

**Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Meeting
September 29 & 30, 2009
AmericInn Lodge & Suites, Ft. Pierre**

SILC MEMBER ATTENDEES: Jim Simbeck, Larry Puthoff, Ryan Green, Patrick Czerny, Margot Burton, Monte Tschetter, Ann Fortin, Matt Cain, Grady Kickul and Gaye Mattke. **SILC NON-ATTENDEES:** Alex Gourneau, Jason Lorang, Philomine Moran, Linda Biffert and Vona Johnson. **OTHERS PRESENT:** Gary Wald, OIL; Denise White, DRS staff; Ann Van Loan, WRDI; Marla Bullbear, NAAP; Shelly Pfaff, SILC staff; Julie Paluch, Interpreter; Faith Ellis, SILC staff; Vickie Yeager, Interpreter and Rich Tschetter.

OPENING ACTIONS: Ryan Green, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:10 PM. He welcomed everyone and expressed a special welcome to the three new members – Ann, Matt, and Monte. Introductions were made around the room.

Approval of Agenda – Ryan confirmed everyone had a copy of the agenda, and asked if there were any changes or additions. Grady requested that the Election of Officers be moved from today to tomorrow, since the Executive Committee needed to finalize their proposed slate of officers. It was also suggested that we add Public Comments as the last item under Opening Actions. **Motion to accept the agenda as amended – Made (M), Seconded (S) and carried (C).**

Before going further, Ryan presented a “Thank You” plaque to Gary Wald, for his many years of service as a SILC member. He spoke to Gary’s valuable contributions to the Council and his hard work and efforts on behalf of meeting the independent living needs of South Dakotans with significant disabilities. All applauded in support of Ryan’s comments. Grady also thanked Gary for his help in growing this Council and advancing our efforts to better the IL system.

Approval of Minutes – Next, Ryan called for any changes or additions to the minutes from the June 16th meeting. Larry Puthoff had one correction on pg. 7 to correct the name to the American Association of the Deaf/Blind. **Motion to approve the June minutes as corrected – MSC.**

Reports on Previous Meeting Commitments – At the last meeting we all made commitments to do one thing to promote SILC and independent living. Shelly asked for volunteers to share what they had done, and she offered to go first.

Shelly had committed to encouraging the SILC, Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) and Council on Developmental Disabilities to meet together for a joint luncheon to discuss what's working or not in the IL/VR world. These groups will come together tomorrow for such a conversation.

Patrick's commitment was to visit the Discharge Offices at a hospital. He has been having troubles nailing down a visit. He is still going to work on accomplishing this task.

Margot shared that her commitment was to work to identify people with disabilities in the WRDI territory. She was involved in visiting 15 different clinics in Western SD, spreading the word about independent living services and other available services.

Public Comment - Ryan opened the floor for any Public Comments. Jim Simbeck said he wanted to publically thank Ann and Margot for the ADA celebration picnic in Rapid City. Jim said he felt it went super and that they should be very proud of their efforts promoting disability awareness.

Grady took time to again thank Gary. He explained that he invited Gary back today to announce that Opportunities for Independent Living (OIL) has won the Abby Award for Professional Services in Aberdeen. Gary spoke to the award. All in attendance expressed their congratulations Gary and entire OIL staff.

DRS DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Grady welcomed the group and started by announcing that Thursday – Oct. 1st – marks the beginning of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). He reviewed the long list of towns celebrating NDEAM and explained how the BVR financially supports these events. Grady encouraged SILC members to attend an NDEAM celebration in their area. He pointed out, especially for new members that travel expenses can be reimbursed if they participate in a nearby event. He reminded SILC members to please introduce themselves to event organizers and explain that you are there as a SILC member in support of employment for people with disabilities.

SILC Appointments – Grady thanked new members who are here for the first time – Ann, Matt and Monte. He asked them introduce themselves again and for the benefit of the others, to include further details regarding where they work, what they do, and what role they are now filling on the Council. Grady also congratulated Margot on her re-appointment and thanked her for her continuing dedication.

SPIL Amendment – Grady shared a handout of one section of the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) regarding 3.2 Expansion of the Network - 34 CFR 364.25 (see attached). Due to the availability of federal American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA), we were required to amend our SPIL. The SILC and DSUs had an official Public Meeting on Sept. 10th to gather public comments. It was held via video-conferencing at five sites around the state. We then submitted the SPIL amendment to RSA on Sept. 22, 2009. The amended language refers to the use of additional funds (ARRA) to increase services through all four CILs. Basically all of our state is considered underserved, and it is recommended that the ARRA funds be awarded proportionately. Grady thought that the four CILs should get a notification of additional funding around mid-October.

