

**Statewide Independent Living Council
Quarterly Meeting (Day 1)
Wednesday, August 7, 2024, 1:00pm to 4:30pm
@SLIC, Lake Charles, LA**

Member Name		Role/ Representation	Attendance	Appointment Date
Brandy	Bordelon		In-person	02/03/23
Rashad	Bristo		Virtual	07/19/24
Brenda	Cosse		Virtual	02/03/23
Shaely	Cheramie		Absent	06/19/20
Danielle	Credeur		In-person	10/27/22
Claudia	Garofalo	At-Large (Executive Committee)	In-person	9/11/20
Alisha	Hammond		Virtual	07/19/24
Esther	Jett	Secretary	In-person	06/19/20
Teriyonda	Murray	Chairperson	In-person	10/27/22
Randy	Dartez	Director of a Center for Independent Living	In-person	10/27/22
		Ex-officio Members		
Eleanor	Murrell	LA Rehabilitation Services	Absent	
Bernard	Brown	LDH- Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities	Absent	10/30/20
Cheri	Crain	Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs	Virtual	10/02/20
Charlene	Gradney	LDH- Office of Behavioral Health	Virtual	06/19/20
Welma	Jackson	LA Dept of Veteran Affairs	Absent	06/19/20
Juon	Wilson	LA Housing Corporation	Absent	07/31/20

Guests:

Hope Day	LATAN	Nicole Dejean	FHF Acadiana
Liam Doyle	GODA	Melinda Elliot	FHF SWLA
Robbie Gray	LRS	Tamara Green	Bossier COA
Mark Raymond, Jr	Split Second Foundation	Marrisa Jackson	
Tory Rocca	DRLA	Adrienne Talton-Shaw	
Monte Woods			

Call to Order

Chairperson Teriyonda Murray called the meeting to order.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by SILC members.

Introductions – Members and Guests

Roll Call / Determination of Quorum

Secretary Esther Jett conducted Roll Call. Quorum was established.

Mission Statement

The mission statement was read in unison by all in attendance:

“The mission of Louisiana’s Independent Living program(s) is to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities, facilitating integration and full inclusion of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream of American society. Louisiana’s IL Partners promote a philosophy of Independent Living, including: consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination, equal access, and individual and system advocacy.”

Approval of August 7th and 8th [Agendas](#)

Motion to Approve by Danielle Credeur. Seconded by Claudia Garofalo. Unanimously approved.

Approval of the May 2024 Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve by Randy Dartez. Seconded by Danielle Credeur. Unanimously approved.

Officer Nominations and Elections

Teriyonda Murray was appointed Chairperson by Governor Landry.

Per the bylaws, “A Member must sit on the Board for at least one year one year before being eligible to hold an office.”

Claudia Garofalo nominated Esther Jett as Vice-Chair. Alisha Hammond seconded. Esther accepted the nomination. Elected unanimously.

Alisha Hammond nominated Brandy Bordelon as Treasurer. Claudia Garofalo seconded. Brandy accepted the nomination. Elected unanimously.

Danielle Credeur was nominated as Secretary. Danielle accepted the nomination. Elected unanimously.

Claudia Garofalo was nominated as Member At-Large. Claudia accepted the nomination. Elected unanimously.

These officers are elected to take their position October 1, 2024.

The Council discussed the need for determining and tracking appointment and term limit dates in order to plan to make recommendations for appointments to the Governor.

Proposal and approval of Executive Director updated [Job Description](#)

The job description states the executive director will work 20-29 hours per week but there may be times when activities require the ED to work more hours. Such times include during legislative sessions, preparations leading up to meetings, and attending conferences. The Council discussed that the ED will submit time sheets. The Chair or her designee will approve the time. A motion to approve the [Job Description](#) as amended was made by Rashad Bristo and seconded by Danielle Credeur. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director Hiring discussion and decision

There was a discussion of how and when personnel discussions can be done as well as when it's legal to enter into an executive session. Randy motioned for the Council to take a 10 minute recess. Danielle seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Rashad Bristo motioned and Alisha Hammond seconded to table this agenda item until Day 2 of the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

SILC Quarterly Budget Update

Fiscal Agent Patricia Yurow of New Horizons provided a current update of the [FY2024 SILC Budget](#).

