**LOUISIANA STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL**

**November 4- 5th 2021**

**Meeting Minutes**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Members** | **Thursday, November 4th** |  **Friday, November 5th**  |  **Role** |
| Archaga, Yavonka | Present |  Present |  CIL Representative |
| Bottley, Jarrod | Present |  Present |  Parent |
| Bristo, RaShad | Present |  Present |  Parent |
| Broussard, Daryn | Present |  Present |  Self-Advocate |
| Cheramie, Shaely | Present |  Present |  Self-Advocate |
| Duplechine, Jamie | Absent |  Present |  Self-Advocate |
| Fuselier, Rocky | Present |  Present |  Agency serving Dis |
| Garafolo, Claudia | Present |  Present |  Self-Advocate |
| Hennessey, Sharon  | Absent |  Absent |  Self-Advocate |
| Jett, Esther | Present |  Present |  Agency serving Dis |
| Nguyen, Steven  | Present |  Present |  Self-Advocate |
| Pattan, Anita | Absent |  Absent |  Self-Advocate |
| Taylor, Erick | Present |  Present |  Self-Advocate |
| 4 Vacancies |  |  |  |
| **Ex-Officio Members** | **Thursday, November 4th** |  **Friday, November 5th** |  **Agency** |
| Brown, Bernard | Absent |  Absent |  LDH- OCDD |
| Crain, Cheri | Present |  Present |  GOEA |
| Gradney, Charlene | Present |  Present |  LDH- OBH |
| Jackson, Welma | Present |  Present |  LDVA |
| Murrell, Eleanor | Present |  Present |  LWC-LRS |
| Wilson, Juon | Present |  Absent |  LHC |
| Vacancy |  |  |  |
| **Staff** | **Thursday, November 4th** |  **Friday, November 5th** |  **Agency** |
| Ennis, Jamar Lanier | Present  |  Present  |  SILC Coordinator |
| **Guests** | **Thursday, November 4th** | **Friday, November 5th** |  **Agency** |
| Baker, Kandy | Present  |  Present  |  LWC- LRS |
| Bayham, Melissa | Present  |  Present  |  LWC- LRS |
| Dean, Gale | Present  |  Present  |  NHILC |
| Dejean, Lillian | Present  |  Present  |  GODA |
| Granger, Mitch | Present  |  Present  |  @SLIC |
| Polotzola, Bambi | Present  |  Present  |  GODA |
| Washington, Melanie | Absent  |  Absent |  GODA |

**November 4, 2021**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Call to Order – Jamie Duplechine (1:00 p.m.)**

Due to technical issues with the Zoom Platform, the November 4, 2021 meeting was called to order at 1:30pm.

**Roll Call / Determination of Quorum – Esther Jett (1:05 p.m.)**

Secretary Esther Jet conducted a call of the SILC attendance roll. Quorum was present.

**Introductions – Members and Guests (1:10 p.m.)**

The members of the Statewide Independent Living Council and guest in attendance were acknowledged and recognized in their official capacities.

**Pledge of Allegiance - Lead by members (1:15 p.m.)**

Steven Nguyen led the SILC Council and participating guest in the reading of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Mission Statement (1:20 p.m.)**

Steven Nguyen led the SILC Council and participating guest in the reading of its the mission statement.

**Approval of Agenda (1:25 p.m.)**

Erick Taylor made a motion to approve the November 4, 2021 meeting agenda. Seconded by Rocky Fuselier, the motion to approve the November 4, 2021 meeting agenda passed with No objections, abstentions or discussion.

**Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (1:30 p.m.)**

 **August 5th-6th**

 **September 16th**

 **October 4th**

Erick Taylor made a motion to approve the August 5th-6th, September 16th, and October 4, 2021, meeting minutes. Seconded by Rocky Fuselier, the motion to approve the August 5th-6th, September 16th, and October 4, 2021meeting agenda passed with No objections, abstentions or discussion.

**Interagency Agreement – Eleanor M. (1:35 p.m.)**

Eleanor Murrell of Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS), the Designated State Entity stated that the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) remains in effect until December 31, 2021, and that Fiscal Agent contract involving New Horizons is finalized and approved. Eleanor also stated that once a Executive Director has been hired, they will be working under the newly created Fiscal Agent contract.

**Quarterly Budget Update- Daryn Broussard (1:45 p.m.)**

Daryn Broussard provided an overview of SILC’s quarterly budget. Daryn stated that SILC has a federal consumable budget amount of 120,933‑dollars, an expenditure total as of $40,872.30. The council’s full financial report (from the Office of the Governor) will be circulated to the members of SILC.

