

SILC Board Meeting, December 12, 2007

Present:

Anita Albright

Bill Allen

Joe Bellil

Bernard Bonsra

Eileen Brewster

Karen Bureau

Dawn Clark

Hollis Cotton

Sybil Feldman

Merle Ferber

Steve Higgins

Keith Jones

Mike Kennedy

Betty King

Karen Langley

Shawn McDuff

Betsy Olsen

Judi Rodger

Paul Spooner

Lorraine Teehan

Jim Tierney

Filomena Tripp

Nancy Trzcinski

Tony Williams

STEVE HIGGINS: Good morning, everyone. We're going it get going. I know we're always a couple minutes late. We always say 11:00ish and it works pretty well. I'm going to do the housekeeping part of our show. Actually, I need to grab myself an agenda off the back table. I'll read Nancy's, hers is in Braille.

(LAUGHTER)

But welcome to the December meeting of the Statewide Independent Living Council here in Natick, and I just get to say welcome, which is a good thing and the housekeeping. For those of you that don't know me, I'm Steve Higgins, the coordinator of the Statewide Independent Living Council, which means I get to do all the stuff you guys tell me, and we have Nancy Rumbolt-Trzcinski sitting to my

right, our Statewide Independent Living Council chair. As far as housekeeping goes, for our meeting today, most of you have been here before but if you haven't, and yes, I'm leaning in front of my projector, sorry, but that's for after, so we can do this and it won't distract anyone.

NANCY RUMBOLT-TRZCINSKI: That thing throws heat.

STEVE HIGGINS: You won't have to worry about being cold. The roast rooms, important thing, located out the back door and to the right in the hallway and there's accessible men's and women's rooms. We have parking permits for those that need a parking permit. Some folks have already gotten them but if you haven't, we have them on the back table back there. When you get your permit, read what street it says to park on because they scattered them around town this time, because the meters are free and all that, so it's kind of crazy, but it's still only a two-hour parking at the meters. If you don't have a permit, they get nailed. They're nice about writing Christmas cards. Monetary Christmas cards, not the best kind. So it works out well. Just meeting etiquette, when you speak today, Mary Jane is going to be grabbing this mic from me in a minute. Mary Jane has been at a lot of our meetings. She's been running our mic and helping us out today and as meeting etiquette, before you speak, identify yourself, because it certainly makes it a lot easier and a lot better for our interpreters and our CART, they're interpreters and CART, they're not mind readers so it's a very important thing. Make sure that you do speak clear and we do have a policy that we do have folks use the microphone. Those are our base housekeeping things. We'll have lunch 12:00, 12:30ish. We are expecting more folks here. There are other meetings, folks dealing with the PCA Workforce Council and all kinds of things but there's a bunch of stuff going on so we're expecting some more folks that will be here this afternoon. But with that being said I'm going to hand the mic over to Mary Jane and ask her to go around the room and we'll let everyone just kind of introduce themselves, so we all know who we are, and then we'll get rolling. Here we go.

BERNARD BONNSRA: Good morning, Bernard Bonsra, SILC.

ATTENDEE: Jeanne, the interpreters.

ATTENDEE: Eileen, the aforementioned interpreter.

SHAWN McDUFF: Shawn McDuff, independent living center of the North Shore and Cape Ann.

JUDI RODGER: SILC board and DPC board.

ANITA ALBRIGHT: Office on healthy aging and office of disability.

SYBIL FELDMAN: Sybil Feldman, member of the SILC and BCIL advocacy.

MERLE FERBER: Merle Ferber from Ad-lib, I'm a nominee.

TONY WILLIAMS: Tony Williams, MILCB and SILC nominee.

EILEEN BREWSTER: Eileen Brewster, SILC member, Workforce Council member.

KAREN LANGLEY: People need to speak up on the mic, because it's hard to hear them even with the microphone. I'm Karen Langley with Mass Rehab Commission. Still.

JIM TIERNEY: BCIL, SILC member.

LORRAINE TEEHAN: Lorraine Teehan, Commission for the Blind.

FILOMENA TRIPP: Filomena Tripp from SCIL, and the SILC treasurer.

BILL ALLEN: Bill Allen from the disability policy consortium.

KAREN BUREAU: Northeast independent living and SILC secretary.

MIKE KENNEDY: Mike Kennedy, Metro West Center for Independent Living and chair of the nominations and development committee.

DAWN CLARK: Dawn Clark, center for living and working.

BECKY OLSON: Hi, I'm Becky Olson from New England index, I'm an information specialist.

JOE BELLIL: SILC member.

STEVE HIGGINS: Nancy in the back there, you want to introduce yourself?

Nancy King: I'm from the Department of transitional assistance.

NANCY RUMBOLT-TRZCINSKI: And then me.

STEVE HIGGINS: She has her own mic.

NANCY RUMBOLT-TRZCINSKI: I have my own, I'm special, Nancy Rumbolt-Trzcinski, SILC chair and from Ad-lib.

STEVE HIGGINS: Before we start, one other quick, quick housekeeping thing I need to do. Our interpreters will be here through lunch, as we do our meeting in two segments. If no one comes and requests interpreters, they'll be able to head out after lunch, because we don't want to keep them more than they need to be kept, but you know, that's always been the policy at the SILC meeting, because it's an open meeting, we make sure that we do have

interpreters and CART available, but if no one requests interpreters during the meeting, then our interpreters are able to leave early and if somebody shows up late, they know it's their own fault. All right, Nancy, yours.

NANCY: All righty, okay, first on the agenda, the approval of the last meeting minutes. Can I hear a motion?

STEVE HIGGINS: Anybody have any questions first? Karen Langley?

KAREN LANGLEY: It's more a comment than a question. I notice that these minutes were done in a different format than in the past, in that it's a direct transcript of everything that people said, and I wouldn't recommend that that's how the minutes be kept in the future, because it might mean that certain people would not be allowed to speak as freely and openly as they would like, particularly if it's going to be where n writing, that could be sent to somebody, so even though it's provided that way from the CART, it might need to be edited for purposes of the meeting. That's my comment.

NANCY: Thanks, Karen.

STEVE HIGGINS: Karen and I actually had already talked about that, so (laughs) we're well aware of that. We'll get that squared away. One of the things with a lot of changes and fun things going on, we were already running about 190 miles-an-hour and said oh, no, we need to get the minutes out and what can we do so, we went back and read through things and got stuff out, but that comment is something we did discuss beforehand. Dawn Clark has a question. Wait for the mic. Nancy, I'll leave this with you and the other Nancy and I can share. We can kind of look like we have this weird duet or something.

NANCY: Put our heads together.

STEVE HIGGINS: As long as we don't have to bend in and do "oooh" or anything.

DAWN CLARK: Dawn Clark. I would like to clarify what you just said. Are the minutes already been scrutinized or do they need to be scrutinized?

STEVE HIGGINS: What would you consider scrutinized?

DAWN CLARK: Well, what I'm saying is, I think -- I appreciate Karen's comment.

STEVE HIGGINS: Yes.

DAWN CLARK: And I guess have we -- do we really want to approve them the way they are right now or are we going to go back and look at them again and try to pull out stuff that needs to be pulled out, or should be pulled out?

STEVE HIGGINS: That would be entirely up to the body of the Council.

NANCY: Anybody care to throw out a motion or a recommendation?

KAREN LANGLEY: We have a motion on the floor already.

DAWN CLARK: That's why I'm asking the question. I think I'd like to do a friendly amendment to that, that we take, particularly, we re-look at these for the kind of things that Karen brought up.

STEVE HIGGINS: So are you suggesting we table the minutes until the next meeting?

DAWN CLARK: Maybe that's -- maybe that's a better recommendation.

STEVE HIGGINS: We have a motion but we never had a second. Did we have a second?

JUDI RODGER: I did.

STEVE HIGGINS: The process, the person that made the motion and seconded the motion, they can withdraw their motion, and if the motion is withdrawn, then we have the option to table the minutes until the next quarterly meeting. That would be the proper pro. Sybil, would you withdraw your motion?

SYBIL FELDMAN: Yes.

STEVE HIGGINS: Yes, okay. So Sybil is willing to withdraw her motion so Dawn Clark, would you like to motion that --

DAWN CLARK: Is Judi willing to --

JUDI RODGER: Yes.

DAWN CLARK: I would like to make a motion that we table the minutes of September, to look at them again in terms of the, to be scrutinized maybe.

NANCY: A second on Dawn's motion?

SYBIL FELDMAN: I second.

NANCY: Any more discussion? All in favor?

All: Aye.

NANCY: Opposed? Abstained? Okay, we'll table the minutes and summarize them and bring them back in the March meeting.

STEVE HIGGINS: That's pretty exciting. That means we know people read the minutes.

(LAUGHTER)

So that's pretty exciting. That's a good thing.

NANCY: Next is the chair's report. Just been doing the usual work of the SILC, attending all of the committees, and everybody's been working really hard, and this January, Steve and I will go to New Orleans for SILC Congress, so that will be a new experience for me, and I'm looking forward to that. And that's pretty much what's been going on, just lots of, just, you know, I attended mostly all of the meetings, I think I'm always there, aren't I?

