

## SILC MINUTES 3/3/22

### **I.Attendance**

Present/Council:

-Coby Livingstone

-Jason Gordon

-Ken Collins

-Jim Salas

-Petra Solimon

-Audra Wilson

-Paula Seanez (later in meeting)

-Lisa McNiven (Later in meeting)

-Marlencia Chee

-Casey Stone Romero

Absent/Council

-Peggy Jo Hayes

Present Community Partners:

-Sarah Michaud

-Michael Murphy

-Leslie Wright

-Nash Sisneros

-Jeff Levine

-Alicia De Vargas

Time was taken during the introduction part of the meeting to introduce new members of the Council, three of whom were in attendance. They spent time describing their job description, and why they want to be on the Council.

II. Approval of minutes: No minutes for last SILC meeting in December because there was no quorum, so no SILC business conducted. Michael Murphy raised the issue that the minutes from the meeting prior to that still needed to be approved. After reports, 9/1/21 minutes approved, with Ken Collins making motion for approval and Paula Seanez seconds. Motions carries with all yeas except for Coby Livingstone, Petra Solimon and Coby Livingstone abstaining.

III. Approval of Agenda-formal approval of minutes moved to end of meeting to allow for review of previous minutes. Ken moves to move that agenda item to follow community partner reports. Petra seconds. Vote is unanimous to change the agenda to move approval of agenda item to the end. Motion carries unanimously, change made to the agenda.

IV. Chair Report: Chair discusses moving administrative work forward since the last quarterly meeting. ACL mandated corrections to the last two SILC PPR (2020/2021), which Chair completed. 2020 PPR has been approved, 2021 still under review. Thank SILC and community partners for providing needed information to complete PPRs. Chair also discussed efforts by Patricia to increase membership, and Chair discussions with DVR concerning new SILC Coordinator contract. Chair notes that SILC currently has no SILC Coordinator due to disagreement between SILC and DVR concerning the renewal of SILC Coordinator contract. Chair says that discussion with DVR is ongoing, and progress resolving the issue is being made. Goal of SILC is to bring their chosen SILC coordinator back under contract. Chair notes difficulty of doing SILC admin work without support of SILC coordinator.

#### V. Community Reports:

1. DVR Report-DVR is continuing to lower counselor vacancy rate. Twenty vacancies now, and DVR is engaging in rapid hire to fill. Offices are open on a hybrid (home/in person) schedule due to Covid. Covid safe practices (mask in office) still in place. 300 plus released from the wait list under order of selection-waitlist down to 680. Nan Sisneros thanks the Chair for negotiating with DVR over issue of SILC Coordinator contract. DVR also advises the Council that the provision of transition services to schools is moving forward.

2. Commission for the Blind Report: Updating Council on STEP program-student transition to employment. Training and work components being done combination of virtually and in person due to COVID concerns. Have a component called STEP into college, focusing on skills required for success in higher education. Pays \$12.95 an hour for summer work under the program, equal to Santa Fe minimum wage. CFB had an audit through the state auditor that went well. Working with DVR preparing performance measures for state plan. CFB is still engaged in COVID safe practices while doing their work, especially work with client. CFB tells the Council that it is hiring for a few vacant Counselor positions.

3. Pueblo Laguna/Acoma/Jemez/OSERS: Still mask mandate in Pueblo Laguna/Acoma. Slowly starting to open from COVID, hoping for more community outreach. Jemez has awarded a new grant for the next three years, and a no-cost extension for unused funds. Offices still closed to the public due to COVID, but taking customers by appointment. They must be vaccinated, and Jemez engaged in other COVID safe practices. COVID outbreak among Jemez VR staff necessitated office working at home until recently. Jemez VR engaging in outreach with other Pueblos within an 80 mile radius. Jemez VR is having annual VR awareness conference virtually. Jemez VR has three vacancies they are trying to fill: two VR counselors and one rehabilitation tech. AIVRS: Program also has carry over budget of funds not spent last year, and has until September 30, 2022 to spend those funds. Providing transition services for youth to work summer jobs and gain experience. AIVRS met with DVR and new Director to review memorandum of agreement. Navajo Times is now on newslines and is available to individuals who are visually impaired through that service. Resuming face to face meetings with consumers, but those meetings must be scheduled in advance.

4. New Vistas: Busy at the end of 2021 submitting 2020 and 2021 PPR. 2020 approved, still waiting on approval for 2021. Served 770 consumers in 2021, a larger number than normal and much of it accomplished under the CARE program. Also hosted first in person out reach event since COVID at the end of last year. New Vistas is celebrating 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this December. Plan is to spend all year doing community events to celebrate. These include targeted transition program for youth and an event around service animals. New Vistas has been back in the office and doing in person services for about a year, while keeping updated on COVID policy and protocol (including masks for in person services.). Not a single COVID outbreak in any New Vistas office. Executive Director Sarah Machaud had first opportunity to provide peer mentorship to a CIL Director in Florida. Continuing to provide five core services of IL.

5. Independent Living Resource Center: Still providing five core services. So far in this fiscal year, IL services to 247 consumers, including 62 new consumers. Supported the implementation of 76 IL plans. Staff has spent over 147 hours in community activities, including out reach and education. ILRC has not lessened COVID protocols since they went into place in 2020. In very sad news, a member of ILRC staff working in Alamogordo passed away due to COVID. Has used CARES Act money for various projects, including outreach, food cards and gas cards for consumers, 56 tablets for internet access, and COVID information outreach to consumers. No further reports from CIL community partners.

6. Lisa McNiven provides public comment to update group about Governor's Commission on Disability. The closing remarks from the Chair praises the work of the CILS and the Council.

7. Meeting adjourned