**Discussion on LASILC’s Reporting Obligations (1:55 p.m.)**

Interim Executive Director Jamar Lanier Ennis of the SILC provided an overview of the Council’s activities relative to reporting. Ennis, Eleanor Murrell, Melissa Bayham, and Jamie Duplechine entered SILC’s pre-pandemic performance data into the federal online reporting system in October. The parties entered the aforementioned data into a newly formed system named Q90. It was reported that the SILC meet all applicable deadlines, and will participate in a meeting on November 10, 2021 to discuss preparations for the next round of reporting relative to SILC’s performance data (December 31, 2021).

**Discussion on LASILC’s Autonomy (2:05 p.m.)**

A motion was made by Steven Nguyen that the SILC enter into an executive session to discuss the Council’s selection of the Executive Director position. Daryn Broussard seconded the motion. The motion to enable SILC enter into an executive session to discuss the Council’s selection of the Executive Director position was passed without any objections, abstentions, or discussion. The SILC entered into an executive session at 1:57 p.m.

***The August 5, 2021 meeting resumed at 2:30 pm, from Executive Session***.

* Update regarding 501(c)(3) status

Gale Dean of New Horizons provided an update regarding SILC’s 501(c)(3) status. It was mentioned that the Secretary state of LA SILC, articles of incorporation were submitted on August 25, 2021, and transmitted a. received a certificate of appointment, and the official state of Louisiana certificate of incorporation. The SILC has also been given an employer ID number. The IRS form 1023 is currently pending with the federal government.

Steven Nguyen provided that the only SILC expense relative to hosting a website has been paying for the domain name.

It was suggested that a grant be pursued to assist in the efforts of sponsoring a webpage for the LA SILC. It was mentioned that Jamie and Steven will continue to assist in this endeavor. It was suggested by the SILC Chairperson to that the webpage be subject to review by the members of the council.

Eleanor stated that operational fees are available through the interagency agreement that may cover the cost of the SILC website.

* Update from Louisiana Rehabilitation Services

All relevant updates were during the Interagency Agreement Update.

**Discussion on LASILC’s Organization (2:45 p.m.)**

SILC Chairperson Jamie Duplechine led the discussion relative to improving the council’s efficiency by developing strategies to share SILC’s information amongst its members and the public. It was mentioned that the council should have a digital drop box that will enable members of the council to gain access to documents such as bylaws, manuals, minutes, etc. In addition to a maintaining a SILC webpage, the council should consider possibly creating a newsletter, and organized calling tree amongst members.

It was mentioned that SILC should plan to creating logos for the webpage. It was suggested that the SILC contact colleges and universities who may have interns who are interested in earning college credit to help nonprofit organizations with digital projects.

**Discussion on LASILC’s Recruitment of New Members (2:50 p.m.)**

SILC Chairperson Jamie Duplechine stated that there are four (4) openings on the council, and to avoid being out of compliance, the council should begin to recruit interested parties. The members of the SILC were encouraged to reach out to interested applicants, and provide a full description of what will be expected of them.

**Establish a procedure to establish**

**Discussion on LASILC’s Execution of the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL)**

**Objectives (3:00 p.m.)**

Interim Executive Director Ennis led the discussion relative to the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). The current SPIL was shared with the participants of the November 4, 2021 meeting via the Zoom platform, and encouraged the members of SILC to provide input relative to accomplish the objectives listed on the plan. It was also suggested that SILC create a mechanism to track the activities of council members for purposes of contributing to the reporting data indicators (e.g. trainings, conferences, etc.). Ennis stated that he will create a single working document to better track SILC’s progress pursuant to the current SPIL.

**Discussion on LASILC’s Legislative Initiatives (3:30 p.m.)**

SILC Chairperson Jamie Duplechine stated that the 2022 Legislative Session will convene on March 14, 2022. Duplechine solicited legislative related topics that SILC should either support or oppose for the upcoming legislative session.

Daryn Broussard suggested that the council should continue to support the various waiver programs and SPAS programs.

Vice Chairperson Rocky Fuselier advised the members of SILC that nursing homes across the state recently implemented a rule forbidding the use of motorized wheelchairs into nursing homes. Members and guest in attendance unanimously agreed that this prohibition of motorized wheelchairs in the nursing home setting is unacceptable. It was suggested that the council should bring the prohibition to the attention of the legislature and any interested parties who are against the current rule. It was suggested that Letters in opposition be drafted to the Nursing Home Association, the Legislature.