Category	Budget	Expended	Balance
Salary & Related Benefits	\$76,000.00	\$27,775.88	\$48,224.12
Travel for SILC members	\$19,000.00	\$6,842.00	\$12,158.00
Office Supplies	\$500.00	0	\$500.00
Captionist and Interpreting	\$9,500.00	\$5,587.50	\$3,912.50
Professional Services	\$2,400.00	\$1,234.87	\$1,165.13
Fiscal Agent 13.8%	\$14821.20	\$5,718.74	\$9,102.46
Total	\$122,221.20	\$47,158.99	\$75,062.21

Budget proposal for approval

Fiscal Agent Patricia Yurow of New Horizons presented the proposed [FY2025 SILC Budget](#), which is \$107,253.25. The FY2025 budget is almost \$15,000 less than the current budget. There was a robust discussion about the budget constraints and priorities as well as the importance for Council Members to develop resources in addition to the current funding received through Louisiana Rehabilitation Council. The Council discussed that as a 501(c)3 the SILC can accept tax-deductible charitable contributions. Danielle made a motion to accept the proposed budget. Alisha Hammond seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PPR – Corrections regarding Disability percentage of 51% and SPIL (State Plan for Independent Living) submitted via Q-90 portal

Rashad made a motion to discuss the annual PPR (formerly 704) Report and the SPIL. The motion was seconded by Alisha Hammond. The motion passed unanimously.

Randy shared that the SILC is out of compliance with the required percentage of people with disabilities. Currently, SILC has 30% of its members who have disabilities and don't work for a Center for Independent Living (CIL) or a state agency. The CIL Directors will stagger their terms in order to not dilute the membership requirements. SILC members will be asked to complete a confidential survey to determine those who qualify as a person with a disability. There was a discussion of the people who have applied to be appointed to the SILC. An email will be sent to boards and commissions requesting that they make the appointments needed to get the SILC into compliance with federal law. A staff member of the fiscal agent (NHILC) can't be a member of the SILC. SILC will contact State Agency representative members about participation in SILC meetings.

Public Comment

Phillip Credeur recommended SILC members to watch the ILRU training called SILC Basics (<https://www.ilru.org/topics/silc-roles-responsibilities>). He inquired about the donated laptops. Patricia said they are stored at the LRS office. He recommended developing a good relationship with boards and commissions in order to get appointments made in a timely manner.

Adjournment/Recess

Danielle Credeur made a motion to recess until 9am. It was seconded by Brandy Bordelon. It passed without opposition.

**Statewide Independent Living Council
Quarterly Meeting (Day 2)
Thursday, August 8, 2024, 9:00am to 12:00pm
@SLIC, Lake Charles, LA**

Member Name		Role/ Representation	Attendance	Appointment Date
Brandy	Bordelon		In-person	02/03/23
Rashad	Bristo		Virtual	07/19/24
Brenda	Cosse		Virtual	02/03/23
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Roll Call / Determination of Quorum

Secretary Esther Jett conducted Roll Call. Quorum was established.

Agency Updates

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services – Robbie Gray said that she doesn't have a report to provide. She requested an email in advance to have a report prepared in advance for future meetings. She shared that LRS is doing a needs and satisfaction survey and would appreciate help getting out the word. If anybody has any questions about that they can contact her at rgray@lwc.la.gov.

Office of Behavioral Health - Charlene Gradney

The behavioral health symposium that is scheduled for Sept 9-11 in Baton Rouge. OBH entered into a partnership with Louisiana Housing Corporation to have regional SOAR, regional specialists throughout the state to assist individuals who have serious mental illness and who are homeless and are at risk of homelessness and need assistance with applying for mainstream benefits with SSI or SSDI. OBH now has SOAR regional benefits specialists around the state through their partnership with Louisiana Housing Corporation.

OBH is also continuing a transitional housing program called Wrenway for individuals with serious and persistent mental illness who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. They are also hoping to be able to expand those beds within this fiscal year because that program stays full with a waiting list.

OBH is continuing a partnership with NAMI Louisiana to support housing, transitional housing for individuals with serious mental illness who are homeless and being discharged from institutional settings such as acute psychiatric, incarceration, nursing facilities.

OBH is also continuing with their supported employment program for individual placement and support. Their assertive community treatment teams now all utilize IPS as a supported employment evidence-based model for their individuals who they are serving and who are interested in receiving employment supports and services. OBH is also continuing with our partnerships with LRS and other state agencies to expand supported employment initiatives. OBH is also continuing our peer support specialist training program for individuals who have lived experience with mental illness or substance use disorders.

Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs- Cheri Crain

GOEA asked for additional positions due to the audit findings and asked for those additional positions in our elderly protective services unit. GOEA was

granted those positions and are working on getting those positions filled. Until they can advertise they are working on the job descriptions to bring them more in line with the national average caseload of elderly protective investigators. Their investigators have an average of 50 caseloads now. Their goal is to reduce the caseload to 25.

Independent Living Centers Updates

[Southwest Louisiana Independence Center \(@SLIC\)](#) – Phillip Credeur

For the five core services, SLIC provided 1,045 services in the quarter. The lowest core services were transitioning. They are looking to see how we can better assist the community on transitioning. SLIC has two unserved populations in Avoyelles and Pointe Coupee parishes. Avoyelles had three outreaches. Pointe Coupee had two, one of those two was partnered with RIL and had a really good success for that outreach. Our underserved population is the same three parishes: Cameron, Iberville and St. Mary.

SLIC issued 177 durable medical equipment worth approximately \$73,000, assisted 260 consumers for the hearing aid program, provided approximately 90 hours of LCD interpreting services, provided 251 transportation services, and had 46 outreaches throughout our regions in the quarter. SLIC has 826 consumers served for the quarter with an estimated cost per consumer of about \$132. They are currently providing services for 137 consumers daily in their Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) program.

[New Horizons Independent Living Center \(NHILC\)](#) – Patricia Yoruw

Patricia shared that the CIL reports to the SILC needs to be consistent across CILs. She reported that 58 percent of the administrative staff have disabilities. NHILC has 33 direct service workers. All of the IL specialists have disabilities. NHILC has a lot of new independent living specialists. She introduced one of the specialists, Gary, who started leading some groups, and said he's really doing a great job. Gary was a consumer.

She discussed the underserved and unserved parishes. For this quarter NHILC did not do anything in East Carroll. In previous quarters they had consumers in East Carroll. Underserved parishes were Catahoula and LaSalle. They have plans for what they're going to do this quarter in these two parishes. She shared that she spoke with a minister in Tullos and she has about 210 families and almost 130 of them have people with disabilities. They're going to provide them emergency prep go bags and teach them a little more about how to prepare.

NHILC did 73 community events this quarter with 2,076 attendees. Of those, half became Information and Referrals. They actually talked with them about what they might need in the future. They've been having a few groups meet every quarter. NHILC continues to provide Covid test kits. Their public health grant ends in September but people are still calling and asking for test kits. So far NHILC has distributed 6,028 test kits and they've demonstrated how to do the test to 60 people. NHILC is still providing

consumer direct, spending money. .They had a budget of \$30,000 this year. This quarter they spent \$3,260.60 mainly on batteries for motorized chairs and also fixing other types of equipment that's donated. NHILC gave away 43 different types of DME. NHILC is still doing our personal care attendant services in the Monroe area and SPAS and private pay in the Shreveport area. They've received a lot of requests to get their Medicaid provider license again.

[Resources on Independent Living \(RIL\)](#) - Alisha Hammond

RIL did rural outreaches, including the Council on Aging St. Tammany Health Fair and the Deaf Festival. They share voter registration information. RIL participated in a back-to-school drive providing information and school supplies. They provided their information to Spanish speaking people through the interpreters.

RIL provided tickets to consumers and one guest to Jazz Festival to increase community and socialization. They met with Natalie Sparrow regarding accessibility for the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, mainly the drop off points for individuals that use RTA. RIL communicated with Trinity City Artivism Project about collaboration when school starts. RIL participated in the New Orleans Mayor Council on Disabilities meetings, EMDAC meetings, NOLA Ready activities and met with the New Orleans ADA coordinator.

RIL went to East Feliciana Council on Aging one stop shop building and provided information. RIL and SLIC did the joint outreach in Iberville Parish in White Castle where they hosted bingo and both the centers provided information about the centers and provided follow up services where necessary. We're doing the voter registration drive in the Baton Rouge area.

Next Meeting Date and Location

There was a lengthy discussion about the next SILC meeting which will be November 6 & 7 in Baton Rouge. The new SILC Director will make all reservations and request accommodations for the meeting.

Selection of Executive Director

The Council interviewed two people for the position of Executive Director. The Council voted to select Bambi Polotzola as the Executive Director. She accepted the position and agreed to start Monday, August 12, 2024.

Adjournment

Randy Dartez motioned and it was seconded by Danielle Credeur to adjourn the meeting. There was no opposition.