

**Alaska Statewide Independent Living Council, Inc.  
Quarterly Meeting**

**LOCATION**  
Teleconference

**DATE**  
September 24 - 25, 2018

MEETING MINUTES

Prepared by: Sheila Garrant  
Peninsula Reporting

***Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018***

**Council Members Present:**

Michael Christian, chair	Advocate/Consumer
Joan O’Keefe	Advocate/SAIL, CIL Representative
Tom Cyrus	TVR Representative
Justine Fine	Advocate/Consumer
Janalee Gage	Advocate/Consumer
Jaye Palmer	Advocate/Consumer
Jen Brower	Advocate/Consumer
Annette Alfonsi	Advocate/Consumer
Cheri Johansen	Advocate/Consumer
Cathy Gerby	Advocate/Consumer
Deb Etheridge	Ex-Officio, SDS

**Council Members Not Present**

Velja Elstad	DVR Representative
Buddy Kutch	Advocate/Consumer

**Staff:**

Heidi Frost, Executive Director  
Kathy Munk, Administrative Assistant

**CALL TO ORDER – 1:00 p.m.**

**ROLL CALL**

**REVIEW AGENDA**

Joan O’Keefe **MOVED** to approve the agenda as presented, **SECONDED** by Tom Cyrus. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**.

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

Joan O’Keefe **MOVED** to approve the minutes from the June 2018 meeting as presented, **SECONDED** by Jaye Palmer. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**.

**SILC BUSINESS**

## **DISCUSS CONSENT AGENDA CHANGE**

Heidi Frost directed the members' attention to the document in the meeting packet titled *Consent Agenda*. She noted that incorporating a consent agenda into the quarterly meetings would expedite routine SILC business items such as the approval of the agenda and minutes, appointments that need board approval, reports that provide information only, and correspondence that requires no action. The consent agenda would consolidate such matters, and the board members can review those documents at their leisure and be prepared to vote on the entire consent agenda at the quarterly meetings. She noted that Council members can request that an item be removed from the consent agenda and be placed on the regular meeting agenda. Hearing no opposition, Heidi noted that the SILC will move forward with that change.

## **SILC BUSINESS – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT & FINANCE**

Heidi Frost reminded the Council members that she had submitted her letter of resignation and as such, her report would consist of the ongoing activities of the SILC that will need to be considered moving forward. She highlighted the following activities:

- ***With regard to the continuation of SPIL activities:***
  - Needs assessment efforts including the focus groups at and outside of CIL locations
  - Survey reviews including the SPIL needs assessment and the customer service surveys
  - Data collection
  - Partner plans and surveys
  - Possible interview with individuals
  - Group meetings to review data and determine next steps as per timeline
  - Define sections of the SPIL including goals and objectives, and address the financial plan
  - Writing the SPIL. Draft must be ready no later than May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019.
  
- ***With regards to partnerships and initiatives activities:***
  - Continue work with mental health crisis in Fairbanks
  - Continue work with emergency preparedness groups including Alaska Disability Advisory Group (ADAG), FEMA, and CILs

- Continue work with Alaska Brain Injury Network (ABIN) as an ex-officio member. Note that SILC is a required member on the Administration of Community Living TABI grant managed by Center for Human Development (CHD)
  - Continue work with the Trust and MSHF grants including the Assisted Living Home Transition Grant
  - Continue work on Home Accessibility/Enabling Technology Project
  - Continue work on service animal issues
  - Continue work with the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE)
  - Continue work on the prevention of sexual assault and domestic violence efforts.
- ***With regards to the SILC administrative activities:***
    - Continue constant vigilance on budgets, including current issue of the cost of accounting services
    - The policies and procedures need to be reviewed and updated
    - Monitor the information technology, deal with the loss of data, and training for staff on file sharing and database management
    - Follow up on the recommendation for a new computer for ED
    - Continually update the SILC website with pertinent information
    - Continue use of Facebook as a marketing tool and review other social media platforms
    - Continue awareness building through presentations, promotional items, and attendance at event booths
    - Continue networking efforts including the creation of an infographic
    - Continue work on nonprofit opportunities, policies, outreach and marketing, and charity registrations.

