

MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 19, 2021, SILC QUARTERLY MEETING

New Mexico Statewide Independent Living Council
Quarterly Meeting: February 19, 2021 – 10:00 AM
In Response to the Governor's Declaration of a Public
Emergency and Ban on Large Public Gatherings the
The SILC Quarterly Meeting was held Virtually Via-Webex

- I. Welcome/Call to Order: Chairman Jason Gordon called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM.
- II. Roll Call: Chairman Jason Gordon
 - Coby Livingstone: Vice Chair and Voting member – Present
 - Paula Seanez: Voting Member – Present
 - Petra Solimon: Voting Member – Present
 - Ken Collins: Voting Member -Present
 - Audra Wilson: Voting Member – Present
 - Jason Gordon: Chairman and Voting Member – Present
 - Linnea Forsythe: Non-Voting Member -Present
 - **Quorum was Complete**
 - Leslie Wright: Present
 - Michael Murphy: Present
 - Sarah Michaud: Present
 - Greg Trapp: Present
 - Marlencia Chee: Not present at Roll Call
- III. Introduction of SILC Members, CIL Directors, State Agencies/Partners and other Guests. Chairman Jason Gordon.
 - 1) SILC Members
 - Ken Collins - Brain Injury: Independent Peer; Changes of life, people with brain injuries. Gallup, N.M. Community Outreach. Guest, Jay Azula. Drug Alcohol Counselor.
 - Paula Seanez -Director Navajo Nation Department of Dine Education Administration/OSERS Under the American Indian Rehabilitation Act
 - Audra Wilson – CILS Representative. Executive Director Choices Center in Roswell, N.M.
 - Petra Solimon – Director Laguna Acoma Connections/ Partners for Success. Falls under the umbrella of OSERS.
 - Coby Livingstone - Vice Chairwoman SILC
 - Linnea Forsythe – Acting Director of the Governor's Commission on Disabilities. (Tracy Agiovlasis will serve as back up)
 - Jason Gordon – SILC Chairman. Litigation Director at Disability Rights N.M.
 - 2) CIL Directors:
 - Sarah Michaud - Executive Director New Vistas, Santa Fe, N.M. Services 9 Counties. Early Intervention Program for 3 Counties.

- Michael Murphy - Executive Director, Independent Resource Center (ILRC), Albuquerque, N.M. ILRC in operation since 1979. 18 years of service. Service 7-16 Counties. Consumer Directed.
- Albert Montoya - Executive Director, The Ability Center for Independent Living, Las Cruces, N.M. Services the S.W. Corner of New Mexico.
- Leslie Wright - Executive Director, San Juan Center for Independence, Farmington, N.M. Services Gallup, Western region of Albuquerque, which includes several different entities.

3) State Agencies/Partners:

- Diane Mourning-Brown - Director of Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Gregg Trapp - Executive Director New Mexico Commission for The Blind. 21 years. Former SILC Member.
- Jim Salas - Deputy Director New Mexico Commission for the Blind. Oversees, Vocational Rehabilitation Program and Independent Living Services.
- Juan Haro – New Mexico Commission for the Blind. Oversees Independent Living Services Statewide.
- Kelly Burma - New Mexico Commission for the Blind. Coordinator for the Skills Center and Pre-employment Transition Services.
- Michael O’Brien – N.M. Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. DVR’S Rehabilitation Services Administrator. Oversees over 130 vocational rehabilitation counselors and staff throughout N.M.
- Michael Cardon - N.M. Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

IV. Action Item: Approval of Minutes for September 9, 2020 Meeting. Chairman Jason Gordon asked if there were any changes to the minutes. Hearing none he asked for a motion to approve.

- Vice- Chair Coby Livingstone made a motion to Approve.
- Ken Collins Seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call was taken.**
- Chairman Jason Gordon: I
- Vice- Chairwoman Coby Livingstone: I
- Paula Seanez: I
- Petra Solimon: I
- Audra Wilson: I
- Ken Collins: I
- Linnea Forsythe: (non-voting member)
- **The Motion Passed Unanimously (6-0)**

V. Action Item: Approval of Minutes for December 21, 2020 Meeting. Chairman Jason Gordon asked if there were any changes to the Minutes. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve.

