

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC)

March 19, 2024

Meeting Held Via Zoom

&

DHS/DRS DHS Hillsview Plaza/Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Theresa Marzahn, Valere Beeck, Richard Moeller, Matt Cain, Ryan Groeneweg, Patty Kuglitsch, Brett Glirbas, Joe Vetch, Kendra Gottsleben, Vicki Steffes, Tasha Jones, Eric Weiss, and Ronda Williams. **MEMBERS ABSENT:** Syndee Jundt and CJ Moit. **OTHERS PRESENT:** Jennifer Lewis, Tehra Nelson, and Colette Wagoner. The interpreters were Julie Paluch and Alecia Barnes.

OPENING ACTIONS: Welcome & Introductory Comments: Ryan Groeneweg, SILC Chairperson, called the meeting to order and invited everyone to introduce themselves. He outlined the voting procedures for newer members. Review and Approval of Agenda: Ryan asked if there were any changes to the agenda. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS DISSEMINATED – MADE (M), SECONDED (S) AND CARRIED (C).** Yeas: Brett, Joe, Theresa, Val, Richard, Patty, Kendra, Vicki, and Matt. NAYS: None.

Review and approval of minutes: Ryan asked if there were any objections to approving all the meeting minutes in one motion; there were none. **MOTION TO APPROVE BOTH SETS OF MINUTES AS DISSEMINATED TO INCLUDE THE SILC DECEMBER 19TH MEETING MINUTES, AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 23RD, ACKNOWLEDGING THE SILC'S APPROVAL OF \$100 TO SUPPORT THE 2024 DISABILITY AWARENESS DAY, MSC.** Yeas: Brett, Joe, Theresa, Val, Richard, Patty, Kendra, Vicki, and Matt. NAYS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Ryan invited public comment. He explained this is a standing agenda item at each meeting allowing members of the public to address the SILC. There was no public comment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: This is also a standing agenda, utilized if there is a need for the SILC to have a closed discussion to address any matter(s) that is sensitive/private or confidential. Hearing no need, Ryan moved the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: There were none.

DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES (DRS) REPORT, INDEPENDENT LIVING (IL) SPECIALIST UPDATE: Consumer Satisfaction Survey Report: Jennifer explained that the SILC developed rating and narrative questions for the CILs to ask each participant to respond to at the time of closure to gauge consumer satisfaction. Closures include successful and unsuccessful closed cases. Unsuccessful closures

included those who the CIL cannot reach, participant(s) moved, or did not complete services. The CILs submit a quarterly summary report to the Division as a requirement of the contract. A summary report was provided for the period of June 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023. The response rate for the time period was 28.17%. Jennifer explained she is working with WRIL staff on efforts to increase the response rate.

Jennifer continued with the narrative questions of the survey and received responses. Overall, the responses are positive for both CILs. The comments include prompt, helpful and courteous staff, happy with adaptive devices/explanations provided of how to use items, devices/items provided helped with feeling safe and more confident living in home, and assistance provided with forms, i.e., social security, housing applications, SNAP. People are very appreciative of the services received. The other narrative question asked what was the least helpful in experiences with IL services and comments included: nothing/everything was helpful, waiting list for stair lift, staff overloaded, nothing to say/appreciate staff's kindness and ease in talking with them.

A comment was made about the high number of cases that WRIL closed unsuccessfully in the report. Jennifer explained that at least 50% of the goals must be completed for a closure to be determined as successful and the participant determines whether the goal is met. Training is being conducted with WRIL staff exploring participants' needs in terms of identifying applicable goal areas. Goals can fall into categories of self-advocacy/self-empowerment, communication, mobility/transportation, community-based living, education, self-care, information access, personal resource management, relocation, community/social participation and more.

Status of CIL Contracts: This report reflects 8 months of activity for the CILs contracts with the Division. The state fiscal year started June 1, 2023 (66.67% of the contract year utilized). Both CILs are on target in terms of needed service units (ILC at 66% and WRIL at 62.35%) which identifies the CILs are on track to spend their entire contract. This report identifies the total amount of Part C funds (funds from the Administration for Community Living to the CILs), and Part B funds are monies from ACL to the Division, and then utilized in contracts with the CILs.