STEVE HIGGINS: Yes.

NANCY: So that's pretty much what I have to report.

STEVE HIGGINS: Thanks.

NANCY: Quick and brief version.

STEVE HIGGINS: That was the fastest 15 minutes in history. That's nice.

NANCY: Anybody have any questions for me?

STEVE HIGGINS: Do we need a motion?

NANCY: A motion to accept my quick and brief report?

STEVE HIGGINS: Dawn Clark. Is there a second?

JUDI RODGER: Second.

STEVE HIGGINS: Judi Roger.

NANCY: No discussion? Opposed, on stained? Mary Margaret is not here today so Steve is going to sit in for Mary Margaret to update everybody on the State Plan.

STEVE HIGGINS: Okay, I'm just going to pull the mic out, I guess I can't, won't come any further. It's actually caught on Wayland.

(Laughs)

NANCY: Wayland, where are you?

STEVE HIGGINS: Sitting on the cords.

NANCY: Now try.

STEVE HIGGINS: Okay. Mary Margaret and I spoke yesterday afternoon, and she was not feeling well and wasn't expecting to be here today. So she asked me if I could give everyone an update on the State Plan for Independent Living Committee and what's been happening so I'm going to do that to the best of my abilities and that's exactly how I told Mary Margaret I would do it. The State Plan for independent living committee as you guys know has two charges. The first charge is the monitoring and evaluation and

implementation of the State Plan for independent living, and then there's that other piece that we do that a couple of years ago, we used to have as many you remember a SILC evaluation committee, and that committee was actually rolled into the State Plan Committee, and that's the committee that looks at the evaluation portion of the centers, one of the annual compliance reviews that we're required to do. So the first thing that I get to report is, on the State Plan for independent living, through the efforts of the folks on the committee and the members of the SILC and lots of folks across our entire state, we were the first state in New England to get a fully approved is state plan for independent living this year with Rehab Services Administration so the State Plan for independent living talked about waiting until the deadline, what was T Karen, the night before the last contract was to run out was when we got our letter, that was still ahead of everyone else. So Massachusetts Plan was approved. There were very little changes to it. The only changes were things like we had an "and" in one place that had to be taken out and an "or" in another. It was very insignificant cant, the changes that we had to do. That being said, that's a very good thing, because nationally there's some states that still do not have their plans. I spoke yesterday with the folks from Ohio, who were in a meeting and their VR agency was meeting with RSA, they still don't have an approved State Plan. So that being said, the folks that work on that State Plan, people like Karen and Paul and Lorraine and, you know, that provided input really needs a round of applause for the work that went into it. It's a tremendous amount of work that goes into developing a document, and for many, many years there was always this scrutiny and wondering does RSA actually read them and the answer is absolutely. There's been significant changes at RSA, the Rehab Services Administration, down in Washington, for those of you that don't know what that little acronym is, and there's been some significant changes at RSA, and you know, they read it word for word, and they called a couple times, and they asked, so you know, I got asked a question one time and Becky will appreciate this, what's the New England Index, and why are they in there? What's this? You know, these were the kind of questions that I did get asked by our reviewer in D.C., because they did read our plan word

for word. Our plan was approved. We received the award letter, and so thank you, everyone, for your work and your input, and everything that went into that.

Now, those of you that are familiar with the State Plan process know it took us close to -- it takes close to a year to go through the work, by the time we do the proper steps of, you know, the public hearings, sitting down and writing it, and doing everything we need to do, so a lot of work went into it. So our new State Plan was accepted. That means that our State Plan is current and it will run now through federal fiscal year 2010, which will end on September of 2010, begin on October of 2009. The SILC runs, as you know, on the Federal fiscal year so you'll notice in some of our documents you'll see, like especially when you look at our report for the Finance Committee it will say FFY, that's Federal Fiscal Year, the abbreviation for that. That was a great accomplishment. The next piece that the committee is charged with is looking at the compliance reviews that are done with the centers. We're required, because we're a 723 State, our compliance reviews are conducted with a team. That team is done by the designated state unit, which is MRC and MCB, in this case, we have units here in Massachusetts. The teams can composed of MRC, MCB and there's peer reviewers, these are individuals that Leo Canuel, a SILC member, also an independent living center director so he serves as a peer ILC director. I have sat in on the last couple of reviews as the SILC observer, also known as Switzerland, in some cases, because a lot of times with the SILC review, what the job of the SILC reviewer is, if somebody on either side has a question, we're able to work that out and get things done and we can fill in and help on basic things on the review. What the site review is, RSA requires centers that receive federal dollars, whether it's \$1 or hundreds of thousands of Federal dollars to meet what are called the standards and indicators, and what the compliance review does is, it's a process that the review team comes in, and we use a standardized tool and document that's used for site reviews, taken looks at, are the centers meeting the standards and indicators, and really, there's two ways you can look at a site review. You can look at it and go oh my God and it scares you or look at it as a tool to help improve the center and make things better. I believe

all of the centers that we're talking, that we're working with on site reviews right now have officially now taken the second approach, which is to look at it and see how we can make things better. So we've got three reviews that the center is actually looking at right now, the committee. The committee recently received the compliance review for Independence Associates which was actually done at the tail end of the previous federal fiscal year, but because with, you know, some changes in things that were happening down there, their report had some delays that happened to it, so the committee is looking at that report. During Federal fiscal year 2007, towards the end of the year, two centers received reviews in Massachusetts, the southeast center for living and the multicultural independent living center of Boston. Both reviews have been completed and they've received their draft copies of the reports. So as soon as the centers -- the way the process works is the center receives a draft copy of the report after their site review is done. They have the ability to comment on the draft copy of the report to see if there's anything that they may agree with or disagree with, things that might need to be changed, maybe something we even missed. It gives -- there's a comment period, and once the comment period ends, then a final copy of the site review is given to the center, and then the SILC will receive that. So both the southeast center for independent living and the multicultural independent living center in Boston have just received their draft copies of the review, and the draft copies have just been shared with the SPIL committee and as soon as the comment period is over, then the actual, if there's any corrective action that needs to be taken, things like that, those will all be addressed in the reports.

That being said, the reports are really a useful tool for the center, really to give itself as kind of a benchmark. Really what the standards and indicators are, are simply benchmarks, what the things that come out in the review are, are benchmarks. What do we need to do to be truly online, to be a center doing everything we need to do. So I think where we're standing right now, the folks that we're working with at each of the centers, they'll be very much proactive measures taken and that will be a great thing.

That being said, we just entered Federal fiscal year 2008 so

happy new year to everyone, a month late. But happy new year. We are required by our contracts with Rehab Service Administration to review 15% of our centers each year in our state. So that would get kind of messy if we did 1 1/5 of a center, so what we've done is we'll be doing two centers each year. We've put together the -- we've scheduled the two site reviews, they're not scheduled this year but they have chosen as far as which two centers they'll be. The two centers that will receive site reviews in Federal fiscal year 2008 will be Ad-lib out in Pittsfield and CORD down on the Cape, so we're going to be at the opposite ends of the state this year as far as our two site reviews, and we looked in both cases, folks asked how do we determine what center gets reviewed. What do we do? Part of it is determined by when was the last time the center was reviewed, which you know, we looked at the case in one center, it had been many years. So it was time, and the other criteria that we look at is, have there been changes at the center, things like that, and one of the reasons you want to look at that is because when you look at the review as being a tool to help establish benchmarks and stuff like that, it's a phenomenal tool for a new executive director or somebody to be able to use to determine am I doing the right thing, are jobs happening the right way. I know Tony just went through it so he can kind of, you may want to say something, who knows, so the two reviews that we're going to have this year are going to be Ad-lib in Pittsfield and CORD on the Cape. The dates for those reviews have not been scheduled yet. Generally we do the reviews towards the end of the Federal fiscal year so I'm guessing they'll probably happen in the Spring or summer -- Spring and Fall. So they'll be happening in Spring and Fall, and Karen probably will be part of that review team this year and she's probably tap dancing under the table. Don't -- so that's where we are right now, as it stands right now, on the State Plan for independent living committee, meets approximately two to three times in between each quarterly meeting, and a lot of it evolves over the next year or so, we'll look at this evaluation piece, the site review piece, and then we'll also look at, are we doing what we said we were going to do in year one of the State Plan for independent living. That being said, the State Plan was approved. I did bring copies of that and you can