- Chairwoman Coby Livingstone made a motion to approve.
- Audra Wilson seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call was taken.**

- Chairman Jason Gordon: I
- Vice Chairwoman Coby Livingstone: I
- Paula Seanez: I
- Petra Solimon: I
- Audra Wilson: I
- Ken Collins: I
- Linnea Forsythe:(non-voting member)
- **Motion Passed Unanimously (6-0)**

VI. Approval of possible changes to the Agenda order and deletion of Agenda items (Action by vote will be taken if there are any changes/deletions): Chairman Jason Gordon.

- There were no changes to the Agenda.

VII. Action Item: Approval of Open Meetings Act Resolution. Chairman Jason Gordon

- Open for Floor Discussion
- Greg Trapp, N.M. Commission for the Blind
- Federal Act: SILC is to establish 30-day notice for SPIL
- Complies with state Open Meetings Act and Federal Law
- Not in SILC Bylaws
- OMA makes it a misdemeanor and creates a liability with Federal Law
- Contains language/direction as to how SILC will meet following OMA during times of disasters.
- The N.M. Attorney General has allowed virtual meetings to take place during this Covid-19 pandemic.
- OMA Signatures. Jason Gordon Chairman of the SILC, Diane Mourning-Brown(DVR Director), Patricia SILC Coordinator
- DVR and SILC together must develop written procedures for Statewide meetings.
- OMA requires that SILC Meetings/Legal notice be posted in newspaper and DVR/SILC website 10 days in advance of meeting.
- Amendment to OMA: "To revise OMA stating that legal notices be posted on DVR Website 10 days in advance of meetings
- Chairman Jason Gordon asked for a motion to approve the OMA with amendment.
- Paula Seanez made the motion to approve.
- Petra Solimon seconded the motion.
- **Roll Call was taken.**
- Chairman Jason Gordon: I
- Vice Chairwoman Coby Livingstone: I
- Paula Seanez: I
- Petra Solimon: I
- Audra Wilson: I
- Ken Collins: I
- Linnea Forsythe: (Non-voting Member)
- **Unanimously passed (6-0) With amendment**

- VIII. Chairman's Quarterly Report/Update: Jason Gordon Chairman
- Update on the SPIL. It was submitted by the December 30, 2020 deadline. Was sent back for additional information and amendments. Returned the SPIL with the requested changes and additions. The SPIL was approved in January. Appreciate the input from everyone, especially Audra Wilson's input and expertise on the SPIL process. Thank you to Patricia Quintana, Diane Mourning - Brown, Michael O' Brien, and Alicia DeVargas
 - Update on the 704/PPR Report: The 704 Report is usually due in December, ICL is in the process of changing the format and has asked that we hold on to the report until we hear from them. SILC has completed their portion and DVR is in the process of completing their portion.
- IX. SILC Coordinator Quarterly Report/Update: Patricia L. Quintana SILC Coordinator
- Contract renewed on January 1, 2021
 - SILC Budget total is \$54,250.00 Balance as of today is \$50,359.47.
 - The Governor finally reappointed the SILC Council and I want to welcome our new appointee, Linnea Forsythe. We are still soliciting interested individuals to fill a few more spots
 - According to the Governor's Legal Staff, the Governor has the authority to appoint the SILC Chair. She has appointed Jason Gordon.
- X. Discussion Item: Establish Executive Committee and Standing Committees: Chairman Jason Gordon.
- Vice-Chair Coby Livingstone suggested the Executive Board appoint committees.
 - Request to send by-laws to members for review of Committees.
 - Discuss further at next Quarterly meeting.
- XI. Discussion Item: CILS goals and objectives addressing the Covid-19. Update on how the Covid-19 testing and vaccination is working for CILS: Vice- Chair Coby Livingstone.
- a) Michael Murphy: Staff working from home, Masks required and available for consumers and attendants. Following CDC Guidelines etc.
 - b) Sarah Michaud: Using a mixed model of home or office. In office services are limited to no more than two days a week. Using general screening, temperature check, daily cleaning, using UV Light sanitation system. Hospitality services are on hold for now. Majority of meetings and services are through a virtual platform.
 - c) Audra Wilson: Choices services are 50% open and 50% from home. Employees trade off from office to home. Masks are required. Temperature is taken and logged into book next to name. All surfaces and needed areas are sanitized. No more than one customer at a time is allowed in office.
 - d) Albert Montoya: Have gone to a hybrid model. Office is moved outdoors Wednesdays and Thursdays. Established sanitation station for workers and clients. Digital outreach approach to parts of Dona Ana County. No congregating at this time.
- XII. State Agency Quarterly Reports/Updates:
- a) DVR: Diane Mourning-Brown: Virtual HAFC Hearing overview and budget recommendation. Robert Cardona DVR CFO. LFC Recommended a cut of \$92.

