

**STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
Virtual Meeting
Thursday February 4, 2021**

Call to Order: Russ Cusack called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Russ Cusack, LaRae Gustafson, Jared Ferguson, Gillian Plenty Chief, Drew Hanson, Mark Bourdon, Royce Schultze, Brittney Hogan, Deb Unruh, Nancy Landon

Members Absent: Bill Willis, Shannon Cook, Brenda Boehler, Benjamin Johnson, Carrie Miller, Matthew White

Others Present: Aimee Volk, Scott Burlingame, Damian Schlinger, Robyn Throlson, Angie Bosch, Randy Sorensen, Kirsten Dvorak

Approval of November Minutes: Jared Ferguson made a motion to approve the November minutes as amended, Mark Bourdon seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Approval of February Agenda: Nancy Landon made a motion to approve the February SILC agenda as presented, Royce Schultze seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Correspondence – Brittney Hogan: N/A

Program Performance Report (PPR) formally known as the 704 report, has not yet been submitted as we are still waiting on direction. Scott stated it may be a few months out and we will have 30-60 days for submission. Aimee and Russ explained what a PPR report is.

Treasurer's Report – Aimee Volk:

Went over treasurer's report.

Nancy Landon made a motion to approve the treasurer's report, Brittney Hogan seconded by. Motion approved by unanimous decision.

Legislative Discussion:

Scott Burlingame talked about that due to a mistake in the process the IL centers were not included in the budget. He talked about the funding of IL centers and how it would

affect the centers. The centers have been advocating to keep the funding and the value added to the centers for independent living. Scott provided testimony to show the legislature why they should provide the money. The impact will affect each center differently. It would be catastrophic for Independence, Inc. as they would go from ten staff to about two.

Damian Schlinger stated that about \$1.7 million dollars was left out of the budget and he testified to restore the budget. Cross over will occur at the Feb 26th.

Royce stated the impact for Dakota CIL most of their state dollars funds the Dickinson office so essentially would close and there would be ten counties unserved. It would have a significant impact on services being provided.

Randy stated that significant impacts would affect Options in which the whole eastern part of the state could go unserved.

Angie with Freedom stated that it would drastically affect them as they would likely need to close one of the outreach centers and decrease staff.

Russ stated that is it important for SILC members to renew their pledge for their legislators to understand the value and nature of independent living. There will be public comment when this goes to the senate.

Quarterly Director's Report:

LaRae for Options: See attached.

Royce for Dakota: See attached.

Scott for Independence, Inc.: See attached.

Angie for Freedom: See attached.

Committee Breakouts: Committee breakout sessions took place at this time.

Committee Reports:

Governance Committee – Royce Schultze:

There were two members that will need to submit reapplications (Gillian Plenty Chief and Russ Cusack) and they completed that. Angie Bosch submitted her application to take over for Royce Schultze for the position of CIL Directors/Representative. We have one more opening that will replace Brittney Hogan. We need to find someone that has a disability for the council. The Governor's office is in the process of updating their website. There will be a new login portal.

Internal Affairs –Brittney Hogan: See the GRID.

External Affairs – Drew Hanson: See the GRID.

State Rehabilitation Council – Russ Cusack:

Met in January 2021. VR needs to spend 15% of budget on pre-employment transition services (PRE-ETS) services and North Dakota is doing great in this area. They explained HB 1405 and talked about how it can benefit employers.

Traumatic Brain Injury Council – Shannon Cook: N/A

Committee on Aging – Royce Schultze:

- Discussed need for meals and food. Amidon food pantry has doubled in needs and how financial limitations/loss of work has hurt people. Shared a story about a lady with limited income that took in three homeless folks.
- Required to have informed choice procedure for Medicaid clients. Talked about home and community-based service (HCBS) options (includes anyone in a nursing facility or hospital). March-Oct about 54 new client per month.
- Service Payments to the Elderly and Disabled (SPED) increased from 1281 participants in January 2020 to 1450 in November 2020. Of these recipients 68 met nursing home level of care but were diverted from there because of the new legibility guidelines put in place.
- 215 people in basic care and memory care tested positive for COVID and 31 died.

Monthly Region 8 Conference Call – Brittney Hogan: No report.