give that to everyone at the last SILC meeting. Anyone that would like to obtain a new copy, I'll gladly give you one. The easiest way to get it will be to go to the SILC website, which is www.masilc.org. Click on the link that says "documents" and then click on "state plan for independent living." You can print it right out there or download the MicroSoft Word or text version of the document, whichever is the format you prefer and you can print it out so that you'll have it. It is posted on the SILC website and it is available and when we write the three-year State Plan for independent living, we are going to be held into looking at did we reach our goals. The next piece that the State Plan Committee looks at is our 704 report. And Karen smiled when I said that wonderful thing. Karen and I are in the process right now, and Lorraine, of working on the pieces of our Massachusetts 704 report. Now again, a uniqueness in Massachusetts, is because we are a 723 state, RSA designate two types of states, 723 and 722. A 722 state, the SILCs and the centers contract directly with Rehab Services Administration. In a 723 state, one of the designations is, is that the state actually receives more IL funds from the state than the federal government, and then the state, through a process, chooses to declare that they would be a 723 state. That being said, we choose a designated state unit. In our case, MRC is the unit that all the reports go to, and they become the contractor with the centers. So our centers do their independent living contracts with our state designated unit versus going out annually for bid and contracting them with the federal government rehab services administration in Washington. There are only two 723 states left. It's the "M" states, Massachusetts and Minnesota, and both of us strongly believe in 723, and are doing everything we can to make sure that we always have that ability, because from a standpoint of having to recontract every year with the Federal government, not only is that a little bit shaky and scary, but it's kind of interesting. There's just no other way to put it. So how it works is, in Massachusetts, each of the centers writes their 704 report, but instead of their 704 report going directly to Rehab Services Administration in Washington D.C., their 704 report will go to the IL Division at MRC in Boston, and the SILC has a portion of the 704 that we write, and then MRC and MCB each have their

portion, but what we do is we combine the numbers for the entire state, and then one 704 report is sent to Rehab Services Administration in Washington. So the timelines are the centers need to have their reports to MRC by December 31st. This is when the centers would normally have to have their 704 reports into RSA in Washington, December 31st. That gives the designated state units and the SILC approximately one month to tabulate everything and put it together so that we can send the mass -- what do they call it, the one 704 that we do, the combined report to Rehab Services Administration, where we have a deadline, we need to have that to Washington by January 31st. That's one of the pieces that it's always interesting, as I hear from the other SILCs, they say happy holidays, it's time to write your 704, and it can be a chore in some ways, but really what the 704 is, it's a report, and it's, you know, it gives us a benchmark again on the State Plan for independent living committee. We're not looking at it for anything other than to see if there's trends developing, to see if there's certain technical support or things that centers may need here in our state, because one of the things that it asks is what do the centers need, what are people asking for, and that's what we use it for in the State Plan committee, to see if there's any trends developing or things that may need to be adjusted, training needs that may need to be met, things like that. So those are the things that are happening with the State Plan for independent living committee. I'm not sure if anybody has any other questions.

Hopefully I was pretty good in the explanations of each part of that. Does anyone have any questions for me at all? Karen Bureau.

KAREN BUREAU: Do the centers get anything copies for what's sent in to the RSA?

STEVE HIGGINS: That's something that if somebody would like to request at any time, we can certainly provide that. We received a copy in the SILC office, MRC and MCB of course have the copy but at any time any of the centers can have a copy of that. In fact, it's a public document. Anyone that would like to can have a copy of it. It's definitely a public document, so we can do that. But certainly give us a buzz. I would say wait until February, though, because by the time we get it compiled into D.C., and all that, you know, it's February by the time we're able to release it here in

the state. Are there any other questions? I'm going to pass this back to Nancy for a second.

NANCY: All right. Since there are no questions, do I hear a motion to accept the State Plan report?

MIKE KENNEDY: I'll make a motion.

JUDI RODGER: Second.

SHAWN McDUFF: Second.

NANCY RUMBOLT-TRZCINSKI: All in favor?

All: Aye.

NANCY: Opposed? Abstained? Great job, Steve. You don't sound like Mary Margaret, but you did a great job.

STEVE HIGGINS: On behalf of Mary Margaret, thank you. Karen Langley has a question.

KAREN LANGLEY: Steve, on those other states that haven't got their State Plan approved, did they get their money held because in the past we've been told if your State Plan is not approved by September 30th, you don't get your money award on October 1st, which could mean there's independent living centers out there in the world with no money. Do they hold the money up?

STEVE HIGGINS: The answer is, in some cases, yes. Because -- let me have the mic. In some cases it was simple stuff and it's just they had to re-run approval at the next SILC quarterly meeting, which many of the SILCs like us, weren't meeting until December, so they didn't hold it up because it was just minimal stuff that they were looking to approve, so it didn't hold up the funding. But in a couple other states, there's been a real issue, so they haven't received the funding. And so there are some centers that didn't have better -- they're in danger of wondering where the money is coming from. We're actually meeting at SILC Congress, the Rehab Services Administration, the officers in the IL division are coming to SILC Congress in January, and I've seen the questions that we plan to ask them. We'll be asking them some pretty tough questions, and so it should be interesting. Nancy will be participating. I'm obviously participating as secretary so it will be interesting.

NANCY: One of the issues that we've been talking about, training for SILC members, and we're starting to address that, so I'm going to turn this back over to Steve to begin a portion of the SILC

training for today.

STEVE HIGGINS: All right. Well, we're actually going to have a couple things happening today. I'm going to do a quick training here, and also, Nancy King and I met back a couple months ago at a meeting, and Nancy works with the Department of Transition Assistance and so Nancy's going to do just a quick presentation on some stuff that she has also. So what I want to do, in the agenda, "SILC member training" the famous SILC manual. About a year or two ago, we developed our SILC manual and it went out to all the members at the time. Several of the nominees that have happened since don't have one. I'll give one to Anita. I brought ten extra copies with me today and also a sign-up sheet with me for today because if you misplaced your copy or if you need a new copy, or whatever, I'll give out the ten that I have and we'll take the sign-up sheet and folks will be able to sign up and I'll make sure we get one out to you. Basically, what the member handbook is, it's really a document that we looked at, and you know, I got to thank Joe Bellil sitting over there for a lot of this. There's a lot of pieces in this document that go back to the work that Joe did. He started doing a lot of this before he went to Easter Seals, when he preceded me as coordinator and I got to come in and finish it and put other parts in and make it work, but what the manual is, really, is it gives you the general information about what is the SILC, what are the processes for being nominated, things like, you know, mileage forms, what's the SILC composition. This book was produced about two years ago, so the SILC composition is changed. We're going to update it, so everybody has that, and -- but there's a section in there on the SILC roles, what are your roles as a SILC member, what do you do. There's a couple sections in there that are blank, SILC minutes, SILC notices and a copy of our SILC bylaws in the manual. There's a copy of the previous state plan for independent living because I'm hoping I'm not going to kill a lot of trees and everybody has the copies I gave them at our last meeting, you can put that in there. And then there's things like the history of independent living and some resources. The reason we put this manual together was simply to give everybody an idea of, A, what we do, but to help bring folks up to speed, and as far as the things that we need to do and our responsibilities as

a SILC. So what we're probably going to start doing is that each of the SILC meetings, we're going to do about a 15-minute training or so. We're going to pick a section of the manual, probably Nancy and myself, and Mary Margaret and one or two others, that will do this and we'll develop a training and really talk about each of the things, that maybe even roles or responsibilities of the SILC members, stuff like that.

Now, the nice thing is, we just got a new copy machine at the SILC office. The SILC, as you know, we share space with Metro West Center for Independent Living, so Metro West actually got the copier but they're our physical intermediary and we use it. We probably use it a lot. But the nice thing about the new copier that I found when I was playing with it, because it arrived yesterday, is not only does it staple but it does three-hole punching and things like that. So all the documents that I handed out today are three-hole punched because then you can just take them and stick them in your book and you don't lose them. It's a place that you'll have. I just brought the one copy of the manual because I wanted to remind people that this is what it is. If you don't have one or you've lost one, it's okay. Let us know. We'll get another copy out to you, and you know, start using it as a place to keep your minutes and stuff like that. We'll make sure that we three-hole punch stuff as we send it out and it's a simple little thing but a nice, easy way to keep that. So that's what that is. So then when Nancy -- yes, Joe?

JOE BELLIL: You want me to just say it?

STEVE HIGGINS: Go ahead, can I repeat.

JOE BELLIL: Real quick, any way we can have that on the web page? I think it would be a great, I mean, I look for information on web pages now more than I do in paper copies, and also, since a lot of it will be updated anyways, you know, we can keep the updated version on the web page, and recommend to people that may be interested in the SILC to just look at the web page and see our manual, which is always updated. You can also use it as an example for other Councils out there in the state to kind of say hey, look, do you have a member, you know, a handbook like this, that details things like that. So my recommendation is to put it on the web page, if we can.

STEVE HIGGINS: That's a great recommendation.

JOE BELLIL: I don't want a hard copy if I can just go to the web page and look at the things and get the most updated information that way.

STEVE HIGGINS: Exactly. There's a lot of stuff in this manual that's already on the SILC web page which is a good thing.

JOE BELLIL: Right.

STEVE HIGGINS: By all means, it's something we can look at that as we work on updating the SILC website and developing it, making sure all of the portions are available on the web page so we'll have a link to pages that already exists and the State Plan's already there, things like that, so that's a great suggestion, Joe, thank you.