Part C ARRA Awards – Grady reported that DRS has spent 100s of hours on webinars focusing on reporting data to the federal

government regarding the use of ARRA funds. For the four CILs, federal reporting of ARRA expenditures will also be a burdensome task, and at the moment there's not too much help out there relating to the Part C funds. DRS has been learning about reporting on Part B funds. Grady publicly committed to the CILs that DRS would help them with the learning curve on this task.

Grady went on to explain that when the submitted SPIL Amendment is approved, then Part C IL Award of Funding will come in a one-time payment to each location. These funds will be specifically designed for Home Modifications and Assisted Devices Program (HMAD) purchases and other related purchases. The total amount coming will be approximately \$350,000 to be divided between the four CILs. In regard to these funds, the four CILs are considered a prime recipient so they will be responsible for all the necessary federal reporting. There is a website - www.federalreporting.gov - that can help CILs learn about appropriate expenditures/activities and reporting requirements. To register at this site, you will need a Grant Award Notification (GAN) number and a DUNS 3. Once you're in the site, if you go to the Central Contract Reporting area, it has a RSA Tip sheet on IL reporting elements.

DRS is considered a prime recipient of ARRA funds. DRS will get approximately \$242,913 in Part B funds and about \$1.4 million in VR funds.

IL Financial Workgroup – Denise White reported that this group continues to meet, holding conference calls every 4-6 weeks. They are continuing the time study of CIL staffs. This information helps in establishing billing rates under the new reimbursement system. Currently, expenditure projections are that all four CILs should meet their service goals and earn their total awards. The percentage breakdowns of staff time recently for all four CILS has been:

JUNE
71% Core Services
18% HMAD
11% Other

JULY
69% Core Services
19% HMAD
12% Other Services

Ryan asked if there is a way within the four core services (Peer Support, IL Skills Training, Advocacy, I & R), to monitor, which gets the most attention. Denise replied that currently the major activity is Information and Referral (I & R).

Grady mentioned that the time studies are going well, but more time is needed to be able to identify any data trends. When asked are the four CILs reporting consistently on the same data elements. Grady said sometimes it's hard to determine, which category a service fits into, but for the most part CILs are reporting apples to apples. Denise added that she knows IL staffs sometime struggle with identifying what did I just do and how do I code it. She recommends they use their professional judgment. Grady also added that DHS uses time studies in all of their grant activities, so the CILs are not being singled out with this approach.

Deaf Services Transitions – Denise reported that in the past, IL services for the deaf were provided through CSD. Now they are being done by the four CILs. Denise originally got fourteen (14) active files from CSD. Ten were transferred to the respective CIL, and after further review, four were closed. DRS has worked with CSD to train two CILs already on deaf culture - OIL and PFC. Trainings at the other two CILs – WRDI and NAAP – are scheduled for next week.

Grady added that due to the very specific nature of the services needed by the deaf and hard of hearing community, DRS has a long-standing relationship with CSD. They are using some funding to address the unique needs that the four CILs truly can't effectively meet and supporting CSD in meeting those needs i.e., effective communication, support groups, and American Sign Language (ASL) training. Grady hopes that CSD and the CILs can forge a strong partnership so they can work together to effectively meet the IL needs of South Dakotans within the deaf community.

Gary mentioned that last week's training with CSD went really well. He stressed that this type of training needs to be ongoing because

there is a lot to grasp about how to effectively deliver services to members of the deaf community. Larry mentioned that he had heard through CSD staff that the OIL training went really well, and they felt OIL staff was receptive and committed to meeting the needs of those they serve from the deaf community.

SBVI DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Gaye Mattke explained that the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired had their last meeting Sept. 24th in Sioux Falls. An area of focus for them is services for individuals who are deaf/blind and their long-range needs, including IL needs. She explained that Maureen McGowan, Helen Keller National Center, is a resource for them. Their next step is to look at how other small states address issues faced by individuals who are deaf/blind. With the ever-increasing, aging baby boomer population, there's a lack of coordination between the numerous agencies seeking to meet the needs older citizens with vision and hearing loss. Marketing and Public Relations are another focus of the Board to ensure the public is more aware of all available services. The Board of SBVI is exploring working with a marketing firm to assist with this effort. Before doing so, they must decide who is their target market (i.e., employers, individuals with vision loss, etc.). The next SBVI Board meeting will be on December 4th at the Ft. Pierre AmericInn.

