



WASHINGTON

State Independent Living Council

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Washington State Independent Living Council Quarterly meeting St. Luke's Community Health Education Center: Bellingham, WA April 23, 2010

Chair Romel Mackelprang called the meeting to order at 9:10 am. The first order of business was introductions. Those present were:

Council Members: Romel Mackelprang, Chair, Cheney; Jana Finkbonner, Co-Chair, Bellingham; Gilbert Garza, Toppenish; Diane Hansen, Elk; Debbie Cook (by conference call), Ex-Officio: DSB, Seattle; Devin Beach, Ellensburg; Andres Aguirre, Ex-Officio: DVR, Olympia; Linda McClain, Spokane; Trina Forest, Lakewood; Sandra Carr, Spokane.

SILC Staff: Rob Honan, Executive Director, Olympia; Barbara Hathaway, Executive Assistant, Lacey

Guests: Von Elison, Central Washington Disability Rights, Ellensburg ; Bob Roberts, Spokane; Jim Baker, Vancouver; Robert Blumenfeld, Branch Manager Alliance of People with Disabilities/ East King County office, Redmond; Jeanne Slonecker, Disability Advocate, Everett; Nicole Selene, Everett; Twylla Nalum, Everett; Charley Lane, Bellingham

Service Providers:; Darlene Pickard, CART provider; Aldo Schipper and Sara Gabelle, ASL Interpreters

Honan made an announcement that the meeting was available on conference call and that CART-Stream was available for others, but that there was no working phone. The solution was to use Honan's BlackBerry (phone) for telecommunication transmissions. He urged patience while the BlackBerry was passed around for direct communications with those on the conference call.

Presentation by Jana Finkbonner: Mackelprang suggested that Finkbonner go ahead and do her presentation first in lieu of his report, which will follow.

“Tribal DVR Programs.”

- The federal history of Tribal DVR goes back to 1978 with services to the Navajo Tribe, and there are 76 programs nationally now. Eight tribes operate programs in Washington state. Alaska has the most Tribal DVR programs.
- Service provision is very similar to the traditional DVR program. The eligibility determination process is different, however, in that one must be a member of a federally recognized tribe to be considered for services under the Tribal DVR program.
- The Tribal DVR program does partner with the State DVR program on many client services projects, such as acquisition of hearing aids and lift-equipped vans (and other joint projects). Also, the various tribes share clients with other tribes.
- Jim Baker inquired about tribal DVR programs providing any IL services. Finkbonner responded by saying that all of the tribes provide services in a different ways, and have areas of specialization like CILs do. Although, she did stress that Tribal DVR is very much the medical model. Finkbonner stated that some of the IL services are in fact contracted out.

Public Comments:

- Jeanne Slonecker, Nicole Selene, and Twylla Nalum all spoke on the need for IL services in the Everett area, but there were some concerns (and other questions) with the coverage of a vast amount of land, from Snohomish County to Whatcom and to Island and San Juan (also to the centrally located Skagit) a new CIL would encompass.
- There was also question about the type of organization that can apply for the grant. Could another agency, for example, serve as an umbrella agency for the application process.
- Mackelprang responded by stating that he and Honan had met with several folks in the Everett area regarding the potential for a new CIL after dRC closed, whether it be located in Everett, Bellingham or some other city within the five-county area. The upshot is that the SILC cannot take a position on what group to support- given that RSA would make the ultimately determination, but the SILC would definitely support the CIL ultimately selected.
- Honan added that the RFP has not even been released by RSA, so he could not provide any good sense of the timing on this. RSA did say “soon.”
- Additional comments from the audience in response to the Public Comment included:
 - Redrawing some CIL boundary lines
 - Brainstorming on out how to bring together a good group of folks to pull this together.
 - How to locate services (i.e. interpreters) in remote areas
 - Distance communication (Romel used example of teaching class across the world from his hotel in Africa) for a new CIL
 - Diane Hansen bought up the need to train people in rural areas about what IL is.

Honan suggested that once the RFP was released by RSA, he would send that out to the three guests in the audience. The application packet would answer additional questions on what is required for a successful grant proposal.

Approval of Minutes. Trina Forest made a motion to approve the January 20, 2010 meeting minutes. Linda McClain seconded this motion. Discussion then ensued. Sandra Carr pointed out that that January meeting minutes stated that the “November 6 2010 (not 2009)” minutes were approved. With the condition that this be changed, the Council unanimously approved the January 20, 2010 meeting minutes.

Chair’s Report. Romel Mackelprang.