So as far as the manual goes, I've got a sign-up sheet up here somewhere. I'll make sure I give them to folks. Oh, it's sitting under my projector, that's why I can't see it. Sorry about that. And so we're going to pass that around and if you don't have one, if we have a copy that we can provide you today, we will, because we do have about eight or ten copies with us, and what Nancy and I talked about, Nancy said let's do some training and things, so I says, well, I've got all of these little trainings I've been doing at SILCs around the country but never done any of them here in Massachusetts and this is a training that I've done probably in about six or seven other locations around the country, called people skills 101 working with legislators. One of the things that we need to do as SILC members every day, part of the piece, part of what happens when we work on the SILC, is we work with legislators, and we're going to be doing that. So some of the stuff in this little training here, to some folks, is going to sound like, well, yeah, I do that anyway, but to others, it might say, hey, that's a great idea. We'll go through this real quick in a matter of time. These are trainings that they've been developed purposely to be like a 15 or 20-minute training, just really to get folks thinking, thinking about what we do. So we're going to go with People Skills 101 and talk a bit about it. What I like to talk about with people, and one of the first things you need to understand when you're dealing with the legislature, or everyone, is a thing that I call the WHAM theory, and the WHAM theory equals what about me, and

it's always interesting when you think about it, what the heck is the WAM theory, what about me? This is what most people are interested in. Even legislators. So always understand that when you're working with legislators, working with folks, bureaucracies, nonbureaucracies, people that you're going to join a group with, you know, the WAM theory, what about me? What's in it for me, what a lot of people are going to say, but the "what about me," and legislators especially, their question is, what about me? What are they interested in? What's going to make them look good? Legislators want to know how it is, what you're looking for, it's not only going to benefit their constituents but how is it going to benefit them, personally. As blunt as that sounds, it's true. But the bottom line is, is you know, they think about their constituents, because obviously they do want to be reelected, and you don't get reelected without having any constituents, but also, what do you have, what do you present to them that's valuable? What are you bringing to them that's valuable, that they can bring to the table and sort of take hold of that as their own piece of work, you know, whether it's in the State House or with a group that they belong to and stuff like that. So always remember the WAM theory. It's important.

The next thing that I do a lot of times when I'm teaching folks in working with legislators is I talk about asking open-ended questions. When you're talking to a legislator or to a legislator staff person especially, ask questions like, "What do you like best about working in the legislature? What do you like least about working in the legislature? What would you change?" The reason you want to ask questions like this is, one of the most important things about working with legislators or people or anyone is, understand that we're developing a relationship. Those three questions right there, you can find out more about a person that's a legislative aide or a staff than you want to know. You might end up asking just those three questions in one visit, because you're going to find out what they like best, what they like least, and what they would be willing to change. And they're going to tell you how to talk to them, because you see, if you know where they're coming from, it's a key to understanding where they're going. And one of the most important -- one of the mistakes that a lot of us

make, especially if we've never done advocacy before or whatever, is we walk into a legislator's office, we have a piece of paper that we got from a rally or got from something. We walk in, every single one of us is shaking and if anybody doesn't shake, I shake when I go to legislator's offices still, so don't tell me you don't shake. People go in there, they're shaking, whatever. A legislative aide comes up, sometimes it's this big burly kid or whatever, and you got this piece of paper and you go, "Here, everything's on it." "I just want to leave this, bye! ".

So you never establish the relationship, and then you call the legislator "I went to your office three months ago and dropped off a piece of paper." They're like, huh? You never established any impression, you never established a relationship with the people that are working there, and always remember that the knowledge that you gather from these questions, knowledge is power. The knowledge that you gain from the answers of the way people answer these questions, they're going to tell you how to talk to them. You're going to understand what the priorities of that legislator are, just by the way they respond to these questions, and it really, really helps you moving forward, and you know, people, whether you realize it or not, tell you how to talk to them. It's how they respond to you many, many times, and the key in all of this, working with legislators, People Skills 101 or anything. Ask questions like that. You'll be interested in the answers you get. The key is ask the question and then zip of the lips for a second and listen to see what the response is. Don't have another question there sitting to ask the next one and fire at them. That's the next point. We need to listen to people. If we don't listen, we're never going to know what they want. When we know what they want, we can tailor our message so they can grasp it. See, I love this saying, I have no idea who made it up. We were given two ears and one mouth for a reason. When we listen twice as much as we speak, we possess the secret to success, and it's so true. Because we really -- we have two ears and one mouth and it's for a reason, because seriously, there's a lot of times, we'll go in, and again, we do this out of nervousness or whatever, when we go into a legislator, and we know what we want to say, so we know all that -- we rehearsed all of the questions in our head. They're

not even finished answering the first question, we're already thinking how am I going to ask them the next one, versus listening to what they are saying to us, and again, listening, telling us about them, what they want to know. So the key is to understand, that we need to listen to people, whether it's an aide or legislator. Always remember, legislative staff are real, real important people. They do 90% of the work in the legislator's office. The legislator does the other 10% of the work and the tap dancing, and they meet with all the folks. So understand your legislative staffers, get to meet them, understand them, who they are, but listen, don't interrupt them when you are listening. You should be listening. But that's the number one way to turn a person off. Legislators love to hear themselves talk. Just ask Bill Allen, how many of those folks love to hear themselves talk at the State House, Bill?

BILL ALLEN: They all do. Unless of course you're trying to pin them down.

STEVE HIGGINS: Yep. And the comment below here was hilarious. This actually came last year when we did one of our events at the State House. I was standing in the corner and I had Ted Speliotis, Jim Marzilli and I forget who it was, we were talking and Jim looked over at me and started laughing. He says, "Man do we love to pat ourselves on the back." It's like, there you go. You know, it's true. The legislators, they love to hear themselves talk, but let me ask you a question. Do you guys like to hear yourselves talk? Who is the most important in here talking? It's yourself. I like to hear myself talk. I'm not going to hide it. It's true with everyone. Make eye contact. Now, as you'll notice here, I say make eye contact -- don't make icon crap, make eye contact, but don't be a creep. Watch the personal space. You see, most people are creeped up. There's this thing I teach about called the three-foot rule and what the three-foot rule is, most people are really freaked out or creeped out if you invade that little three foot of space around them. It's kind of fun. When I do this in a longer version, I'll do a training and have somebody come up and start talking to them and I walk a little closer and walk a little closer and you watch. I literally follow that person around the entire room and then I talk about the three-foot rule because the

three-foot rule, it's so true. Let's be honest, we have that comfort zone around us and you know, so make eye contact, don't be creepy, don't be staring at them, you know. But make eye contact, do things like that, and remember, everybody's got a comfort zone, and you learn to control this space and everything within it. If you know how the three-foot rule works, it works really well because you get them into a space really quick, A, they can't back up any further, then you stay three feet in front of them, and they have nothing to do but talk to you because they're afraid to leave. It works out real well. It's like, learn these tricks!

So the next thing I say, smile, as it increases your face value, but again you'll notice, still don't be creepy. Creepy is important. Don't be creepy. "Hi Mr. Legislator, how are you today?" Your face is your mirror. Lean forward, watch your body language. Harvard University did a study several years ago, and they said that body language makes up 67% of how people judge you. The tone of your voice is equal to 28% of how they judge you, and what you say is equal to 5%. So quite frankly, what you say isn't all that important. It's making that first impression. It's not going in there like, you know, "Hi how are you?" That scares the hell of them, they think Dawn Clark just came in to sell them something. Tell them what they want! You know, the key is, when you're working with people, 95% of communication has nothing to do with what you say. And this is why developing relationships and commonality is so important. 95% of communication, nothing to do with what you say. You could tell them they're ugly and they're not going to hear it. Of course it might be the 5% they pick up on so I don't recommend it highly, but needless to say, don't make any stupid comments. Now, this might sound stupid that I put this in here but unfortunately, it's true. Don't make any stupid comments. Saying something dumb like I just said, that, you know, or walking in and looking in their office and going, wow, that picture on the office wall is really weird. That thing's ugly. Well, how do you know that the legislator's 3-year-old daughter didn't draw that for them, and they're so proud, because their 3-year-old drew a picture, that they want to have it in their office at the State House? If you say that's the ugliest freaking thing in the State House, there's a good chance you just lost