Heidi Frost directed the member's attention to the financial documents contained in the board packet and stated that the SILC is financially on track.

## CALENDAR

Heidi Frost directed the members' attention to the 2018/2019 calendar contained in the board packet and did a review of the upcoming meetings, conferences, and events on the SILC calendar. Heidi confirmed that the date for the May Council meeting is May 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019. She recommended adding the decision of where to hold the May 2019 meeting to the November meeting agenda.

## **POLICIES**

Heidi Frost stated that it is time for a review of the SILC policies and procedures, and normally the board is involved in that process. Heidi stated that she will send the draft policies to Council members for them to review and give input.

Heidi Frost mentioned that a review of various SILC insurance policies is underway. The policies that are up for renewal include general liability, workers' compensation, director and officer liability, and healthcare. Once those policies are renewed, she will share them with Council members.

## **BOARD POSITIONS**

Heidi Frost directed the members' attention to the section of the bylaws related to the Executive Committee and stated that an election will be held at the November meeting to elect a new chair and treasurer for a two-year term, because it is a new cycle for those positions; and a vice chair for a one-year term, because Tom Cyrus' term is expiring and he will be leaving the SILC.

Heidi Frost encouraged board members to be actively involved and help identify people for those positions in order to build a strong Executive Committee to help the new executive director.

## **TRANSITIONS**

Heidi Frost stated that she proffered her resignation with an end date of November 2<sup>nd</sup>, and has since recognized that November 2<sup>nd</sup> was poor timing considering the fact that the SILC has a face-to-face meeting at the end of November. Heidi offered to amend her resignation end date to November 30<sup>th</sup> if the board was agreeable. After a short discussion, the board agreed to accept Heidi's offer to stay through to the end of November and noted that they appreciated her offer to stay.

Michael Christian led a discussion related to the hiring process for a new executive director. Michael presented an option for the board and offered to serve as an interim director if the board was agreeable in order to ensure the most important activities of the SILC, including the development of the SPIL, continue and also allow time to go through the recruitment and hiring process. Michael recommended that the Executive Committee continue the conversation regarding this option.

Joan O’Keefe recommended that the SILC advertise for the position and begin aggressive recruiting immediately regardless of the options on the table for an interim director.

From the discussion, Heidi Frost summarized that the next steps include the following:

- Michael Christian was asked to send his resume to the Executive Committee in the next two weeks
- Staff will send the Executive Committee an updated executive director job description and job announcement for review, and after such time the SILC staff will follow the direction of the committee regarding advertisement
- Executive Committee needs to make a decision regarding an interim director
- Executive Committee needs to make a decision regarding hiring Heidi as a consultant on specific projects.

Tom Cyrus **MOVED** to hold officer election on day two of the meeting to reorganize the Executive Committee, **SECONDED** by Annette Alfonsi. During discussion it became clear from the bylaws at Article 4, Chapter 1, Item C that the new officers would begin representation January 1<sup>st</sup>, which would not be the intent of the motion. The motion was **WITHDRAWN**.

The board agreed to table the rest of the discussion on transition until a later date.

## **NON-PROFIT STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Heidi Frost directed the members’ attention to the strategic plan that was developed in September of 2017 contained in the board packet. She reminded the Council that they had a facilitator come in and assist with the development of the plan to become a better non-profit organization and to help the SILC do resource development for themselves, and in turn the SILC would be able to do resource development for the IL Network.

After a review of the activities for each quarter and identifying outstanding activities, Heidi Frost opened the floor for Council members to volunteer for specific activities. The following offers were made:

- Janalee Gage will submit a personal story to be published on the SILC's website and social media
- Jaye Palmer will develop a plan for SILC promotional items.