Thousand which equals a loss of \$434,000. In Federal matching funds. The Executive branch did not recommend any cuts. Independent Living Budget recommendation was for a 5% reduction from the Executive Branch of \$33,800. LFC's recommendation was to keep the budget the same. DDS, the LFC recommended no cuts, the Executive recommended a reduction of \$72. Thousand. DVR Audit Report, Robert Cardona DVR CFO. Did well in audit with a few minor issues. Diane Mourning Brown, Staff is still tele- working after a year, not seeing clients, continual virtual visits, modified work schedule with 10% of staff working in house. Vacancy rate continues to fall. Order of selection released 200 more who were on wait list, with 600 remaining. Significant reduction from a year ago, at 1,400. SB354: Will create an independent commission of Vocational Rehabilitation and removing it from under the PED umbrella. Sponsors of the Bill Senators Linda Lopez and Jerry Ortiz y Pino. There would be no fiscal impacts with this change.

- b) New Mexico Commission for the Blind: Jim Salas. Focusing on remote services to client base which has shown to be effective during this time regarding vocational and rehabilitation services. The independent living program has been more of a challenge in delivering services due to Covid-19. As far as employees, most have been vaccinated. There are a few vacancies to fill in Las Vegas and Las Cruces with qualified blindness skill instructors. These vacancies will be open until filled.
- c) AIVRS Program: Paula Seanez. Navajo Nation returned to offices on February 8. There has been a dip in the number of Covid-cases. The vaccine rollout has vaccinated all Navajo Nation Employees. RFP Grant Proposal due in April. There are 46 Tribal VR Programs and 50 have applied. This approach is making it more competitive between programs and is not a good approach. Laguna Pueblo: Petra Solimon. Established a Talking Circle Session focused on issues and discussion for grant support. Petra was reappointed to SILC. Pueblos continue to be closed. Delivery of constituent services continue through Zoom and other platforms. Limited and careful meetings with consumers. Jemez Pueblo: Marlencia Chee. The annual performance report has been extended. There has been a grant notification letter. Applying for grant opportunities. Operation of Programs. Staff are on a rotational schedule. Have a response team for those in isolation, quarantined, and affected by various covid-19 challenges.

XIII. CILS Reports and Updates:

- a) Sarah Michaud, New Vistas, Santa Fe, N.M. Early Intervention program has seen a 30% decrease statewide due to covid-19. Challenges with tele health, even with the challenges, 250 children were serviced. The Las Vegas Office was moved to 624 University Ave. Have more space for evaluations and conferences. Will allow more success in case management system for early intervention. Renewed partnership with the Department of Health Covid online curriculum and staff has been trained. Legislative Action Team. Will be meeting to follow up on Legislative issues. Telework and office hours. Slowly increasing time in office. At 25% Capacity at this time.
- b) Michael Murphy, Independent Living Resource Center, Albuquerque, N.M. Assisted 42 consumers on IL Plans. 125 hrs on community advocacy. 484

consumers receiving services. Staff is in office 25% of time. Key issues are still related to housing availability. And current DVR training with new staff.

- c) Leslie Wright, San Juan Center for Independence, Farmington, N.M.
- d) Audra Wilson, CHOICES, Roswell, N.M.
- e) Albert Montoya, The Ability Center, Las Cruces, N.M. Center has developed a hybrid model of delivering services. Social media following of 600. Services activities are virtual. Digital outreach is the main approach used to reach and engage clients. Winter clothing event raised enough clothing to provide to 124 families. Provided 200 households with heaters. From the food pantry, delivered 2,300 lbs. of food to homebound individuals. Delivered hygiene packages, established a pet food pantry. Mobile hot spot allows individuals to use computers to access curriculum and information. And established a mobile computer lab.

XIV Dates for the next three meetings.

XV Meeting was adjourned at 1:52 PM