Olmstead Commission – Scott Burlingame:

They had people come in and talk about the appeals process, MFP, and if an individual has an Olmstead complaint, they want to address it right away.

Vote on Bylaws Updates – Royce Schultze:

Went over the Bylaws that were sent out prior to 30 days to this meeting.

1. The election of officers will be held every two years during the annual meeting or as needed. The new officers will assume their new role at the following meeting or immediately if the role is vacant. Officers may serve up to two terms if elected.

Mark bourdon made a motion to approve the Bylaws as presented, Drew Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous decision.

ND Disability Advocacy Consortium – Kirsten Dvorak:

Talked about the ND Disability Advocacy Consortium (NDDAC) to advocate on behalf of others. They are looking for members currently. They are interested in having independent living actively engaged in this group.

Their priorities are focused on getting definitions in schools the same throughout the state. They are working with legislators on DHS budget especially for DD services. They have a large presence during session for bills related to anything related to disability. They are watching about 15 bills.

For more information on the North Dakota Disabilities Advocacy Consortium go to nddac.org.

Public Comment: N/A

The next SILC meeting will be held May 6-7, 2021 in Grand Forks, ND.

Mark Bourdon made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Jared Ferguson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Dakota CIL Directors Report, February 4, 2021

CARES

- 50 people received essential food bags from Oliver and Sioux counties.
- 50 people received emergency kits from Oliver and Sioux counties
- 10 iPads and 12 Chromebooks have been loaned out.
- Continue to send out resource mailings to consumers

Consumer Services

- Crafts-Christmas trees from spoons,
- Tour of Italy
- Working on getting iPads for individuals who needed to return theirs after LSS closed.
- Two home assessments

Community Education

- Presentation on services to new Metro Plains staff
- Presentation on services Great Plains Food Bank
- Facebook live on Disability Etiquette in Collaboration with Morton Mandan Library
- Powerful Tools for Caregivers
- Monitoring HB 1012 consumers wrote to restore CIL funding

Transitions

- 3 ADRL
- 2 MFP
- Hiring MFP TC

Community Activities

- Point in Time Survey held from Belfield, South Heart, and Dickinson areas and surveyed SW Homeless Coalition
- Legislative working group
- New Route Task Force submitted route change to transit board and ED presented to the city and approved.
- Power of 100 \$12,685

Independence Inc.
Directors Report-SILC
2/4/21
Scott Burlingame, Executive Director

1. Office Update

- The building we are located in is currently up for sale, and our board has decided to seek another location in order to better meet our needs. Our current lease is up at the end of April. With possible budget cuts, deciding where we are going to go is very, very difficult.

2. Individual Services- Virtual Classes

- Merry Mug Cakes- participants learned how to prepare a variety of indulgent mug cake recipes and practice following food safety guidelines.
- Holiday Gifting on a Budget- class designed to teach shoppers how to stretch their budget. Participants will explore affordable or no-cost gift ideas, learned tips for saving at retail stores, and created their own DIY gift at home.
- Holiday Gnomies- Participants had the opportunity to practice healthy coping techniques and express themselves through a creative outlet. Participants were provided with a craft kit, delivered directly to their home.

3. Individual Services

- Using the funds provided by MFP through the ADRL program, we assisted 3 people to move into their own home. One was living at the Domestic Violence Crisis Center, one was homeless and living at a rehabilitation facility, and one was homeless and living at a homeless shelter.
- As of February 1, we are a provider of Community Connect. Community Connect helps people with a Mental Health or Substance Use Disorder access needed services, such as housing, employment, financial, parenting, physical health, and community connections.
- Since November 1, we helped 5 more people apply for Medicare Part D during the open enrolment period.
- We worked with the DVCC to help three additional people transition from their shelter into their own living arrangements.