## **VOLUNTEERISM AND FUNDRAISING**

Michael Christian reported that he has been working on an online silent auction fundraising event for SILC with the goal of creating a discretionary fund that could be used to supplement or enhance activities of the SILC's non-profit goals. He noted that the timeline for the online silent auction to go live is November 1<sup>st</sup>. Michael encouraged Council members to join him in his effort, and he provided his contact information for anyone interested in helping.

Heidi Frost gave a brief description related to the roles a Council member takes on being on the SILC board. She stated that as Council members serve as the advocacy/advisory board to the state, as board members, they work with the non-profit to develop and ensure the non-profit is meeting its mission.

## **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

A public testimony period was offered, and no one appeared to testify.

## **RECESS**

Heidi Frost requested that the Council members think about the following issues and come back on day two ready to discuss the following items:

- Action related to the transition of the ED
- Action related to the Executive Committee
- Action related to volunteerism and board donations.

The meeting recessed at 4:00 p.m.

***Tuesday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018***

**Council Members Present:**

Michael Christian, chair	Advocate/Consumer
Joan O’Keefe	Advocate/SAIL, CIL Representative
Tom Cyrus	TVR Representative
Cheri Johansen	Advocate/Consumer
Justine Fine	Advocate/Consumer
Cathy Gerby	Advocate/Consumer
Janalee Gage	Advocate/Consumer
Jaye Palmer	Advocate/Consumer
Jen Brower	Advocate/Consumer
Annette Alfonsi	Advocate/Consumer
Deb Etheridge	Ex-Officio, SDS

**Council Members Absent:**

Buddy Kutch	Advocate/Consumer
Velja Elstad	DVR Representative

**Guests:**

Alison Kulas	AMHB Director
David Newman	State ADA Coordinator
Denise Daniello	ACOA Director
Doug White	CIL Director
Joyanna Geisler	CIL Director
Denice Gilroy	CIL Director
Juanita Webb	Wall Busters

**Staff:**

Heidi Frost, Executive Director  
Kathy Munk, Administrative Assistant

**CALL TO ORDER – 9:00 a.m.**

**ROLL CALL**

**RECAP FROM YESTERDAY/OVERVIEW OF TODAY**

Michael Christian opened the floor for comments related to the items Council members were asked to think about after yesterday’s meeting. The following comments were offered:

- Jaye Palmer offered to help with the survey focus groups
- Janalee Gage offered to assist with creating board member job descriptions and assist with creating SILC brochures
- Cathy Gerby offered to assist with developing policy for board donations
- Council members agreed to be responsible for sharing on a revolving schedule either their personal story or a story from a person impacted by independent living.

## **PARTNER UPDATES**

### **ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH BOARD**

Alison Kulas joined the meeting and was introduced as the director of the Alaska Mental Health Board (AMHB), the Alaska Board on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (ABADA), and the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council (SSPC). Alison gave a brief overview of the makeup and mission of the boards and stated that the two boards and council are statutorily required to advise the Governor, the legislature, and various departments on issues affecting the behavioral health system in Alaska. They receive a great deal of public comment, and they work with providers and State employees to identify the mental health needs in the state and advocate for change.

Alison Kulas reported that they serve as a partner advisory board for the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority along with the Alaska Commission on Aging and the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education to identify joint advocacy priorities that impact Trust beneficiaries. She noted that the AMHB and ABADA will be holding their joint meeting in Kodiak October 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and that the public is welcome. They will also have a teleconference line available for the meeting for people across the state to call in.

Alison Kulas reported that the SSPC will be meeting in Utqiagvik October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. Alison reported that AMHB's Executive Committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. Those meetings are held primarily to share updates between the board meetings, and all board members and the public are welcome to attend.

Alison Kulas reported that she along with staff from the boards and council are joining with their partner boards and DHSS to update the comprehensive plan for integrated mental health. They will be looking at how the system supports Alaskans across the life span.