***Chairperson Duplechine stated that she will entertain a motion to resume SILC’s legislative discussion on November 5, 2021.***

**Public Comment (3:55 p.m.)**

Members and participants of the November 4, 2021 SILC meeting expressed concern regarding the vaccination and weekly testing mandates, especially for the Independent Living Centers and the Southwest Louisiana Independent Center (SLIC). Mitch Granger, Director of SLIC asked if potential legislation could provide an exemption to the requirement of businesses with 100 or more employees. If the vaccination mandate goes into, the SLIC may lose 50% of its workforce and will be subject to a $14,000 per unvaccinated-employee fine. Ester Jett expressed similar concerns relative to the vaccination mandate as it relates to the Independent Living Center’s ability to serve the needs. Those in attendance of the November 4, 2021 meeting expressed interest in elevating this concern to state and federal leadership and devising a plan to address the mandate.

**Adjournment (4:00 p.m.)**

Yavonka Archaga made a motion to adjourn the November 4, 2021 meeting of the SILC. Daryn Broussard seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn the November 4, 2021 meeting of the SILC passed without any objections, abstentions, or discussion. The November 4, 2021 meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

The November 5, 2021 meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m cst.

**November 5, 2021**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Call to Order- Jamie Duplechine (9:00 a.m.)**

The November 5, 2021 meeting of the SILC was called to order by SILC Chairperson Jamie Duplechine at 9:06 a.m.

**Roll Call / Determination of Quorum – Jamar Lanier Ennis (9:05 a.m.)**

Jamar Lanier Ennis called the official roll of the SILC. Quorum was established.

**Independent Living Centers Updates (9:15 a.m.)**

Southwest Louisiana Independence Center (@SLIC)– Rocky Fusilier

Rocky Fuselier provided a report on behalf of SLIC. Please find the link below to gain access to the full report.

[**https://invite.bublup.com/kWP\_3mssj1PZ**](https://invite.bublup.com/kWP_3mssj1PZ)

Update from New Horizons Independent Living Center (NHILC) – Gale Dean

Gale Dean provided a report on behalf of New Horizons Independent Living Center. Please find the link below to gain access to the full report.

[**https://invite.bublup.com/gvgvrQ14tTuG**](https://invite.bublup.com/gvgvrQ14tTuG)

Update from Resources on Independent Living (RIL)- Yavonka Archaga

Yavonka Archaga provided the following update on behalf of Resources on Independent Living.

Yavonka provided that her agency is adapting to MSIL system.

RIL represented and participated in the Cancer Association of Louisiana’s (CAL) fundraiser on behalf of at least ten (10) of their consumers. The fundraiser netted around $77,000.00 for the CAL.

RIL is in the process of becoming a COVID-19 testing site. It was mentioned that RIL would like to further educate consumers and the general public regarding the importance of receiving the COVID-19 vaccination and getting tested.

RIL is in the process of renewing the Trio Bike Program, which encourages individuals at residential settings to be active.

RIL has also advocated and spoke with Senator Bob Casey’s office relative to preparation for natural disasters as it relates to individuals with disabilities and consumers of IL services. It was mentioned that during the most recent storm (Hurricane Ida), RIL distributed AC units, generators, and other items to individuals in need. RIL also participated in various assessments to provide items including but not limited to walkers, hearing aids, ramps, cleaning supplies, etc. RIL also collaborated with various shelters to provide assistance after Hurricane Ida. It was mentioned that the New Orleans IL center, received two (2) feet of water in the facility, is recovering from the effects of the hurricane and remains closed for the moment.

**Agency Updates (10:00 a.m.)**

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services – Melissa Bayham

Melissa Bayham provided an update on behalf of LRS. Please find the attached link to gain access to the full report.

**https://invite.bublup.com/A2JmAhSXLEDA**

Veteran Affairs- Welma Jackson

Welma Jackson provided an update on behalf of The Louisiana Department of Veteran Affairs. Please find the attached link to gain access to the full report.

[**https://invite.bublup.com/fZ6GYEkQskCk**](https://invite.bublup.com/fZ6GYEkQskCk)

Office of Behavioral Health- Charlene Gradney.

Daryn Broussard read the OBH report on behalf of Charlene Gradney, please find the link below to gain access to the full report.