- As a result of COVID 19, we have seen a lot of people who have lost their jobs. We have assisted a lot of people to apply for unemployment, including helping them to access the online process that is often very complicated and time-consuming.
- We have built a great relationship with Judge Ashley Beall. When she has people, who have disabilities who come in front of her, she often refers them to us for services. We have helped a lot of people to get their real ID as a result of this referral point.
- We have our first person who has found housing using the Open Doors program. The Opening Doors Landlord Risk Mitigation Fund provides participating households with an opportunity to access housing, while protecting the property and investment of property owners and landlords. Individuals who are accessing housing face multiple challenges mainly due to having poor credit history, criminal background, and/or poor tenant history. The program provides participating landlords with up to \$2,000.00 dollars to reimburse for any damages caused by the tenant up to two months of non-payment of rent if the tenant did not vacate the apartment in good standing. The consumer who accessed this program was unable to find housing due to recent open felonies and pending charges. She is a mother of two children and has one on the way. She is now able to have visitation with her children and she is working full time at a local restaurant. She hopes that because of her recent success she will be able to have full custody of her children soon in her own home.

4. Website Update

- We redid our website for the first time in several years. For the first time, it is completely run and designed internally.

5. Community Services

In collaboration with the Minot Alliance of Nonprofits, we hosted a zoom training a human resource training with Kiersten Small, Compliance Investigator with the North Dakota Department of Labor and Human Rights. Among the topics discussed were exempt vs non-exempt, overtime, legally mandated breaks, employees who want to "volunteer," their time, hiring and interviewing related issues, employment discrimination, labor laws, and at-home-work and other common problems in North Dakota.

6. Other

At Christmas, we worked with FedEx to deliver presents to three families in our area (photo below).

We completed a Community Impact Report to highlight some of our accomplishments during the past year. See attached.



**Options ND SILC Report
February 4, 2021**

Home Modifications/Evaluations:

- Assisted 2 individuals with home or apartment accessibility design needs such as ramps or bathroom updates.
- Completed Accessibility Evaluation for the city of Mountain.
- Provided technical assistance to the city of Grand Forks on accessibility requirements for crosswalks.
- Provided technical assistance on accessible parking and bathroom requirements for Manvel parks personnel.
- Provided technical assistance to USDA Rural Development personnel on requirements for counter heights for a project they are funding and reviewing.

Advocacy:

- Assisted REM to advocate for access to dental services. A local dental service was planning to stop serving all people with disabilities receiving services from REM because of the behavioral issues of one individual.

COVID Groups:

Spirit Club:

- Option's has enrolled in Spirit Club, a fitness company that offers affordable online exercise programs designed to support people with and without disabilities. They offer virtual classes of fitness, yoga, Zumba, boxing, meditation, and healthy cooking. Their mission is to create a universal design for exercise leading different versions of each exercise to encompass all people to participate. They offer virtual personal training, partner training and small group classes. The individual's Options serves are excited about this opportunity especially during the pandemic and are currently signing up for classes which can be either live or prerecorded.

Coffee and Chat:

- The purpose has been to assist individuals in combating isolation by seeing how individuals are doing, talking about various strategies to cope and socialize during the pandemic.

Party Line:

- The Peer Group started in Devils Lake to assist with isolation factors during the COVID pandemic. Volunteers call their peer person on schedule that works for both of them.

Newsletter:

- Options sent out a newsletter to ND residents solely on COVID issues.

Relocations and Diversions:

- Three relocations all of which are MFP
- One diversion

Medicare D Enrollment:

- Options staff researched, reviewed and enrolled 52 people in appropriate Medicare D plans. A total of \$3,972.45 was saved by finding better cost saving plans.

Freedom Director's Report

January 2021

Jamestown Office

- Since last report-one MFP transition, two ADRL transitions
- Virtual Freedom In Action on getting your affairs in order
- Continues to facilitate IL Skills class via Zoom with students from Valley City

Lisbon

- This office is busy with various benefit questions, there are not a lot of agencies in the Lisbon area, so the staff has become a go to when people have questions navigating the system.

Wahpeton

- First office to offer virtual office hours.

Fargo

- IL Skills Class Living Well 101 wrapped up and Living Well 102 started January 22 offered on Zoom.
- Since last report-one ADRL transition

We have a new staff member; Drew Hanson began work on January 19 he is our new ND IL Advocate for Cass county and Peer Mentor Specialist who will serve both states.

Working with ND Assistive on training for consumers on how to use devices.

Ramps continue to be placed.

Successful virtual award event was held.

Gearing up for Giving Hearts Day-February 11

Planning another round of care packages.

ND Legislature update regarding CIL budget. Letter writing campaign. Will do this again in mid-February after cross-over.