With regards to partnering with the SILC, Alison Kulas noted that the AMHB sends out advocacy alerts to their partners related to legislative interests, and they would be interested in partnering with the SILC on their areas of common interest. Another area where the AMHB and the SILC could partner relates to the lack of mental health providers in Fairbanks and potentially restarting the peer counselor program.

## **CIL UPDATES**

### **Arctic Access**

Denice Gilroy, executive director at Arctic Access, joined the meeting and reported that Arctic Access is in the Northwest region of the state that serves 37 villages from Savoonga to Point Hope.

Denice Gilroy highlighted that besides their regular business, the current activities for Arctic Access include planning for a brain injury clinic in the Kotzebue region November 19<sup>th</sup>- 20<sup>th</sup>, and planning to send adults who experience disabilities to the Peer Power Self-Advocacy Summit in Anchorage.

Denice Gilroy commented that with regards to consumer stories the SILC is looking for to post on their social media, she would be willing to provide her own story and put out a request for stories from consumers in her region.

### **Access Alaska**

Doug White, the executive director for Access Alaska, joined the meeting and reported that Access Alaska serves Fairbanks and the Interior North Slope region through an office in Fairbanks, the Mat-Su Valley through an office in Wasilla, the Southcentral region with an office in Anchorage, and an at-home office in Dillingham serving 20-plus villages with PCA services.

Doug White reported that with regards to partnerships and disability initiatives, Access Alaska is engaged with the re-entry initiative; involved in homeless initiatives, particularly in Anchorage; and has members on the DART team.

Doug White shared that it is Access Alaska's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and they will be holding an open house on October 26<sup>th</sup> at their Anchorage office. Other Access Alaska offices will be holding celebratory events in their regions. Doug noted that

with regards to storytelling, Access Alaska was selected as the non-profit partner for Arctic Entries, a storytelling venue in Anchorage. They are excited to be there each month at the event to talk about Access Alaska.

Doug White reported that in terms of advocacy, their advocacy director is serving on the NCIL board. He was a Region 10 representative and has now moved to the board. With regards to the Disability Integration Act, which is a bipartisan attempt to support and enhance the ADA, they are hoping to get Senator Murkowski to co-sponsor the bill.

Doug White reported that they formally have a PCA Association. He noted that the current priority is to make sure that SDS and the legislature understand that people with disabilities are ending up in nursing homes at higher rates than ever before.

Doug White shared that Access Alaska is working with DVR to provide their consumers with work experiences and supporting them while they develop their skills and build confidence to enter the workplace.

Heidi Frost expressed SILC's appreciation for the assistance Anchorage Access Alaska provided with regards to SILC's focus group forums. She asked if Access Alaska would inform the SILC when they plan travel to their other sites so SILC could possibly tag on to those visits to hold more focus group forums.

### **Southeast Alaska Independent Living (SAIL)**

Joan O'Keefe, the executive director of SAIL, which serves Southeast Alaska, reported the activities for her region as follows:

- SAIL was awarded a Native American IL Demonstration Project grant, which is a three-year grant. They are in year three of the grant. Their proposal was to partner with tribes in six villages in Southeast Alaska, regional housing authorities, and the health consortium to provide core IL services.
- SAIL has partnered with the Juneau Community Foundation to spearhead a coalition in Juneau to deal with the problems navigating the Social Security system. SAIL partnered with Disability Law Center (DLC), who has hired a full-time staff person in Juneau to assist with the navigation. SAIL plans to work with DLC to apply for a Murdock grant for a regional staff position in Ketchikan to assist with Social Security system navigation.

- SAIL's HomeMAP has completed eight home modifications in Hoonah and eight home assessments in Kake. The Kake projects will be completed in the spring, and a new round of grants will begin.
- SAIL is working systemically with SDS and other partners to fix the e-mod waiver service program.
- SAIL has been involved in two accessible playground projects, one in Sitka and one in Juneau.
- SAIL has taken a national position against the appointment of Judge Kavanaugh and on the Johnson Amendment.
- SAIL is celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a gala event in October.