Western Resources for Independent Living (WRIL) Quarterly Report for October 1, through December 31, 2023: Services were provided in the majority of core services areas, except for nursing home transitions. The total number of individuals receiving services this quarter was 446. A total of 11 individuals received HMAD, 53 receiving assistive devices and 60 receiving housing services. There was a total of 75 new applicants this quarter with 44 under the age of 25. WRIL staff participated in events this quarter in Pierre, Rapid City and Spearfish. Participants primarily learned of services through family member/friends, word of mouth is working well. Services were provided to a referral from outside of the service coverage area, participant was from Pine Ridge. Outreach was conducted with rural school districts in Box Elder, Newel,

and Onida and with nursing home/assisted living centers. Staff participated in a Let's Talk Work event in Rapid City. Staff training was conducted in October and November. WRIL's information reflected they were at full staff, but they are recruiting again.

Independent Living Choices (ILC) Quarterly Report for the time period of October 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023. ILC has provided services in all core service areas. The total number of individuals served since October 1, 2023, is 1,447. The number of individuals receiving Home Modifications and Assistive Devices (HMAD) since October 1 is 331, assistive devices/59 and housing services/64. Total new applicants since October 1 is 308 with 31 applicants under the age of 25.

There was a lengthy list of activities that ILC staff participated in or organized to talk about IL services/resources i.e., Ft. Yates, Dell Rapids, Flandreau, and larger communities. ILC disseminated a number of mailings to organizations or service providers in their coverage area. The majority of participants identify medical personnel for learning about services (family member/friends is 2nd). A question was asked about whether ILC directed efforts/outreach with medical personnel, to explain this as the top referral source. Matt responded that yes that ILC directed time and attention to reach medical personnel after a review of information a few years ago. A concentrated effort was made to broaden the view of IL services beyond medical needs i.e., promote IL skills training, peer support.

Public comment or received communication this quarter: participants in need of home modifications do not always receive them as quickly as needed; resources scarce, list of projects is lengthy, some participants have passed away while on waiting list. Balance is needed to have enough approved contractors to complete projects, having enough staff and staff time, supplies and needed resources. There were no participants electing to complete the IL services referral form. ILC conducted activities with schools, visiting one on one with school staff. Participated in Transition Services Liaison Project (TSLP) events, Let's Talk Work and Summer Institute. System advocacy activities and staff training activities were identified. ILC is at full staff, with a number of staff being long term.

IL Funding Sources: The different funding sources were explained that are utilized to support IL services in the state, i.e., Part C, Part B, Social Security Reimbursement Funds (SSA), and other state funds. The budget has separate columns for monies the Division has contracted with the CILs in support of IL Services in addition to the Part B funds and match, i.e., SSA funds and the ramp project monies. Part C funds are based on the federal year of October 1st through the end of September, and Part B funds are based upon the state fiscal year of June 1st through the end of May. This outline also identifies the Part B funds utilized in the SILC's resource plan to support SILC member travel, meeting expenses and SILC's strategic planning.

CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CILs) UPDATES: ILC: Matt provided information as reported in the Program Performance Report (PPR). The totals are for ILC South, ILC North and ILC Native American. ILC served a total of 2,627 people compared to the previous high of 2,555. He attributed this to the addition of staff and increased need for IL services. Sixty percent of those served were 60 years or older; 33% were ages 20-59, and 7% were 19 or younger. Demographics included serving 83% Caucasian, 11% Native American and 6% other. This is the 2nd year that the number of Native Americans served is higher than the percentage of South Dakotans that identify as Native American. The breakdown of people served by disability categories include physical/66%; cognitive/12%, mental/emotional/8%, and the remainder were in the other or multiple disabilities' categories. Twelve individuals were assisted with moving out of a nursing home; 423 individuals were assisted with nursing home deterrence. A total of 74 ramps were installed, including 14 installed on the Tribal Nations. A total of 251 HMAD projects were completed with total expenditures of \$1,233,000. ILC utilized United Way funding, DRS Ramp funding and ILC reserves. He spoke to peer support, having a total of 26 peer support groups and 32 peer support volunteers. ILC hired a full-time peer support coordinator to help grow this area.

Last year, ILC offered 4 summer transition programs with 42 students attending. He thanked the Division for the ability to access these types of funds, as vocational rehabilitation dollars are utilized to support these activities. At least one person was served by ILC in every county or Tribal Nation in their coverage area. ILC continues to partner with the Home Builders Association and the City of Sioux Falls with the Repair Affair event. This is a one-day annual program to make homes more accessible for the elderly and individuals with disabilities (i.e., installation of ramps, grab bars, railings).