Older Blind IL Program – This program has almost spent all of their ARRA funds on education and demonstration devices and large print calendars. A new policy is being developed due to limited funds and increasing demand for services. This fiscal year will be ending soon. A position was recently filled in the Rapid City SBVI office which will carry a combined vocational rehabilitation and independent living case load to better meet demand in western South Dakota.

Closed Circuit TV – A total of 150 people are presently being served, and only 10 are on a waiting list. Five units have been assigned but are not yet delivered. Their North Dakota counterparts are soon starting a similar CCTV program. SBVI is providing

technical assistance through conference calls and sharing of information.

DRS IL PROGRAM SPECIALIST REPORT: Since Denise had shared information in an earlier portion of the meeting; there was not a specific report at this time.

SILC STAFF REPORT: Shelly turned to Ryan for the first item under her report.

Joint Meeting of Boards/Councils Chairpersons – Ryan told the group how the three groups are trying to collaborate more on activities like public meetings, NDEAM, and Governor’s Awards Luncheon. Those involved with the first call were: Dave Miller, Chairman of Board of SBVI; Beth Haug, Chairperson of the Board of VR; Ryan Green, SILC Chairman; Shelly Pfaff, SILC Staff; Colette Wagoner, BVR Staff; Denise White, DRS IL Specialist; Grady Kickul, DRS Director; and Gaye Mattke, SBVI Director. Another call is planned for October 29th. Ryan asked that SILC members please let Shelly or he know of any topics that you would like brought before this group. A Joint Meeting of all three groups is being targeted for the third week of June 2010 in Pierre/Ft. Pierre or Chamberlain.

Action on Bylaw Revisions – Shelly passed out a handout of the proposed changes to the SILC Bylaws. These changes are basically minor. She drew attention to language on Page 2 of the first draft previously sent out, which was discussed at an earlier time, but wasn’t included in the last printed copy. **Motion was to approve the revised bylaws as presented – MSC.**

BREAK

Small Group Work Assignment – As an introduction, Shelly explained that SILC staff generally looks at the past meeting minutes to get a starting point on creating the next agenda. The SILC Executive Committee then holds a conference call to discuss

the upcoming meeting and related agenda. From there, draft agenda are finalized and shared with everyone prior to the meetings. Today, the SILC was asked to break into Small Groups and discuss agendas by answering the following questions:

- *Of the standing agenda items, which are most useful?*
- *Which would you like to receive in writing prior to meetings?*
- *What items are missing from the agenda that would be helpful to you as SILC members?*

General consensus reported back was they would like future agendas to include:

- Reports from each of the four CILs, limited to 5 minutes each;
- SD Housing Development Authority update;
- SBVI Director's report;
- DRS Director's report;
- Department of Social Services update;
- DRS IL Specialist Report needs to be a standing item;
- Public Comment Time (maybe move to later on the agenda);
- SILC Staff Report;
- Upcoming Events or Hot Topics item;
- Committee Reports, as needed;
- Review Meeting Protocol early in each meeting.

It was suggested that some of this information could be provided in writing, and if done in this way, it should be made available to members prior to the meeting so they have ample time to review it.

Much discussion was held on the idea of having everyone sit at the table versus having guests sit along the outside of the room. Some felt strongly that it would improve the meetings to have everyone at the table. They felt there are ways to ensure that all attendees follow proper meeting protocol. Others felt it was not appropriate and referenced meetings of similar groups. They spoke to how the "public" in attendance is not at the table, yet still have opportunity for input.

It was agreed that it would be left up to the discretion of the SILC Chairperson, based on each meeting scenario, as to whether to invite all attendees to sit at the table. In order to improve communication, if they are not at the table, the rooms will be set up in an open “U” shape with chairs for the public at the open end. Thus they can easily see and hear the SILC, and the SILC can easily see and hear the public in attendance.

ADJOURN FOR THE DAY – The meeting concluded at 5 p.m. for today.

MEETING RECONVENED – The meeting started at 8:30 a.m. on September 30th. The group was welcomed back by Chairperson, Ryan Green.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Shelly asked to step out of role and speak as Freedom To Work (FTW) staff. The Chairman granted her permission to do so. She announced that Mike Walling Employment and Benefits Training is coming up in October:

Advanced Session, Monday, the 19th – Fort Pierre
Basic Session, Tuesday, the 20th – Rapid City
Transition Session, Tuesday night, 20th, Rapid City
Advanced Session, Wednesday, the 21st, Rapid City
Basic Session, Thursday, the 22nd, Winner
Basic Session, Friday, the 23rd, Huron

For further details or to register, she invited people to contact Faith or herself. She thanked the Chairperson for the ability to step out of role, and returned to her role as SILC staff.