[**https://invite.bublup.com/HZ868xB4sL\_Y**](https://invite.bublup.com/HZ868xB4sL_Y)

Update from Elderly Affairs- Cheri Crain

Steven Nguyen read the Elderly Affairs report on behalf of Cheri Crain, please find the link below to gain access to the full report.

[**https://invite.bublup.com/At2qCzhcQlXD**](https://invite.bublup.com/At2qCzhcQlXD)

Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities- Bernard Brown

Steven Nguyen read the OCDD report on behalf of Bernard Brown, please find the link below to gain access to the full report

**https://invite.bublup.com/8j0mI4sfMYce**

Department of Transportation and Development– Jamie Ainsworth DOTD

Please find the link below to gain access to the DOTD report.

[**https://invite.bublup.com/-DCh0SN6nhfm**](https://invite.bublup.com/-DCh0SN6nhfm)

Louisiana Housing Corporation- Juon Wilson

Juon Wilson provided the following update via email.

Within the 22 parishes of the Louisiana Balance of State Continuum of Care (not statewide numbers), From 5/31/21-10/31/21, 785 people who self reported having a disability

People First Louisiana/GACDA and NCIL Housing Committee- Sharon Hennessey

No report provided.

**SILC Member Updates (11:00 a.m.)**

*Recap of activities/events occurring in each Council member’s local community that might provide opportunities for dissemination of Independent Living services and philosophy.*

Steven Nguyen- The month of October 2021 was declared Spina Bifida Awareness Month. During the month of October, Steven made several post on social media to educate the community and spread awareness about Spina Bifida.

Claudia Garofolo- participated in as a panelist/ consumer reviewer for a program sponsored by the Department of Defense and administered by General Dynamics. The program receives proposals from scientist and clinicians who desire to conduct research, studies to benefit individuals with spinal cord injuries.

Recap of the Council’s participation in Louisiana’s Emergency Management Disability and Aging Coalition (EMDAC) and report on EMDAC activities at quarterly LASILC meetings.

No report provided.

Recap of Council’s participation in webinars, conference calls, and training.

No report provided.

Discussion on the Independent Living Center Consumer Satisfaction Survey

No report provided.

**Legislative Updates (11:30 a.m.)**

Daryn Broussard proposed that the SILC advocates for more funding for the State Personal Assistance Service (SPAS), and ensuring that Home and Community Based Services are fully funded as legislative initiatives.

Claudia Garafolo proposed that SILC advocates against the prohibition of powerchairs in nursing homes and or nursing facilities.

Bambi Polotzola suggested that the council conducts research as it relates to any prohibitions of powerchairs in nursing homes and facilities.

Gale Dean suggested that the prohibition of powerchairs may be limited to one or two nursing homes or facilities, and that more information is needed.

Rocky Fuselier provided that the prohibition of a powerchair concern came directly from a consumer of the SLIC. It was determined that the aforementioned concern stems from individual nursing home situations, and depends on who makes the decisions. It was mentioned that there is a policy within a nursing home to determine if an individual is mentally capable of operating a power chair without hurting anyone else in the facility. It was also mentioned that once someone goes in the nursing home, Medicaid or Medicare no longer provides for powerchairs, it could also be that the nursing home chooses not to pay for the powerchair due to it’s expense.

Daryn Broussard provides that the prohibition of powerchairs interrupts the agreement/recommendations of treating doctors who state that its use is necessary.

Jamie Duplechine provided that a statement “SILC believes people should have access to their motorized wheelchairs in living facilities and will pursue actions necessary to ensure this.”

Steven Nguyen provided that COVID-19 vaccine mandates can have a detrimental effect to companies that support individuals.

Rashad Bristo suggested that to reduce confusion and oversaturation of legislative agenda items, the SILC should focus on a few issues as it relates to advocacy during the 2022 Legislative Session and create a targeted approach.

Daryn Broussard suggested that a special meeting be called to create a legislative agenda.

Daryn Broussard made a motion that the SILC supports and will enforce a basic principle that individuals with disabilities should have access to motorized wheelchairs and other equipment in facilities. This motion was seconded by Steven Nguyen. The motion did not move forward due to the lack of quorum.

Jamie Duplechine will schedule a meeting to discuss SILC’s legislative agenda.

**Other Business, Closing and Public Comments (11:50 a.m.)**

No other business, closing or public comments were provided.

**Adjournment (12:00 p.m.)**

The SILC November 5, 2021 meeting officially adjourned at 12:00 p.m.