dealing with that state legislator for the next two to three years. So don't say stupid things. Maybe they are a bit weird, but my question is, aren't we a little bit weird, too? You know, weren't we all taught glowing growing, up don't talk to strangers. Here is this training going in and talking to strangers, what it comes down to. Remember that. Those are keys. Don't play topic. There's a wonderful game I've heard, called Top-it and I'd love to do this in another training. The first one is you talk to somebody, you say well my dog, he can jump two feet. Next guy says my dog can jump two and a half. The next guy, my dog can jump four feet and he can catch a frisbee. The next guy's dog can jump five feet, catch a frisbee and recite the Emancipation Proclamation. The key S when working with folks, don't play Top-it. When they tell you a story how bad something is, don't feel like you have to tell them a worse story, because it's not going to get you anywhere. In fact, they think they have the worst stories, so if you can hear the worst story and you can relate to them, you go wow, I know how you feel. I've felt that way before, and this is what I do, feel, felt, found, very important things to learn. Just because we have the biggest, baddest car, we don't have to tell them theirs stinks. It's a powerful thing. Be excited about why you're there but don't be overly excited and don't be caught up in the rock star value. Your legislators are not rock stars so tell them what you want to tell them. Unfortunately, a lot of people when they meet a legislator they have the rock star value built in, and what that is, you go into the office and there's that, wow, I'm really standing in my legislator's office! Wow! Why am I here? And what ends up happening is, you get this rock star aura mentality and then you don't get anything done. Understand, as I tell folks, they put on their underwear the same way we do in the morning. They're no different than us. They're all people. You know, and it's the same, but it happens. So stick to your script. Hit your talking points. Give them a sheet or so of information about it. Never leave a legislator with a book. Give them one or two things, fact sheets, basic things like that, and let them know that you're their partner in accomplishing their goals together. Let them know you're their partner, and then it creates the value piece, goes back to the relationship. Be on time. They may be late, but it's

imperative that you show up on time. Showing up on time shows that you're very serious about what you're there for. If you are going to be more than ten minutes late, call ahead and let them know. Give them the option of rescheduling, but only if they balk at you being late and only if they balk at you being late. I'm going to be ten minutes late. Don't say I'm going to be ten minutes late, can we reschedule? I can guarantee every time they'll say reschedule. It's called planting seeds, you're giving them a mental seed. If you go in there every time, I'm going to be ten minutes late, I'll see you then. It will be okay. Don't plant seeds like that, and I guess that was the last slide on that one. Hold on a second. (Singing) do, do, do, do, do, do, do. We're going real fast. That was it. So being on time, and those are the keys, but basically, I did really good, kept exactly what I said, 10 to 15 minutes. I call this working with legislators, and the bottom line it's People Skills 101, working with legislators, contractors, whether you're working with anyone, you can take everything that we just talked about in that 10 or 15 minutes and apply it to what you're doing, and really, it is people skills. It's all about it. 90% of politics is relationship. Always understand that relationship is the key to this. You'll notice when we talk into the advocacy committee report this afternoon, Paul's not here. He will be here this afternoon, although if he doesn't get here on time I might do part of it. Some of the things that we're looking at this year are fostewing. Wow, I'm starting to talk like Babra Wawah.

MIKE KENNEDY: Elmer Fudd.

STEVE HIGGINS: Some of the things we're talking about this year is building and fostering -- excuse me -- those relationships with our legislators, and the folks that are out there. You know, our Council does important work, and we do a lot of things, and two years ago, we had great things happen in the legislator -- in the legislature, but when a legislator, who is in a key position in the State comes out, yeah, yeah, yeah, IL, but what the hell does IL do and that's word for word what came out of somebody in leadership earlier this year and a sit-down that I happened to have over coffee with a person one night, and you know, these are the things that are out there. I think the same person might have mentioned

something similar to Bill, but it was, you know -- so as we move forward, this skills training 101, working with our legislators and talking to folks, is a very empowering thing and something that we all need to do. So that was my training, was that okay? Karen? Can we pass a mic to Karen. It escaped. There it is, it's back there.

KAREN LANGLEY: If you take a little suggestion for one more?

STEVE HIGGINS: Yeah.

KAREN LANGLEY: Asking them if you can have their support on the issue.

STEVE HIGGINS: Absolutely.

KAREN LANGLEY: This was one of the things that Tip O'Neil mentioned, he lost a particular vote and went to his neighbor and asked her, why didn't you vote for me. She said, you didn't ask me to. So I think one more thing is to ask the person if you can have their support, would be another thing you want to add onto that.

SYBIL FELDMAN: Yes.

STEVE HIGGINS: I wrote that on a sticky note so I'm going to add it in there. All right, well with that being said, we are going to move on, and Nancy King is here.

Nancy King: Right here?

STEVE HIGGINS: Come up to the middle here, Nancy. I'm going to pass the mic over to Nancy. Nancy works at the Department of Transition Assistance. We met back in, I believe it might have been September we were sitting at a table together and talking, and it was during part of the emergency preparedness conference, I believe, and Nancy mentioned that one of the things that DTA is trying to do is really reintroduce itself to the centers for independent living and talk about the stuff that's there, and what would be a good way to do it. My thought was, well, you know, why don't you come to a SILC meeting, and we'll see what we can do. We sustained the relationship via e-mail and chatted a bit, and we wanted to give Nancy a couple minutes on the agenda prior to lunch, because it is already back there. Really to talk about some things, but also then if anybody has any questions, during lunch, get the opportunity over a sandwich or a soda or whatever's back there, to personally ask Nancy questions. So I'm going to turn the mic over to Nancy King, and we're going to let her go for about 10

or 15 minutes before we take our lunch break.

Nancy: Do I need a mic, I'm loud?

STEVE HIGGINS: For the room, yeah. There we go. Those are the sign-up sheets on the floor, no.

Nancy: Am I doing this right? Can you hear me?

STEVE HIGGINS: You got to be close to it.

Nancy: My name is Nancy King, I'm with the Department of Transitional assistance but I hate to say this but it's formerly known as the Department of public welfare. We don't want to talk about public welfare anymore. That's the ick factor, so we're the Department of transitional assistance, and we do cash benefits. We do food, nutrition benefits and we do emergency shelter for families, and in September -- no, in April, we got a new Commissioner, and not long after that, we got a new unit, which I am a part of, called the Strategic Development and Community Relations Unit so today's piece is the community relations part of that. And as an agency, we have a couple of goals we want to improve people's self-sufficiency economically. We want to end homelessness totally, completely, and we want to improve customer service and access to our programs. So the reason I'm here today, following up on what other people said is, I'm looking for your support. I'm looking to know more about what you do so I can know how we can better work together. My specific tasks and I'm going to try to go real fast, because I see lunch back there and I wouldn't wait for me to talk to eat lunch, I'm not that good.

(LAUGHTER)

But my specific task within this unit are to set up advisory boards, to conduct listening sessions where appropriate, and to better develop linkages with our various communities to find out what we can do better, where we're lacking, what kind of things we need to be doing, to reach out to the people we should be serving, and who maybe aren't accessing our benefits right now. I'd say food stamps is one of our big issues. There are a lot of people who do not collect food stamp benefits. And we need to know why, what is it about the Department that's keeping people away. You could apply online. You could apply by mail. You never have to go to a local office. There's information we need to better disseminate to various populations, like we've applied for a waiver

for medical deductions that will make applying easier and documenting medical deductions easier and therefore, enhance either somebody's eligibility for the amount of benefits they receive, so basically, what I'm here for today is to ask you if I can work with you individually, if you want us to come out and talk to you and the people that you work with, we need members for advisory boards. These will be boards for every one of our transitional assistance offices. We have 25 -- 26 across the state, and 25 locations. We want to set up a Statewide Advisory Council that is solely persons with disabilities and interested in serving that population, and we want to do community focus groups. We want to go out to various communities and that doesn't necessarily mean the Town of Natick, that community. It might mean the community of the different persons that we're serving, so we'd like to come out and talk to people and say, "What do we need to do differently? What's your impression of us now? What do you know about us? What do you want to know? How can we work together? What do I need to know about you so we can better work together?" I have business cards with me today. I will be hanging around because Steve said if I stayed I could eat.

STEVE HIGGINS: Nice!

Nancy King: And when I met Steve at this conference, I have to tell you guys, he was not exactly the quiet guy at the table. He was talking the whole time, he was cracking jokes. So I couldn't help -- and Mary Margaret was there. Wasn't he kind of rowdy at that conference? You were there, right? I thought he was a little rowdy. I thought this is a guy I can talk to. So if anybody has any questions, if anybody wants to come up to me afterwards, if you want to just grab my call -- my card and call me and e-mail me, we can do it that way. Basically what I want to do is just sort of get this started as an opportunity. We can do future things, when we bring out somebody who talks specifically about the food stamp program, but that's what I want to know from people, what can we do better, what can we do for you, and how do you feel like you can come and play with us. Any questions, any -- yes?

STEVE HIGGINS: Mike Kennedy.

MIKE KENNEDY: Hi there. Just to -- we can contact the DTA and actually have you folks come in and do in-services at the ILCs to

tell more about your services and also to encourage focus groups on improving that service delivery?

Nancy King: Yes, absolutely and I think that's probably the best way to do it, in small groups. When you make it too big it's harder to get that message out. We have a food stamp outreach team that does trainings, does informational pieces. They can talk about the virtual gateway online application for food stamps. Now people can apply for food stamps from their own computer. Somebody has one at home, they can apply like that, so yes, absolutely.

MIKE KENNEDY: That's great to know, because I know just in my experience in independent living, we've had consumers coming to our door with no services at all, not being aware of them, and food stamps was a great example. A lot of people had no idea that food stamps were available to them and how easy it could make -- so I think that's a great idea. Because again, there's a lot of people who come to the IL's door steps with absolutely no services, no, you know, no anything going for them at the time. So I think it's great.