Margot spoke about how successful the 2nd Annual Disability Advocacy Network was on July 21st. It was well attended; over 20 different groups were represented. There was great discussion on numerous topics. Participants identified their main issues for the next Legislative Session. The Summit initiative is growing in strength, and The COALITION will continue to serve these groups,

and others, with Email Legislative Updates throughout the upcoming Legislative Session. The Summit participants will also be holding follow-up meetings in November and December, as well as during session. These will be held via DDN.

Election of Officers: Ryan had Shelly remind the group who the SILC Officers have been for the past year: Ryan Green, Chairperson; Linda Biffert, Vice-Chair; and Jamie Mack, Member At Large. Jamie has resigned from the SILC, and thus that position is currently open.

Grady presented a slate of candidates, recommended by the SILC Executive Committee. They are: Linda Biffert, Chairperson; Margot Burton, Vice-Chair; and Ryan Green, Member At Large.

Motion to nominate Linda Biffert as Chairperson - MS. Grady called for any additional nominations three times, per Robert's Rules of Order. Hearing no other nominations, nominations were closed. A vote was taken – **Motion Carried.**

Motion to nominate Margot Burton as Vice-Chairperson - MS. Grady called for any additional nominations three times, per Robert's Rules of Order. Upon hearing no other nominations, nominations were closed. A vote was taken – **Motion Carried.**

Motion to nominate Ryan Green as Member At Large - MSC. Grady called for any additional nominations three times, per Robert's Rules of Order. Hearing no other nominations, nominations were closed. A vote was taken – **Motion Carried.**

Grady thanked Ryan for his dedication, hard work and leadership while Chairperson. Grady encouraged all members to think strongly about future leadership opportunities on the SILC.

Healthcare Reform: Shelly distributed a handout that highlighted numerous websites with differing views on what healthcare reform is or isn't, and she reviewed the pros and cons listed at these sites.

Shelly said that two of the sites she personally looks to as objective and non-biased are Families USA, www.familiesusa.org, and the Kaiser Family Foundation, www.kff.org. She referenced that the Kaiser site has a tool by which you can read a side-by-side comparison of over a dozen key factors either on an individual basis or in total.

The SILC was asked to move into small groups and talk about:

- *Does SILC have a role in the Healthcare Reform debate?*
- *If so, how does the SILC carry this out?*
- *What is the SILC's role as an advocate?*

Margot asked Shelly for some past history on how the SILC has advocated on issues in the past? Shelly explained that her recollection is that the SILC has written letters to the editors statewide on issues such as voting. They have provided information on issues to CILS and those they serve. Grady added that the SILC has taken a strong position on educating all parties about accessible voting. Margot reminded the group how the SILC is evolving from its role of a “financial watchdog” to more of an advocacy role, so this dialogue fits as the SILC seeks to define it’s new direction and how to carry it out.

Small Group Reports

Group A – They felt the SILC does not have a role in this yet because it is very political, and there is no actual bill to support or oppose. Once there is a bill, the SILC should take an educational role – inform people what is and is not being proposed and encourage people to be involved in the dialogue. Since our Bylaws say we’re about advocacy, the SILC needs to be involved when the time is right. It was suggested that the SILC maybe needs to work more closely with The Coalition on advocacy and education. On a different idea, it was suggested that to promote accessibility, maybe the SILC could recognize and honor places that do a great job on full accessibility.

Group B – They started by saying they basically agreed with Group A. They suggested that maybe the SILC could formulate a position paper on healthcare reform. They encouraged the SILC to use the CILs' staff and refer accessibility issues to them. SILC can promote ideas or issues to the Disability Advocacy Network (Network). Ryan shared first hand experiences that proved that letters submitted by the Network last year were effective. Legislators read them; they did have an impact. So yes, the SILC could benefit from working more closely with the Network. Grady confirmed Legislators turn over every two years, and education is an ongoing need. They suggested having advocacy as a standing agenda item for the future. Consensus was that this could work, but that members would have to first provide staff background and details on why they feel the item needs to be brought before the entire SILC. It would need to first be approved by the Executive Committee, prior to being added to agendas.