### **Independent Living Center (ILC)**

Joyanna Geisler, the executive director at ILC, which serves the Gulf Coast region including the Kenai Peninsula, Kodiak Island, and Valdez/Cordova census areas, joined the meeting and reported the following activities for ILC:

- ILC has four offices: Homer, Kodiak, Seward, and Soldotna.
- Joyanna Geisler is on the Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance Committee, which has been working with the City of Homer to develop a transition plan for accessibility for businesses and local government.
- ILC has staff traveling to Glennallen and Valdez for a week to provide outreach services to consumers and providers in that area.
- ILC is working with a facilitator to restructure their internal operations to function more efficiently and effectively.
- ILC has been successful in the recruitment of an IL advocate in Seward.
- ILC is involved on a data committee to develop consistent IL data across the state.
- ILC has been working with SAIL, the Trust, SDS and other partners on the e-mod project.
- ILC finished their first youth in transition group. Joyanna and Maggie Winston taught a group of four 18 and 19 year olds in self-advocacy.
- ILC has provided approximately 50 veterans with in-home supports through the VA system.

Joyanna Geisler shared that the inclusive recreation program called Trails is currently doing a barrier project with a GoPro camera purchased by ILC to identify difficult areas and barriers for people with disabilities in the Homer area.

## STATE ADA COORDINATOR

David Newman, the state ADA coordinator, joined the meeting and shared that the State ADA Compliance Program Office was created by administrative order in 1992 by Governor Hickel in response to the passage of the ADA in 1990 with the specific responsibility to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to the state's facilities, programs, and services under Title II of the ADA.

David Newman shared the four priorities he has identified and the activities underway for each priority as follows:

- ***Web accessibility:***
  - Worked with the commissioner of the Department of Administration and the Office of Information Technology to get consistent accessibility notices on all department webpages, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor's webpages, the Division of Elections webpages, and on Alaska.gov webpages.
  - Currently working on a state enterprise license in order to migrate all the state webpages to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).
  - In the process of identifying all public access computers and provide accessible tools for equal access to those computers.
- ***Emergency management:***
  - After talks with the Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs, David was appointed the access and functional needs liaison at the State Emergency Operations Center at JBER.
- ***Proper access to voting:***
  - Worked with the director at the Division of Elections to visit 30 polling places in August to identify problems with accessibility.
- ***Access to state facilities:***
  - Visited high-traffic facilities in Anchorage and Juneau: DMV, Job Center, and Public Assistance to assess accessibility
  - Developing a self-evaluation tool based on the federal regulations under the ADA for state facilities to report on accessibility.

David Newman stated that with regards to the topic of service animals, on July 11, 2018 they issued a new policy on service animals in regards to state facilities and

within state programs. In the new policy, service animals are defined as dogs or miniature horses that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities, and the work or task a service animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. David stated that one of the most important things to note in regards to state facilities is that it is important to know that animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals. David gave a brief outline of other items in the updated policy related to what questions can be asked by state staff, control of the service animal, and service animals in training.

David Newman shared his contact information and encouraged Council members to contact him with any issues they see related to accessibility. He also encouraged them to share his contact information with their respective organizations and visit the state website for more information regarding the ADA and state compliance.

## **ACoA DIRECTOR**

Denise Daniello, the executive director for the Alaska Commission on Aging, joined the meeting and shared a PowerPoint presentation of an overview on the process they use to develop the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services. They are in the process of developing the next state plan that will begin on July 1, 2019 for FY20 through FY23.

Denise Daniello highlighted the following information in the presentation:

- There are 27 census areas apportioned into nine service regions of the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). The nine regions are used for distributing federal and state funding for social service programs including federal grant funding as well as state grant funding for senior services that are non-Medicaid.
- The U.S. Administration on Community Living requires, through the Older Americans Act, that every state that receives federal funding for its senior programs has to have an approved plan of how they are going to use that money to provide services for seniors. The Administration on Community Living published a set of instructions and guidance for each state to follow to develop the state plan.
- The first step in developing a plan is engaging older adults, their families, providers, and other public members to talk about what are the issues of importance to seniors, and then use those findings to construct the needs

assessment for the state plan from which the goals, strategies, and objectives are developed.