In the coming year, ILC is excited to host transition classes at all 9 of their offices. Matt expressed appreciation of funding provided by the Division to support these efforts. ILC has been approached by the state of South Dakota to become the fiscal agent or agency of choice for providers (respite care, companion care providers) of the Family Support Program. There are currently 5 agencies of choice, which will no longer provide this service. ILC's board of directors will explore this at their next meeting.

Matt concluded with the number of participants served this past year, and noted that ILC might be at its maximum level, i.e., funding and staff capacity. When looking at the total number of participants served by ILC and WRIL, ILC served 85% of the total population. He would like to see the number grow but he does not know if it is possible.

WRIL: Cody was unavailable to provide this report due to a family emergency.

BOARD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (BVR) UPDATE: Eric explained that the Board is the advisory board to the VR agency which provides services to individuals with disabilities seeking employment. This is a standing agenda item for the

SILC. Board responsibilities include advising the Division on the performance of the VR program, developing goals and strategies (work on the VR State Plan), and analyzing consumer satisfaction of services. The last meeting was March 6th and agenda items included a new member orientation, updates on VR program initiatives, and an update on performance measures. The next Board meeting is scheduled for June 25th. Eric displayed the State's Boards/Commissions portal and showed members various screens and how to find the Statewide Independent Living Council and the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation. The screens displayed upcoming meetings, archived meetings, and other related information. This information can be found at: <https://boardsandcommissions.sd.gov/>.

DIVISION OF SERVICE TO THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED (DSBVI)

UPDATE: Ronda provided the update on Division activities. Sandy Neyhart manages the Independent Living Older Blind Program and supervises the rehabilitation teachers. Rehabilitation teachers provide services statewide, and work with individuals who are blind/losing vision in their homes. Rehabilitation teachers work one on one with individuals on skills of blindness, looking at the accessibility of the home which will enable the individual to remain in their home. Sandy provides support to 10-12 support groups across the state, which have become more active since COVID. Sandy attended a program manager meeting in New Mexico. Funding is received from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and for the first time, the Older Blind program will have target numbers to strive for (success rates). For example, assistive technology devices and services target will be 85% (SD exceeded this number, reaching 95%) and for independent living and adjustment training services, RSA target was 85% and SD reached 89%. There are two other targets that deal with consumer satisfaction which SD was close to meeting the target.

The Division will host an all-staff training in July. Training will include counseling techniques, how to support individuals who are experiencing blindness, deaf blindness information, orientation and mobility training, team building and other activities. In terms of staffing, there is a VR counselor position vacant in the Rapid City office. Ronda stated that Gaye Mattke has announced plans to retire in June. Gaye and Ronda have been meeting regularly and talking about succession planning.

BOARD OF SERVICE TO THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED (B/SBVI)

UPDATE: Ryan reported he also serves on the B/SBVI. The B/SBVI met on March 15th via videoconference sites utilized in Pierre, Rapid City and Sioux Falls. The meeting allowed access by telephone. Agenda items included updates from the board's committees and work on activities, i.e., Disability Awareness Day at the Capitol, Governor's Awards, National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) and sponsorships. Ronda reported that the B/SBVI will provide \$5,000 in support of the Governors Awards Ceremony activities and will provide up to \$5,000 in financial support of the 2024 NDEAM activities. There was discussion and action taken to

continue the Boards support of conferences and blind organization conventions by providing stipends to consumers to attend. The National Federation of the Blind, SD Chapter will host a convention April 26-27 in Rapid City. The Division will host a public forum during the convention. In terms of appointments to the B/SBVI, one reappointment was made (Cole Uecker) and they are waiting for one more appointment. The next meeting will be held June 14th.

Earlier agenda items moved quickly, and there was consensus to move forward with the State Plan for Independent Living agenda item. Some members needed to leave by 1:00 pm.

DRAFT STATE PLAN FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (SPIL): Eric initiated this item by providing background information on work started over a year ago on the development of the SPIL. The draft SPIL was presented and discussed during the SILC's December meeting, and it was approved at that time to move things forward. He outlined tasks that needed to be finalized prior to the submittal of the State Plan to the Administration of Community Living. Tasks included scheduling a public hearing, disseminating State Plan information, issuing notice of the public forum, and then incorporating public comment and related changes into the State Plan.