Nancy King: I think it's something we need to correct the understanding of what the Department does. I think that welfare had a connotation, it was a place to get cash and when people came N you're disabled, you don't have to do anything. Now we're working with vocational experts and services, to say whatever your issues are when you come in the door, whatever your struggles are and your plan S we'll work with you on your plan so there's a shift in what the efforts are even as the TAFDC and cash level for assistance. We shouldn't say you sit over there and collect your check and you're fine. There should be some more real contrived efforts to identify what people's needs are and try to deliver those, so there's a big move towards that now. It's a shift.

STEVE HIGGINS: Dawn Clark had her hand up next, and then Sybil.

DAWN CLARK: My understanding of transitional -- DTA, is that there's a long wait at the centers, and I wondered whether that's changed or not, the waiting time for people to be served.

Nancy King: A long wait at the transitional assistance office? And that might be true, and that's something that we need to address. We have the staff shortages and issues that everybody else has but we are stressing with folks at that offices you need

to deal with that, work within the constraints of what you have, and that's, again, why I think communication can help to work with folks, let them know, don't come without an appointment, schedule an appointment. My advice, don't go at all if you don't have to. Why go to the office? It's not that much fun.

(LAUGHTER)

So if we can help people understand what benefits you can access without ever going to the office, and then facilitate when people go, how to avoid that long wait, because it's bad customer service and that's the other piece of my job. I'm just going to improve customer service after I end homelessness.

STEVE HIGGINS: Cy bell actually had a question. Oh, did you?

TONY WILLIAMS: No. Give it to Sybil.

STEVE HIGGINS: Sybil then Tony, how's that?

FAWN PHELPS: I was I was living on my own, and still doing up and downstairs, and I called and called, and they never called me back.

KAREN LANGLEY: Sybil said she was on food stamps and got cut off. She called and called and nobody calls her back.

Nancy King: I got that. You said that well. That's a significant issue and we understand that that happens and I think that's something we need to do some extra work on, is the ways for folks to communicate back and forth better about what the issues are. The food stamp program is unfortunately, I think, terribly complicated. You get on benefits, you have to reapply every so often. You get a terrible notice that says we're going to cut them off unless you come back in.

SYBIL FELDMAN: Yes.

Nancy King: We need to do a better job communicating what all the steps are so if you want to, Sybil, you can give me your specific information and I can follow up particularly on your case, if you want me to.

SYBIL FELDMAN: Yes.

Nancy: I'll come talk to you after and we can do that. If people get cut off because they have too much income for the food stamp program, we need to make sure that everyone understands that.

SYBIL FELDMAN: All right.

Nancy: I'll work with you on that.

SYBIL FELDMAN: Thank you very much.

TONY WILLIAMS: My name is Tony Williams and I work for the multicultural independent living center. I'd like to first of all applaud you for being here today, and also to say that you guys are doing great outreach. There's always room for improvement, but your people have called my people, and we're going to call your people back. But thank you, I just wanted to say that.

Nancy: Thank you.

STEVE HIGGINS: Lorraine Teehan has a question.

LORRAINE TEEHAN: I don't have much experience with the DTA, but I read an article in the paper, Kevin Cullen wrote an editorial about a family that was displaced from an apartment, and was living in a hotel and it was their last day in the hotel, and it didn't have anyplace to go, and I had a client who called once, living in a hotel. Is the hotel program part of the DTA, for people who need places to live, and how does it work?

Nancy King: The hotel program, unfortunately, there isn't really a hotel program. What we manage is we manage a shelter system for homeless families. When, unfortunately, that system, because it becomes overwhelmed when there are too many families needing shelter, and there are no more beds left in the Commonwealth, that we purchased, we're unfortunately, in a position where we say, I need to put you in a hotel until I can find you a shelter bed. On the other end, we have people working madly to take those folks in the shelter beds and help them identify living situations so they can move out and free up that bed, so that we can work with this new family. So that's how the hotel system works. It's a fail-safe. It's always a tragedy. We don't like putting families in hotels. It's just not a place for families. And we don't have the staff there to work with them and in a shelter, we have staff working directly with the family to identify what their issues are, help them access the appropriate education, whatever it is they need. So our effort is to make sure that somebody's stay in a hotel is minimal, limited time-wise as possible and move them into a shelter, and even that is just an only until we can move them out because a shelter is not a good place for families.

STEVE HIGGINS: Hollis and Karen.

Hollis: I'm with the Mass Office on Disability. I had a

question, given the extraordinary number of people with disabilities who are either unemployed or underemployment recently, you talked about the vocational rehab, I was wondering what is the office's relationship to the Department of Workforce Development.

Nancy: We have a working relationship with the office of workforce development. I think we're moving forward with them now to try to better identify the sorts of things that our clients need, and what the industries out there need, and that we can suit our clients to. So it's a big issue in getting our population of clients served. Many are disabled, but many are not. They're just simply out of work, and have no work experience, very little education and training, and so the effort is to say, with the various populations that we do serve, what are these things that are available for them, what kind of development needs to occur to make more employment options available, and what are the training and education things needed to move people into those. We have a working relationship and we're trying to move forward to make that stronger because that's obviously the key. There's got to be that economic work opportunity development to happen in order to put people into jobs because there's plenty of people out there wanting to work. Does that answer your question?

Hollis: Yes, thank you.

KAREN LANGLEY: I wanted to go back to, doing outreach and what are the organizations, and there are 11 independent living centers that are represented on this particular body and most of them are trying to work very closely with the aging services access points and they have a consortium, the aging and disability resource consortium, so when you're doing outreach training, trying to go through that consortium, which has been started in even of the ILC areas, but furthermore, what I wanted to mention is, it's a golden opportunity for some cross-training.

Nancy: Yes.

KAREN LANGLEY: What we've found through the years and I won't speak for everybody here but if you have a person with a significant disability needing to go to a shelter, they can't get in, can't get the services that they need and that's a responsibility of the State to make sure that that happens.

NANCY: Absolutely.

KAREN LANGLEY: There could be cross-training there. The other piece is for cross-training, not only the staff at DTA but also some of the shelters on the Mass. Access Housing Registry. I've given this example in the past, a woman I read about in the newspaper two years ago, a woman with a disability, a couple kids, who ended up going from shelter to shelter to shelter around the state, and it was because nobody at those shelters knew anything about how to find accessible, affordable housing. We had an online registry. I saw that in the newspaper on a Friday night. I called that woman. I went on the registry from home. I found her an apartment. I referred her to Northeast, she was living in an apartment in two months. She had been traveling from Lawrence to Springfield to Fall River to Dorchester. There was no need for that. If somebody had been trained properly, she could have had that accessible housing a year before. We really need to do some strong cross-training. I think this is a wonderful opportunity to do it.

NANCY: I'll take you up on the offer, we should talk about how we can set that up for our vendors and staff. Because sometimes it's simply knowledge. Sometimes a case worker just needs to know, wait a second, isn't there a registry? Isn't there something, don't we have a name of somebody we can talk to and say, isn't there something else that can be done, in order to push that vendor or that case manager just a little bit further in the effort to help somebody. I think that's a good point, cross-training is always good, because the information you said, is power, and you can get more power to help people if you have more information.

STEVE HIGGINS: At this point, I'm going to steal the mic back so that I can do it the right way. There we go. Mary Jane is going to give me that one. There we go. All right, well at this point, I think we want to say thanks, Nancy, for being here today.

Nancy: Thank you.

STEVE HIGGINS: Over lunch, take the opportunity to talk with Nancy, introduce yourself. I know even though there's stuff going on at the centers today, there's people from eight different centers here today or, you know, so get the opportunity and Becky does a lot of stuff with the Index, she does the information, and information is power, we know that. And take the opportunity and

introduce yourself to Nancy. Nancy, do you mind if I recess for lunch? Two Nancys at the same table. We'll break for about an hour. It's quarter of 1:00 now. Let's come back at quarter of 2:00. And we'll finish everything up. Everybody enjoy lunch, and we'll touch base in a little while. So we'll start at quarter of 2:00 promptly.

(Lunch recess)

STEVE HIGGINS: I'm going to give everybody the biological warning, so if you have to do anything before we start, you have five minutes.

STEVE HIGGINS: Good afternoon, everyone. We're going to get going. Before we go too, too far, a couple folks came in throughout the course of the morning, and after the meetings they had so I want to recognize them. You know some of them, Paul Spooner came in, he's over on that side. Betty King, wow, that was like a golf clap, that's hilarious.

PAUL SPOONER: I am at not a golfer.

STEVE HIGGINS: Hollis Cotton is over here, new staffer at Mass. office on disability and he'll be joining us at the SILC meetings so he'll be part of that list in that group of us that are here, so make sure if you haven't introduced yourself to Hollis so you say hello. And then there's the guy in the back of the room, Mr. Keith Jones.

Keith: Hey!