- Typically the process of developing the state plan takes 16 to 18 months from start to finish. The process includes a needs assessment, gathering public input, and developing a plan. The activities used for the needs assessment are a senior survey, a provider survey, and elder senior listening sessions.

Denise Daniello reported that ACoA received 3,102 senior survey responses and 85 provider survey responses. They are in the process of purchasing new software to help analyze the findings from the surveys. Denise reported that they have completed six elder senior listening sessions.

Denise Daniello stated that when the needs assessment activities are completed and the findings compiled, the next step is to convene the State Plan Advisory Committee. That committee is convened by the Commission's planning committee and is comprised of representatives from state agencies serving seniors, senior providers, seniors themselves and their families, and other public members who want to be part of the process representing various regions across the state. The State Plan Advisory Committee serves an important role in that they review all the findings from the needs assessment activities and use the information to develop the basis for the state plan, which includes identifying the goals, strategies, and performance measures for the state plan.

## **WALL BUSTERS**

Juanita Webb joined the meeting to propose a partnership between Wall Busters, a consumer-led advocacy organization, and the SILC. She stated that Wall Busters began in Fairbanks in 2008 and has had a partnership with Access Alaska since its inception. She stated that Wall Busters would like to grow a partnership with the SILC with the belief that it would greatly benefit both the SILC and Wall Busters. Wall Busters would support the SILC in advocacy in Interior Alaska; promote and assist, when appropriate, SILC activities in the Fairbanks community; and support SILC in Wall Busters' outreach events. They hope that the SILC will support Wall Busters advocacy statewide and support Wall Busters' outreach and educational events when appropriate. Wall Busters would like to meet with the SILC board and staff to discuss partnership and develop parameters that would benefit both organizations.

Juanita Webb stated that Wall Busters has been a very strong advocate and highlighted the successes they have been involved in as follows:

- Involved in the passage of the ID bill
- Instrumental in getting the fairgrounds in Fairbanks paved for better access for people with disabilities and other community members
- The lead on a transportation survey
- Wall Busters holds legislative luncheons
- Wall Busters works closely with the UAF Disability Center to advocate for people with disabilities on campus
- Wall Busters has a workgroup focused on voting accessibility.

Heidi Frost recommended that Michael Christian and the chair of Wall Busters schedule a meeting to discuss partnership opportunities.

### **SENIOR AND DISABILITIES SERVICES**

Deb Etheridge, acting director at SDS, highlighted the following information:

- SDS is involved in the development of the Behavioral Health Comprehensive Plan.
- SDS continues to work on personal care services and the concerns related to staffing for provider agencies.
- SDS is moving forward on the legislative intent language to create companion services.
- SDS will be moving forward with the new 1915(c) Individualized Supports Waiver and the 1915(k) Community First Choice program. Those programs will go live October 1<sup>st</sup>.
- SDS is committed to working on the home modification program.
- SDS has appointed Lisa Morley as the SDS liaison to the SILC board.

### **STATE PLAN FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (SPIL) UPDATES/FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE**

The State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) and the focus group schedule discussion were tabled. Heidi Frost recommended that Michael Christian contact Council members individually to find out what activities they would be willing to take on with regards to the focus group forums spelled out in the strategic non-profit plan.

## **ADJOURN**

Tom Cyrus, who has served on the SILC board for the past three years, will be termed out on November 1<sup>st</sup>. The Council members expressed their appreciation for Tom's service to the Council and the ease in which he approached the tasks of the board. Heidi Frost stated that the bridge Tom helped build between the SILC and TVR has been a great benefit to both organizations. The Council wished him luck in his future endeavors.

Cathy Gerby **MOVED** to adjourn, **SECONDED** by Jaye Palmer. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**, and the meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

**Minutes Approved: 11/28/18 – P.D.**