Colette spoke to the public meeting held on February 22nd. There were 7 SILC members, both SILC and DSE staff, and 9 other individuals in attendance. The comments/questions from the public meeting were disseminated to the full SILC. Colette spoke to the comments and questions raised during the public forum. A question sought clarification whether there were substantial changes from the current SPIL to the proposed SPIL; and several comments affirmed that the goals and objectives aligned with what is needed in the state. There were no written comments received. The draft State Plan was disseminated again to the full SILC and posted on the boards/commission's portal. The only change was the addition of the Executive Summary.

Some members provided comments about the public forum, highlighting the summary provided of the SPIL, comments received were positive and had a great turn out.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE STATE PLAN FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (SPIL WITH THE ALLOWANCE OF MAKING MINOR EDITS, MS. Discussion continued that if ACL asks for more details or information, these types of edits can be incorporated. Ryan clarified that no substantial changes would be made to the SPIL content. If there is a need to make substantial edits the SILC would review and approve these changes. Colette added that approving the SPIL at this time would allow staff to begin entering information into the portal once it is made available. ACL has indicated the web-based portal would be available early in April. Comments were made to finalize and approve the SPIL. **MOTION CARRIED (MC).** Yeas: Brett, Joe, Theresa, Val, Richard, Patty, Kendra, Vicki, and Matt. NAYS: None.

BREAK

SOUTH DAKOTA HELPLINE CENTER – HELPLINE CENTER UNIVERSITY: Tehra Nelson, Mental Health Training Coordinator was present to talk about 211 helpline services, 988 and navigating their website. She outlined the 3 main core services. Mental Health Crisis Support (988) which includes prevention, intervention, and aftercare services. Anyone calling the 988-phone number is connected to a professional crisis counselor (all have some type of a master's degree or higher in behavioral health, mental health, or counseling). The goal is to provide collective mental health services for the state of South Dakota. The 2nd core program is the volunteer connections program, provided in only 3 communities, Rapid City, Sioux Falls and Brookings. The last program is the 211 program, the call center for information, resources, and referrals from around the state.

Next, Tehra shared her screen to display the helpline center website <https://www.helplinecenter.org/>. She shared the Community Resource Database which can be researched by zip code and displays resources (housing, food, health care, mental health, support groups and more). Information is available in a few languages. She explained how someone using the site could create a list of resources which can be printed, shared, saved as a pdf. There are resource guides available, i.e., statewide guides, Sioux Empire Area, Black Hills area, Brookings area and a person can create their own guide. Under the Find Help tab, you can locate "Help Sheets" which are brief documents providing an overview of a specific topic. These include basic needs (rental housing, rental calculator, childcare, food resources) mental health, public health issues, substance abuse, and special topics. The Data dashboard offers information about 211 information, statewide or by county. Information can be pulled on number of calls, information requested, and more. She talked about the promotional items that are available free.

She provided an overview of the 998 information and suggested that people call the number. This would allow the person to experience what happens when they call. Information/resources include frequently asked questions, videos and a toolkit which has interactive links. Staff provide QPR (Question, Persuade and Refer) and Mental Health First Aid training, safety planning. To request this type of overview or training use the training@helplinecenter.org link to make the request. There is information about special populations (disability, Native American, elderly, teens, parents/guardians/teachers). There are 17 programs they work with i.e., caregiver support program, childcare helpline, substance abuse, women's program, fall prevention.

A question was asked about individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired and accessing the Helpline/988. Individuals can call, text or chat. There are a few staff who utilize ASL, and they also work with interpreters if a caller needs this service. A

suggestion was made to add information about how to obtain interpreter services as a resource on the website. Tehra will send information and other resources to staff that can be shared with all members.

It was agreed to continue with the agenda and not break for lunch.

SILC STAFF UPDATE: SILC Program Performance Report: This is the annual report submitted to ACL in January. The report includes information regarding the compliance of SILC's membership, information about work completed throughout the year, and information about the progress made towards accomplishing the SPIL goals. We are still waiting for approval.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). A request for funding was disseminated in December to local community planners throughout the state. Requests were due in February and 10 requests were received for a total amount of \$34,951.11. The NDEAM Review Committee met on February 26 to review the proposals. The Review Committee is recommending approval of all the requests. Staff noted that the expenditures have been less than the total dollars requested the last few years. Events vary by community, i.e., has a screening of a film to broaden understanding of persons with disabilities in the workplace; followed by dialogue with panel of guests of employers and providers; communities pool resources and bring in a presenter; host annual employer and employee with disabilities recognition events; retreats for middle and high school students, utilizing a speaker who focuses on disability awareness and team building activities. And communities use various forms of advertising utilizing radio, newspaper, and other social media.