STEVE HIGGINS: Some people know him, some people don't. Some people wish they didn't. (Laughs)

Keith: We was robbed, man, robbed!

STEVE HIGGINS: That would have been if we introduced you again. So that being said, Nancy, you got your mic in front of you, let's get this thing rolling again.

NANCY: All righty. Next is the treasurer's report and we'll turn it over to Filomena Tripp.

FILOMENA TRIPP: Financial report. SILC meeting, December 13th, 2007. The financial committee has been meeting regularly since the last SILC meeting. Committee meetings happened via teleconference on the first Tuesday of every month from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. The committee directed the SILC Coordinator to purchase a copy of Quick Books Professional to have the SILC using the same software as our

fiscal intermediary, and be able to produce easier to understand reports. After closing of the books on Federal Fiscal Year 2007, it was determined that there would rollover of \$9,536.99 from fiscal '07 to fiscal '08. The committee is recommending that the rollover be applied as follows: \$7,225 to the special events line item to cover the cost of events such as ADA Day and State House Activities sponsored by the SILC. \$2 action 311.99 to the State IL Conference Line Item to allow the SILC to place its deposit for the conference space for 2008. During the month of October, which just closed, the SILC expended \$9,798.85 of its 2008 budget.

Copies of the SILC budget worksheet using our new reporting format are attached today for your review. Additional copies may be obtained by contacting the SILC office.

The committee is writing a letter to MRC to request a meeting with Commissioner Carr to determine if there is a different way to apply the SILC monies to its account. Currently the SILC body accepts its budget in September, but that money does not all come to the SILC in one allotment. Usually the SILC budget is amended several times throughout the year. In the past, this has left the SILC in the position of almost running out of moneys to operate.

Respectfully submitted, Filomena Tripp, treasurer. Any questions?

STEVE HIGGINS: Mike?

MIKE KENNEDY: Mike Kennedy. This is not a question, just more of a comment. I absolutely love the actual, you know, grid, the breakdown with the numbers, probably the first time we've actually, most of us have been able to see them and read them, so that's a good thing.

STEVE HIGGINS: Nancy?

MIKE KENNEDY: I said most of us, Steven, bad Steven!

STEVE HIGGINS: Dawn Clark?

DAWN CLARK: I'm curious, request to meet with Commissioner Carr to determine if there is a different way too apply SILC monies to the account. What is that?

STEVE HIGGINS: Essentially we accept the budget, the SILC accepts its budget in September, but because MRC receives the money for the SILC in lots and lots of pieces, Karen could probably explain that a little bit better, but what ends up happening is, because especially the past two years, we've been on -- the Federal

government's been operating under what's called continuing resolution, and what that means is that the Federal budget, the Federal Government only funds itself for only three or four months at a time. So needless to say, MRC or MCB doesn't receive its full allotment of funds. They receive a piece of it. Part of what's become complicated is, MCB can't send their portion over to MRC, until they have the money there to do it, and if the money only trickles in \$1,000 here or \$3,000 there, or whatever, it ends up being the end of the Federal fiscal year and we're just finally getting that piece from MCB, because they finally have gotten their full allotment. If you remember last year, this wasn't MRC's fault but the way the moneys came in, we were very, very close in December last year to having to shut down the SILC office. Because of the fact that there wasn't going to be any money. The money was gone, and we were within a week or two of the SILC running out of money, when the allotment came in, and MRC was able to amend the contract, and guarantee us that the monies were going to be there for the SILC. So the question last year, the finance committee met briefly with Commissioners Bartels and Govostes and they talked about it and we didn't get a chance to follow up with them and as you know, Commissioners Govostes and Bartels have both since moved on, so the goal was the finance committee wanted to sit down and chat with Commissioner Carr, just to have the issue on the table again, and bring it forward to see if there is a way that, through creative thinking or whatever, that MRC can work with the SILC and when we have our budget set for the year, we're getting a contract at the beginning of the year, not all in little tiny pieces throughout the course of the year and not running that risk of being part-way through the year and all of the sudden being no operating budget to work from and having to close down on office. And part of it really, the organization that gets hurt the most by this, other than the SILC, is our fiscal intermediary, because if you know, our fiscal intermediary, which is Metro West Center for Independent Living they have contracts with the SILC, myself, consultant, and others, DPC. They're kind of on the hook for that, and you know, unfortunately that's a blunt way to say it, but it could, if the monies in the SILC office run out, not only do it jeopardize the SILC, but it could also jeopardize Metro West and

their credit line, and you know, they put their neck on the line as far as for the SILC, so the idea was to sit down and get the opportunity to meet with Commissioner Carr and talk with them about this, see if there's a way that it can be done differently, meaning we need to think outside of the box, we're not sure, but that's why we were asking, Dawn.

DAWN CLARK: That's clear. I have a follow-up question to see if I understand. Are you saying that you get maybe \$1,000 every month or whatever, are they individual contracts?

STEVE HIGGINS: What actually happens is, the SILC contract, every time we receive an allotment of the funding, the contract gets amended, so yes, it's almost like receiving little individual contracts, but the contract itself gets amended, so basically, in simplistic form, Karen receives an allotment. She knows how much goes to the SILC. She amends the SILC contract for that amount. Sends a copy out. Paul, who is at Metro West in our fiscal intermediary has to sign the contract, get it back to Karen, and you know in some cases, right now because of things running with the Federal Government, we've been doing that three plus times per year and it gets a little shaky at some points. But our goal, obviously, we know MRC supports the SILC, so the goal it to figure out what the best way is to do it, if there is a better way to do it.

DAWN CLARK: One more question. There was, there used to be a letter of credit or something, I've forgotten the name of that, but it used to say that we intend to give you the funds. Is that something that they still do or not?

STEVE HIGGINS: Well, the issue is, is because the SILC -- the SILC theoretically is not an entity, I guess is the best way to put it. In other words, the SILC doesn't have its own checking accounts, we're a council but not an actual established entity, so that means the SILC can't establish a credit line or do anything like that, so I'm sure, if we were able to do that, that we would have the support to, you know, say that the monies would be there, but the SILC itself, the way we're situated in our state, does not have the ability to do anything like that. So we have to rely solely on Metro West, and in the case if the SILC was to draw over, it would go against Metro West and their credit line, and that's something

that can't happen, because we do have a great relationship, but at the same time, you know, the board of Metro West needs to think of Metro West and the consumers that they serve, you know, I like Joe. I like everybody on the board, and they all like me, but hey, you know, I mean, they have to do what they have to do. Paul doesn't like me anymore.

(LAUGHTER)

But so yeah, so that was the reasoning behind that and why we wanted to have that meeting.

STEVE HIGGINS: Bernard Bonsra has a question.

BERNARD BONNSRA: Okay, Bernard. Have we already placed a deposit for space for next year's conference?

STEVE HIGGINS: No. We -- I actually have the contract for the space for next year's conference, and the hotel has been very, very good at working with us in the past, so we actually had the contract before I walked off the premises from this year's conference, went upstairs, met with them, we picked dates and worked on things like that, and they've held the date without a deposit. We do need to get that deposit to them, though, in the very near future, and we couldn't really do that, pending this change in the budget we had accepted today, so if Filomena's report is accepted as read, and the recommendations accepted as read, then we'll be able to make that deposit with the Best Western so that it is official, but at this point, the hotel, and they've been very, very good to work with, they've been holding the dates for us, pending the fact, knowing that usually it's, you know, end of December, before they actually get that done, the monetary deposit, and the deposit would be about \$1,000. It won't be the entire \$2,300. The other portion of that \$2,300 is just we use that as we're starting to get ready for the conference. We have to do things like prepare materials and things like that. We use that all for that type of stuff. Dawn Clark has a question.

DAWN CLARK: No, I'd like to move that we accept this report. I'd like to move that we accept this report.

JUDI RODGER: I'll second it.

STEVE HIGGINS: Judi Roger seconds.

NANCY: All in favor? Opposed? Abstained? Okay, great! Thanks, Filomena!

Okay, next is the advocacy report, and Paul is here, so I'll turn it over to Paul Spooner.

PAUL SPOONER: I'll sit next to Nancy.

STEVE HIGGINS: Wow!

NANCY: No, do I need to move my dog?

PAUL SPOONER: No, but you don't want to block the projector. Am I blocking it?

Tracy: No.

PAUL SPOONER: Cool. Should I start with a joke? My jokes are pretty tasteless. Mostly about blind people, so --

(LAUGHTER)

NANCY: I'm used to it, it's like 20 years plus.

PAUL SPOONER: A lot of them sore old, though. You've heard them before.

NANCY: There's some good ones out there.

PAUL SPOONER: No, there really aren't. When I got to the office this morning, went in the office, and it smelled like maple syrup and pancakes, right, and someone had oatmeal, brown sugar oatmeal something. Anyways, that reminds me, how do you know when a blind person has too much maple syrup on their pancakes? When their foot sticks to the floor.

NANCY: Oh! You're really stretching it, Paul.

PAUL SPOONER: Oh, that was so bad! How bad was it?