- Provided information about the webinar (on-line training) he conducted with TACE (John McClure and Kathe Matrone’s group)
- Gave additional background about the ARRA funding, beginning with the July 1, 2009 conference call with RSA until the present time when none of the CILs have received their ARRA funds yet. Several of the CIL directors in the room commented about the arduous process with RSA.
- Mackelprang also discussed the critical need to attend such conferences as NCIL, SILC Congress, and APRIL. There was discussion around implications of out of state travel freeze, how we as a state are to advance on a national level if we don’t reach these conferences. The fact that the SILC was instrumental (along with the CILs) in the effort to bring \$1.8M in ARRA funds was also brought up as a talking point for out of state travel. Mackelprang wanted to approach the Governor’s office about this situation again.
- A general discussion on the difficult fiscal climate ensued. Sandra Carr mentioned that the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Council was abolished. Andres Aguirre mentioned that, while he does have a role in this process, he must work through his chain of command. Aguirre will look into the possibility of the SILC becoming 100% federal from an accounting/ budget perspective.
- As a result of the this discussion, it was decided that Andres Aguirre would explore these possibilities (of accounting and budgeting) to see what is feasible.

Committee Reports

- **DSB: Debbie Cook** was present (by phone) and did not have a report. She emailed her report.
 - **Budget:**
 - DSB lost a little over \$100 thousand in state money. The Governor's initial budget directed this be taken from the Older Blind IL program, but fortunately the final budget allows DSB to manage the cut. This means IL services will not be reduced this year. Of course it also means they won't be increased.
 - **Furloughs:**
 - As with DVR, DSB is anticipating some furlough days throughout the year. It results in two weeks of not working and serving clients. We don't know what the full impact will be yet. As Diane noted, the dSB SRC will be exploring alternative meeting arrangements because of the restrictions on travel for councils.
 - **ARRA:**
 - DSB's IL projects are continuing. We are currently recruiting trainees for our distance learning opportunity to develop new providers. Response has been encouraging. We are also continuing to develop our program evaluation module. Other activities include increased AT services and outreach to under served populations identified in the SPIL.

- **DVR Report: Andres Aguirre**
 - Reported that the Legislative Session just ended and that DVR received \$4M of general funds to match federal dollars, bringing the state to a maintenance of effort levels (no loss of funding)
 - There is a hiring freeze, and is leading to large case loads for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.
 - Aguirre reported that he would be in place as interim director until at least the end of June, and does not know exactly how the new DVR position will play itself out.

- **WSRC Report: Sandra Carr**
 - The WSRC has two new members: Vanessa Lewis and Mark Hobson. Carr also reported that the WSRC is also looking to add additional members, preferably younger members.
 - Carr reported that CRP (Community Rehabilitation Program) job developers were having a more difficult time finding jobs for their clients due to the economy.
 - DVR has been struggling, according to Carr, with providing culturally competent services to its clients.
 - Andres Aguirre added that the DVR will be having a series of public forums across the state to support changes to its state plan (Lynwood, Spokane and Tumwater).

- **Budget Report: Rob Honan**
 - As always, Honan stressed that this is an unofficial report since the DVR/ OFM figures are always a little different than the in-house SILC figures that Executive Assistant Barbara Hathaway keeps. He handed out an Excel Spread sheet of the basic budget and expenses for the year.
 - Honan reported that the SILC spent approximately 42% of its budget from October 1, 2009 to April 1, 2010
 - Honan also mentioned that the SILC support of \$25,000 and \$30,000 to ACIL-WA and the CILs is no longer part of the budget.

- **ACIL-WA Report: Linda McClain**
 - ARRA funds will be coming to the CILs soon and a good use of the funding will be to send staff and board to DC for the NCIL conference.
 - The CILs will again sponsor Rob Honan, SILC director, to attend the NCIL conference.
 - Public Forums: Most of the CIL directors have attended at least one public forum so far and there are four more after this date.
 - The 20th anniversary of the ADA is coming up and Linda is challenging everyone to make sure they promote this in their communities.
 - Jim Baker provided information on the dARSW upcoming May 22nd fundraiser.