MOTION TO APPROVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE 2024 NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH EVENTS, IN THE AMOUNT UP TO \$5,000.00, MS Discussion included the SILC's financial commitment in previous years. **MOTION CARRIED (MC).** Yeas: Brett, Joe, Theresa, Val, Richard, Patty, Kendra, Vicki, and Matt. NAYS: None.

BVR & SILC Solicitation for Nominations: The solicitation for nominations was disseminated in January statewide (hard copy and email) to numerous disability related boards/councils, individuals with disabilities and disability related organizations. Information was also posted on various social media sites (SILC, Center for Disabilities, BHSSC, Council on Developmental Disabilities, and Division's websites). Nominations were due February 23rd. The SILC will need six vacancies filled, due to occur at the end of June. Two members are interested in being reappointed and four other vacancies will need to be filled. The nomination information was compiled and submitted to the Division and will be forwarded to the Governor's office for consideration and action.

Governors Awards Solicitation for 2024: The 2024 solicitation was disseminated earlier in March and nominations are due May 3rd. There is a Governor's Review Committee which includes members from the BVR, B/SBVI, and SILC. The Review Committee is tasked with reviewing all nominations and providing recommendations for a recipient in each category to the Governor for consideration/action. The committee will convene in late May or early June to review the nominations. Similar to the last couple of years, we expect the ceremony will be scheduled in the Fall, depending on the Governor's schedule and availability.

Champion of Independent Living Services Award: The SILC's Public Awareness/Outreach/Advocacy/Collaboration Committee works on the Champion of IL Services award activities. The solicitation for nominations will be disseminated in the middle of May with a due date later in June. This is an annual recognition program started by the SILC in 2015. This award recognizes and honors individuals, organizations and businesses that exemplify the SILC's vision that all South Dakotans are treated with respect, live in an accessible and inclusive community of their choosing. Examples of nominees could include: a person with a disability; parent or family member of person with a disability; professional who has dedicated their lives to disability rights; community organization, business or school for innovative programs that are fully inclusive and accessible. The committee will review the nominations and recommend 1 recipient; and then plans will progress with a presentation of the award event. In the past, the event has been coordinated with the SILC's September meeting.

Fall Conference: The Division's annual conference will be held October 29-31 in Deadwood at The Lodge. Staff received word from some BVR/SILC members who are interested in attending. If a member is interested in attending, please let staff know in order to obtain the needed sleeping rooms. Save the Date information has been disseminated and information about keynote speakers can be found at: <https://www.sdrehabaction.org/fall-conference/2024-speakers>.

Budget Update: BVR and SILC staff and administrative support is provided through an agreement between the Division of Rehabilitation Services and Black Hills Special Services Cooperative. The agreement started in January 2020, with the option of 4 one-year extensions. The current agreement started January 1, 2024, and it will end December 31st. A budget spreadsheet was disseminated, and it reflects expenses for one month. Expenses are tracked separately for SILC items to include SILC member travel, SILC meeting expenses and SILC Strategic Planning. The majority of expenses occur in October, November, and December, including NDEAM, Champion of Independent Living Services Award presentation, SILC member expenses related to the Fall Conference and the CIL staff training line item.

OTHER BUSINESS: There was none.

CLOSING ACTIONS: Future Agenda Items: Election of officers will take place during the June meeting. Tasha will term off in June so the SILC will need at least one more name for consideration and addition to the proposed slate of officers. Richard is unable to attend the next meeting and Vicki is unable to attend from 9:00 – 12:00. Members were asked to send suggestions for agenda items to Ryan or to staff. Several members expressed a desire for more presentations similar to the Helpline and Human Trafficking. Next Meeting: will be held June 11th via Zoom. Adjournment: The Chair asked if there was anything else or other final business. He called for a motion to adjourn. **MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 12:15 PM, MSC.** YEAS: Brett, Joe, Theresa, Val, Richard, Patty, Kendra, Vicki, and Matt. NAYS: None.