BREAK

SILC MARKETING: Shelly shared with everyone a copy of the current SILC brochure. She explained that this brochure has been around a long time. It basically has details on programs/services and shares details on the four CILs and CSD. The SILC was asked:

- *Do you need a SILC brochure?*
- *If so, what do you want in it? What's your message?*
- *Who's your audience; how will you distribute brochures?*
- *Does each of the four CILs need their own brochure?*
- *Does the SILC need a website?*

Grady said he knows these brochures are available at DRS offices statewide. Upon review, he feels there is some duplication and a need for revisions. Shelly mentioned that SILC staff makes this brochure available at every exhibitor booth they host. This includes booths sponsored by SILC, BVR, FTW and COALITION.

Denise wondered if it possibly could be a double-sided card, similar to the MAWD program brochure. She offered to create two sample ideas for the group - one focused on IL services and the four CILs; and one focused on the SILC.

A lengthy dialogue followed including comments on having one brochure since the four CILs have their own brochures. It was agreed that in today's technology age, websites are expected and brochures should direct consumers to appropriate sites. A question was asked, "If the general public doesn't know what the SILC is or what it does, do we care; does the general public have a need to know about the SILC; about the services? Suggested that any future outreach materials keep it simple with more of a targeted purpose. There is IL information on the DRS website, but it is buried quite deep. SBVI has heard similar stories about how IL information, including specific details, is hard to locate. Several folks wondered if the SILC is not ready for this step; maybe the SILC needs to nail down their role.

Staff was asked to resend members the information previously worked on with Paula Hallberg. It was agreed that this could help the SILC in future conversations. Shelly and Denise voiced concerns that further discussions on the SILC's role might be more effective if done as a small group activity and not as a smaller ad hoc committee. Others agreed, and it was asked that this topic be on the agenda of the next meeting.

Ryan asked SILC members to let staff investigate other SILC websites and other available outreach materials.

CLOSING ACTIONS: Gaye asked permission to introduce a guest that she had invited to stop in today. He's wanting to share a concern with the Council. She introduced Lyle Cook, Director of the Native American 121 Vocational Rehabilitation Program in Eagle Butte. Lyle thanked the group for letting him have a few minutes today. Until last year, his program provided space to the Native American Advocacy Program staff that served IL consumers in their

area. Earlier this fall Lyle was approached with a need for a new ramp installed for the elderly and was looking for direction for IL funding like in the past. Lyle explained that he went to the web first looking to the NAAP site with no luck. Next he tried the State's DRS site, which didn't provide much more helpful information. Next, he went directly to the area CILs but none of them covered our "county". He then attended the Public Meeting held via video conferencing on Sept. 10th in the hopes of getting this request to someone. Basically that's why he's here today. He wants the SILC to see that if he, as a knowledgeable person, can't find the IL information and services needed, imagine how difficult it must be for others who may not be as knowledgeable of available services and supports. He urged the SILC to understand that all our SD counties have to be covered. Lyle offered to make available some of their office space to an IL representative again. Just like VR staff comes up from Pierre to Eagle Butte on a set, regular schedule (such as the third Thursday of the month), he suggested a similar approach for the delivery of IL services. Denise agreed that problems have existed, and DRS has been working very hard with NAAP on these needs. NAAP are seriously taking it to heart. They are working hard to increase visibility and to be a constant presence in the various communities statewide. DRS is encouraging NAAP to take Lyle up on his offer of office space and get an IL representative regularly in that region. Denise was asked if she thought NAAP is even open to this idea? Denise said yes, and agreed to continue working on making this happen. Grady thanked Lyle for his courage to bring this to the SILC's attention today. It's a gracious solution being proposed, hopefully it will become reality soon.

Future Agenda Items - Ryan reminded the group of their discussion yesterday regarding agenda items. He continued to say the SILC needs "thought provoking" agenda items; they need them ahead of time, so they can be worked into the agenda. If members are wanting to put a topic on the agenda, they need to provide background information ahead of time to the Executive Committee. If on the agenda, they need to provide handouts to staff ahead of time so they can be circulated to members prior to the meetings. It

was also expressed that more agenda items need to be structured to create small group conversations, so the SILC uses available resources around the room. Agendas need to set up the small group activities the first day – this would give members the evening to continue discussions or at least think it through more and have the chance to come back the second day and bring it up again if needed. The key is getting good input to the Executive Committee prior to drafting the agendas. Staff will ask all members for input into the agenda approximately a month out from the meeting dates.

SCHEDULING NEXT MEETING – Staff will attempt to arrange the next meeting in Rapid City. Pierre/Ft. Pierre is the second location choice. The week of December 7th is the targeted week. Details will follow as arrangements are finalized.

Motion to adjourn - MSC. Meeting adjourned at 12 pm.