- **State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) Committee Report: Jim Baker**

- Four Public Forums held to date: Seattle (April 1 and 22), Tacoma April 21, and Bellingham April 23rd.
 - Diversity of people, ideas, and issues has been very strong at all public forums. We are hearing a lot about reaching out to unserved and underserved groups such as LGBT and Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
 - Baker attended a recent training in New Orleans (sponsored by the University of Arkansas Currents program) and he found it very useful as it relates to the SPIL. The focus of the training was using econometrical and statistical analysis (and demographic information) to make informed decisions on where best to start up and provide continued financial support for CILs as it relates to their catchment areas. The training indicated that the most a CIL should ever receive is \$1.5M for its operating budget.
 - There was discussion on whether the SILC could pay for this study and if a motion was needed. Baker was to explore the options further with the SILC, ACIL-WA and the Patricia Yaeger (and her graduate students). Baker believed the cost of the study would be around \$1,000.
- **Executive Director Report: Rob Honan**
 - Honan handed out the written Executive Director Report (which was also emailed out the week prior). The full report can be read on the SILC website: www.wasilc.org.
 - Honan provided a brief report on his kidney disease and the procedure he went through on March 29th, and reported that he is doing fine.
 - He provided additional information about the SILC public forums, giving a brief mention where Jim Baker left off. Honan provided some of the technological challenges and issues with the Public Forums, but is pleased at the progress being made.
 - The GCDE Youth Leadership Forum will not be held this year, Honan indicated but the CIL directors mentioned that each of their CILs will be hosting a summer youth leadership session, much like the summer of 2009. Baker also mentioned that many youth from Washington will attend the APRIL conference in Kansas City this year.

Old Business: By-Laws

- Linda McClain and Sandra Carr are in the process of proposing amendments to the by-laws. McClain proposes some kind of cross ACIL-WA/ SILC committee to look at this issue of making the ACIL-WA liaison to the SILC more clearly defined and stronger.
- Carr's update to the by-laws concerns adequate protections for the executive director. Thus, the by-laws need to examine personnel issues.
- Mackelprang suggested that Carr and McClain write the proposals up and send them to the SILC for consideration before the next meeting. Mackelprang provided some background on the previous executive director's personnel challenges and hopes that the by-laws could clarify some things- even if working more closely with the state HR policies. This is also a reason, Mackelprang stated, to seriously move towards SILC 501 c3 status. (this is another issue for another day).

New Business: State Plan for Independent Living: All

- With about an hour left in the meeting, Chair Romel Mackelprang led a general discussion on the substance of the Public Forums to date.
- To recap, there have been four Public Forums so far: Seattle (2x), Tacoma and Bellingham, with four more to go: Vancouver, Ellensburg, Pasco and Spokane.
- A variety of issues have come up at the forums. Here is a list of the topics raised for consideration for the 2011-2013 State Plan for Independent Living (this is not the entire list of issues brought up, but is a cross-sampling of some of the discussions). Seattle (April 1 and 22)
 - Housing. Access to accessible and affordable housing is a must
 - Transportation. This was brought up in a number of different forums. For instance, as the second Seattle Public Forum several participants noted the need for education of drivers as well as placing the “stop” drawstrings at appropriate levels for those who cannot reach them. In Bellingham, members of the Deaf Community voiced concerns about accessible communication on the web-based bus schedules.
 - Caregivers. There was representation from SIEU regarding caregiver training at the Tacoma Public Forum. There was also discussion about the need for caregivers for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community at the first Seattle Forum (April 1).
 - Interpreter Costs:: This was a big issue brought up with respect to cross-providing services between CILs and the Regional Deaf Service Centers.
 - Outreach and Marketing of CILs: McClain brought up the fact that many folks still do not know what CILs do. Needs to be greater education to the general public about CILs.
 - Hard of Hearing. vs. Deaf Culture. Honan pointed out differences in the two communities. Also “little d” vs. “capital D (Deaf Culture)”
 - Light Rail and Accessible Taxis: Need for better access discussed
 - Immigration issues (Seattle April 22): 1. Documented Workers 2. Immigration 3. Culturally Competent Services were all issues and 4. Citizenship issues all discussed

TACID/ Tacoma (April 21): Issues: Slope of city trail for recreation, caregiver (see SIEU above), homelessness, Health Care (insurance) reform to cover hearing aids, cultural awareness of ethnic and cultural minorities, advocacy,

Mackelprang also discussed the need for universal access instead of carving accommodations individual by individual.

After many of the ideas and issues were discussed, then a quick review of the process took place. Honan indicated that the SPIL must be submitted on-line on the RSA-MIS system this year. The 2011-2013 SPIL is due on July 1st, so there is a great deal of work to be accomplished until then.

Because the SILC must ratify the SPIL, Honan suggested having the July meeting in June. Several dates were discussed and the Council settled on June 11th in the SeaTac area. Information will be provided as soon as details are confirmed.

Chair Romel Mackelprang adjourned the meeting at 3:01PM

Respectfully Submitted by Rob Honan, Executive Director (I used the CART rough draft from CART-provider Darlene Pickard and my personal notes to create these minutes. I am open to any suggestions, amendments or changes. Thank you for understanding)