureau, and the Bureau is close to getting started on the actual study activities. They expect it to be completed by the end of summer.

### **DRS IL PROGRAM SPECIALIST REPORT:**

**IL Financial Workgroup** – Denise reported that contracts are out, a little later than usual, and they are waiting for the signed contracts to be returned. They have also worked with CFAL to have a one-button approach to generating monthly reports, so CIL staff time needed for this task should be lessened. She also reported that there were no rate increases for IL for FY11, and this is true for any rates paid by the Department of Human Services to various providers. The group is meeting as an ad hoc group, more informally and less regularly. Grady and Denise are open to meeting with the group at any time that a request might be made to do so. Three of the four CILs earned their entire contract amount for FY10.

**Core Services** – Denise reported that core services continue to be the primary services provided by the CILs. She continues to review the core service data in order to identify trends that may be occurring.

Denise reported that the ARRA funds will end at the conclusion of FY11, and when that happens the HMAD program will not be funded.

She anticipates there will be conversations about this during the coming months.

### **SBVI DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

**Board Activities/Collaboration with SILC** – Gaye provided an update on a deaf/blind pilot program that they are working with CSD on developing and implementing. They are seeking to provide peer support to people who are deaf/blind and use ASL to communicate, and people who are deaf/blind who do not use ASL for communication. The pilot program will be for six months, and it will provide support of interpreters, service support providers, drivers and assistive technology. It will target people from Sioux Falls and a two-hour distance from Sioux Falls.

Gaye then reported on the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired supporting a media campaign “focusing on blindness”. They are working with Media One on this campaign, and the current contract is only for development costs. They will need to develop a new agreement for the media buy.

Next, Gaye reported that after not having a raise in driver rates since 2006, she sought an increase. She has been notified by the Bureau of Personnel that the rate increase has been approved, and it is now \$9/hour. This new rate also applies to reader services. Discussion followed on how this might impact the SILC. Staff indicated that policy has been to follow State rates for such services, and staff would continue to do so unless the SILC directed them to do otherwise. Consensus was that staff should continue with the current policy of following State rates.

### **DRS DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

**ARRA Part B and Part C** – Grady explained how the reporting requirements are handled by DRS, and how the CILs will need to participate in this reporting process. He offered assistance to the CILs, since DRS has been reporting and the CILs will just be starting.

**Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA)** – Grady shared a couple of comments on this effort, including the fact that the SILC Chair, who will be elected at the next meeting, will be a part of the CSNA Executive Committee.

**Meeting with RSA Commissioner Ruttledge** – Grady shared that at a recent regional meeting, he had the opportunity to meet the RSA Commissioner Ruttledge. She previously was the director of a VR agency in Washington. She has experience in both the IL and VR programs, and she is a person with a disability. Grady and Gaye shared that they are looking forward to her leadership and working with her.

**New RSA IL Chief** – Grady reported that Tim Beatty is the new Chief of IL Services under the Rehabilitation Services Administration. He also shared that for the short-term, Sue Rankin-White will still be a lead contact on IL issues until Tim becomes more familiar with the federal system. Tim has worked for 28 years in the California Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

**Ramp Materials Purchase** – Denise reported that at the end of the fiscal year, DRS purchased \$150,000 in ramp sections from Springfield. This equates to 70 ramps, and they will be working with the CILs to distribute these ramps.

**SILC Appointments** – Grady reported that the Governor's staff is working on appointments to the SILC. We expect the appointments to be made very soon, and new members will be present at the next meeting.

**ADVOCACY ISSUES:** Disability Advocacy Network – Margot is the SILC representative to the network, and she asked Shelly to speak to what has been happening. She reported that the Third Annual Disability Policy Summit is set for July 20<sup>th</sup> in Oacoma. The focus this year will be legislative issues, how to work on other fronts throughout the year and the effectiveness of the network. Margot asked if there

were any issues the SILC wanted her to bring forward; none were raised. Linda asked if the SILC saw value in the summit through its participation then possibly they would want to provide some financial support of this effort. After much conversation, consensus was that this would be an agenda item at the next meeting.

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

Recognition of Outgoing Members – Margot, as Vice Chairperson, took the lead in thanking Linda for her service on the SILC and provided her with a plaque in recognition of her service. She spoke to Linda's passion and commitment. Grady and Gaye added their appreciation for Linda's involvement, as well as her passion and commitment to making a difference. Linda thanked the SILC for the opportunity to serve, expressing that it has been a very positive experience and she hopes she has added to the work of the SILC. Ryan Green and Jason Lorang will also be leaving the SILC. Plaques have been made for them, and staff will send them out on the SILC's behalf.

### **CLOSING ACTIONS:**

**Future Agenda Items** – None discussed beyond items noted earlier in the minutes.

**Scheduling the Next Meeting** – Staff will try to schedule the next meeting for the afternoon of September 8<sup>th</sup> and the morning of September 9<sup>th</sup> in Pierre/Ft. Pierre.

Chairperson Linda Biffert adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:30 a.m.