

Delaware Statewide Independent Living Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: February 26, 2024

(Held Via Zoom starting at 11:03 AM)

Members Present: Sandra Farina (DE SILC Chairperson), Arte Mays (DE SILC Vice Chair), Daniese McMullin-Powell, Zachary Simpler, Elizabeth (Lizzy) Phillips and Blake Roberts (DE SILC Secretary).

Others Present: Kathryn Burritt (DE SILC Executive Director), Ashley Spinden (Independent Living Services Administrator, Division for the Visually Impaired), Jody Hougentogler (Director, Freedom Center for Independent living), Mary Beth Parker (Community Hub Manager, Independent Resources, INC), Debbie Bain (public, former DE SILC Executive Director), Elisha Jenkins (Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation), Elizabeth Furber (Disabilities Law Program, Community Legal Aid Society, INC), Lauren Jumps (Division of Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities) and Ashley Steinbrecher (University of Delaware, My Health, My Wellness).

Meeting Commencement

The meeting commenced at 11:03 AM. Quorum noted.

Approval of December SILC Minutes (Sandra)

Blake made a motion to approve the December 8, 2023, Minutes. Lizzy seconded; Minutes were approved as submitted with no corrections, changes, or questions.

Presentation: My Health My Wellness Toolkit (Ashley Steinbrecher)

Ashley thanked DE SILC for supporting this project through a past Venture Grant. The focus is health knowledge, health-related skills and increasing confidence in handling those two areas. The My health, My Plan teaching guide was also discussed during today's presentation. The guide is designed to accommodate different learning styles. Example: feedback opportunities, group activities and individual questions. The healthcare plan resources, and teaching guide are both available online. Website:

<https://www.cds.udel.edu/healthcareaccess>

A series of three videos is available on the My Health My Wellness website providing useful information for direct service professionals and individuals. To improve the teaching guide, the plan is to add a lesson on mental health. Sandra suggested that the My Health, My Wellness website be shared in DE SILC's social media to promote the project. The SILC Chairperson encouraged centers for independent living to do the same. The IRI representative said the center considers the toolkit to be a useful resource. The Freedom Center also plans to promote the project and looks forward to connecting with Ashley in the future. The DVI representative will discuss with DVI Director the possibility of promoting the My Health

My Wellness project. Sandra suggested that a My Health My Wellness presentation could be provided to DVI in the future.

Contractors Update (Kathryn)

A DVI Independent Living Services contract commenced at the end of January 2024. The independent living services home modification contract is ready for signature. The Independent Resources, INC. and UDiscover contracts are in process of creation.

The NFB of Delaware extended its Book Talk contract time period for providing deliverables. Jody asked if the Book Talk project is available to participants of any age (youth to adult). Kathryn responded the focus is primarily transition-age young people. The plan is to complete the NFB of DE Book Talk contract by the end of this fiscal year (September 2024).

Money for the Delaware Healthcare Association contract has been approved by the state. SILC hopes to find additional funding for this project.

State Plan for Independent Living Feedback Update (Sandra)

A draft 3-year State Plan for Independent Living will be available to the public by the end of March 2024 for public feedback. There will be a State Plan for Independent Living feedback forum in April facilitated by Qua Marketing. Feedback can be provided virtually (one session), in-person (Three sessions, one in each county) and written comments. Daniese stated the rack card promoting SPIL feedback from the community is difficult to see. There was agreement by Sandra and Kathryn that the document needs to be readable by everyone. Kathryn pointed out the importance of accessibility for everyone, regardless of abilities or disabilities.

Sandra said the feedback sessions will be accessible to Delawareans with disabilities, including provision of interpreters. Jody stated the importance of reaching out to unserved and underserved populations. She suggested doing this by requesting zip code during registration. Kathryn supported Jody's recommendation. Daniese pointed out that people can fall into multiple categories. Examples: people with disability, professional and/or caregiver. Sandra agreed that people should be able to choose multiple categories; she will remind Marcella about including multiple category selection during registration process.

Life Conference Report (Kathryn)

Kathryn, Sandra, and Lizzy all attended the 2024 Life Conference. Sandra and Kathryn attended sessions when they were not promoting the organization at DE SILC exhibit table. Lizzy also assisted with

exhibiting. Sandra was impressed by the voting rights session. Jody stated that while exhibiting at the Life Conference, the Freedom Center for Independent Living was able to update its outreach list.

Action Items

Anticipated Budget for 2024 SILC Congress Attendance (Kathryn)

The Executive Director will attend this year's SILC Congress scheduled to occur in Arkansas in-person, March 2024. Kathryn presented a proposed event budget. Anticipated budget for SILC Congress attendance: \$2443.82. All voting SILC members unanimously accepted the estimated budget by individual member voice vote.

Proposed By-Laws amendment (Arte)

A by-laws amendment was drafted by the Secretary with input from the Executive Committee. Purpose: dealing with inactive SILC members. Arte verbally read the By-Laws amendment during today's meeting. It was sent electronically to all SILC members before the meeting occurred.

Daniese objected to the By-Laws due to the timeframe. Sandra responded it is important to deal with people who do not come to consecutive meetings. The goal is communication from the Council member. As a non-voting member, Ashley stated the importance of communication particularly if no response is received after 60 days. Kathryn pointed out that some Committees meet monthly. Arte and Sandra clarified necessity for members to actively participate on Committees.

Zach questioned the necessity for this amendment due to not understanding the document. Sandra explained the amendment verbally using simpler language. After hearing Sandra's explanation, he supported the amendment. For clarity, he asked if follow-up would be a verbal warning. Answer from Sandra: No, the goal is to encourage involvement. After hearing that response, Zach voted yes. Daniese was the only member who voted no.

Lizzy asked a question in chat about what happens if someone is unavailable on vacation when a meeting is scheduled. Kathryn responded in chat that written communication is acceptable.

Reports

Fiscal Report (Kathryn)

Kathryn reviewed the fiscal report which was submitted to SILC members before today's meeting. Sandra stated that the Administration on Community Living has indicated the fiscal amount for FY 2024 is expected to be identical to FY 2023. Those funds have not yet been received. Sandra also said that currently, carry-over money from FY 2023 is being used. There were no questions about the fiscal report.

Advocacy Committee (Daniese)

The Advocacy Committee Chairperson stated that Joint Finance Committee activity has caused less of a focus on legislation. She also stated that her term will expire as of March 29, 2024. Sandra encouraged Daniese to seek a new appointment in the future if she chooses to do so.

Website Committee Report (Blake)

Blake stated he continues to write Acronym of the Month articles. One Organization Spotlight article is expected to be published in March 2024. A second organization Spotlight article will be published in April.

Membership Committee Report (Arte)

Arte said the Membership Committee is always looking for new members.

Social Media Report (Sandra)

DE SILC continues to share information through its Facebook page.

Centers for Independent Living Reports

Due to time shortage, Independent Resources, INC. and Freedom Center for Independent Living will submit their reports in writing.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next SILC meeting is scheduled to occur on April 22, 2024. Today's meeting adjourned at 1:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Blake Roberts, DE SILC Secretary