NANCY: You're inching way too far.

BILL ALLEN: Let the dog out, Nancy.

(LAUGHTER)

PAUL SPOONER: I have to try.

NANCY: Get on with it, Paul.

PAUL SPOONER: I'll have to try harder with the advocacy report. Goodness gracious.

KAREN LANGLEY: Where is John Chappell when you need a bad joke.

PAUL SPOONER: He's got better bad jokes than I do. I have other jokes but they can't be said in public. We'll move on from there. The internet is a wonderful tool. Great amount of knowledge out there.

Okay, advocacy. What have we been doing on the advocacy committee? We've had a couple of committee meetings and we've had a couple of other impromptu meetings where we really tried to sit

back and critically analyze what the SILC has done the last couple of years, in its advocacy functions, which have been primarily events that we've had up at the State House, and you know, our successes, our lack of successes, doing a variety of activities with the state legislature, getting into the budget and so forth.

The SILC members, a number of SILC members who have been active with an ad hoc group that's been trying to get a meeting with the Governor, thus far, we have not succeeded. It's really been a difficult process, and I know some folks have been here, and just have been through that, the fight with us, and sat in the Governor's outer office to get a meeting, and that didn't happen and so on. We still continue that, but in the meantime, we also recognize that we have to start getting ready for the budget process, which will come as we all know, the Governor presents his budget end of January, known as House 1 and that starts the lengthy process from the House side first, and then the Senate side, to getting a budget and the budget's got to be approved and hopefully the Governor signs it and/or sometimes the Governor vetoes sections of it, and we have to get overrides and vetoes. We had been working with Assistant Secretary Jeanne McGuire and Commissioner Carr to make sure some of SILC's priorities are in their priorities as they put forward funding requests for their respective agencies, and you know, we've been told really kind of off the record, but they can't say anything, that our priorities are up there pretty high as far as increased funding for centers, advocating for funding for supported living programs, and other community-based programs that the SILC has supported for many years and has been part of our priorities. But we also are aware, and I believe most of you are, if you pay any attention to the news and information out there that everyone is speaking doom and gloom this coming fiscal year that we got anywhere from an \$800 million to \$1.5 billion shortfall, so revenue is not coming in, and no one's talking about new revenue, so it could be a pretty difficult fiscal year, but that's never stopped us before, and it's not going to stop us now.

So anyways, we've been trying to figure out how what we do as a SILC and as a community is effective, and one of the lessons we've learned repeatedly is that having an event up at the State House or

a series of events at the State House is important, but we're not getting enough legislators that know who we are, what we're about, and why our services are important to support people with disabilities in the community. So we took a look at what the SILC had for resources, and this is the plan that we've come up with, is that we have one big event scheduled for the week of April --

STEVE HIGGINS: It will be April 22nd.

PAUL SPOONER: April 22nd and there will be a lot more material out shortly about that. We'll try to do a really big presence up at the State House, and this will be at the Grand Staircase but we're not going to do a lunch presentation in the Great Hall this year.

What we want to do is starting off right after the holidays, there's that, Steven's looked at the budget and has communicated to the centers what we want to try to do is start doing some individual, local events, whether it's like a breakfast, legislative breakfast or coffee and cookies on a Friday afternoon or come talk to your local legislators to try to get the centers to actually get legislators to come to the center, get to know their programs and what would be great is if you could actually get legislators to go with you or go to a consumer's home, to actually understand what people with disabilities deal with on a day-to-day basis, because the purpose of this is to try to get legislators that truly understand what we do and why it's so important, so we can get that group of legislators, and our goal is very simple, we want to get 11 more legislators, doesn't matter if they're Senate or House, but we want 11 more champions for independent living in the State House this year, and that each center is going to be committed to get one champion themselves. Now, in the past, we've had a couple of champions, Stavros had one with Ellen Story which helped us get the increase we got two years ago and that same year, BCIL worked real hard with Chairman DeLeo from Winthrop to get him to support us and he actually gave us a little bit of extra money, but we need more champions in the State House. We need more people that are going to take the agenda of independent living with them on their short list when they go fight for budget stuff. And we don't have that, so we think that if we can organize it so each center does a local event, brings people in, brings legislators in, consumers, help educate them, get them to understand what we do,

how we do it, and why it's important that we, instead of having 2 champions, we should have 13, 14 or 15 champion this is year which will help promote our agenda. Is this going to work? I don't know. But I think, you know, every lesson I've ever learned in advocacy is, you know, advocacy is local stuff. It's how you get your local rep. or Senator to understand what the issues or and what's important to people. So the SILC will have some money for each of the centers to put on an event, it's not going to be a lot and clearly Steven and other members of the advocacy committee will be available to help out and work on these events and we're going to try to get them all done before we come to the State House in April, so in fact, maybe we can have all those champions, you know, be at the rally in April and speak at that rally for all of us, and we hope to have a couple hundred people at the State House for this rally, and it's going to be the only one we're going to do, and why is it being done in April? Because that's about the time when the House budget is out. It's right before the Senate budget is going on, and so it's a good time to get attention to our issues. Now, having said that, that doesn't mean that we're not continuing to work with DPC and other members from the disability community to go in and have talks with budget folks and push our agenda. That's kind of ongoing stuff. We're also going to have ad hoc ongoing stuff to try to get a meeting with the Governor, but these are more of the organized events that the SILC is going to be putting on. So let me stop there for a moment and see if there are any questions, comments?

Keith Jones: I have a question. What's the SILC, in terms of our advocacy, towards working with the Secretary of State on voting accessibility, and polling places, considering they moved the primary up and all of those things?

PAUL SPOONER: Keith asked, because he didn't use the microphone, what the SILC's working on, voter access, access to polling places, and where do we stand on that with the primary being moved up.

Keith Jones: Right.

PAUL SPOONER: I don't believe -- is that within one of our priorities, Steven?

STEVE HIGGINS: That wasn't listed as a priority this year.

PAUL SPOONER: Since it wasn't listed as a priority issue, I

haven't been charged to work on that particular issue, so that's something that the SILC as a body could make a deliberation and decide to add to the priorities. It's not within the three-year State Plan, but it certainly can be modified and added to that, if the SILC so desires to. I do know that DLC is working on this issue.

Keith: Right.

PAUL SPOONER: They have in the past and there are some efforts along those lines but it hasn't been something we've been charged with, Keith. Okay.

There's a bunch of things going on in the state on an advocacy level, and some of you are involved in that. Some of you see the e-mails. Some of you hear about these things, and there's a lot of different groups meeting, not just centers but other providers, elder agencies, ASAPs, and so forth, people are working on this big 1115 waiver proposal that's supposed to do services. There's a whole bunch of work groups that have been established to work under that waiver. There's also an Olmstead workgroup that Dr. McGuire, Jean McGuire from Executive Office of Health and Human Services has formed, to work on developing a, not developing, but taking a look at the people's Olmstead Plan and another plan that the state put out, and taking a look at those recommendations, determining if any of those recommendations have been achieved, the status of those, and to give the Governor a report. I believe sometime in March, as to the status of what is the state of affairs with Olmstead in the Commonwealth. I'm not sure yet whether that's an Olmstead plan. We had a meeting on Monday, where part of the struggle for a lot of us is that when you meet on these work groups with a lot of state folks and other agency representatives, that there are a lot of interests. There are a lot of agendas, and that a lot of times, these meetings get very much bogged down into the minutia of details. This is my impression. I'm not speaking for the SILC when I say this but my impression in the Olmstead meeting, we don't have a clue of what the vision of what Olmstead is supposed to be and we don't have a vision or a mission statement or a value statement. There's still a lot of confusion about Community First versus Olmstead, and I think a lot of people in the community are looking for real tangible action steps and I'm not sure that that's

getting through. I think Dr. McGuire hears that and I think Dr. McGuire wants to see that. I'm just not convinced of all the -- no deferens to them, all of the bureaucrats working on these various projects and grants. They seem to be more concerned about the design of the work plan and how it's laid out on the paper than what the end results of the work plan are going to be. So I'm a little somewhat cynical and disappointed, but there are plenty of assertive advocates on the Olmstead plan that I'm sure is going to push that group forward. There's also a group that's just starting, and I think unofficially, the meeting date is December 20th, and it's been a group that Executive Office has pulled together, to start dealing with some real tangible issues to change in the PCA program or fixing the PCA program. I have not seen the list of who's on the group, so I don't know if any of you are on the group. I am, because I sit on the PCA Workforce Council, and the first meeting's on the 20th and it's to look at a lot of the issues that all of you have raised about, you know, particularly problems of keeping your PCA programs without having to prove that you keep needing it, every year, year after year, the deferrals, all the extra medical information you got to provide for it, and just the real bureaucratic mess of PCA program, and then finally, there's also the PCA Workforce Council. As most of you know or should have heard there was an election for a PCA Union that had 94% in favor vote and a union has been formed by 1199 SEIU, Service Employers International Union, and that probably in the very foreseeable future, the union and the Workforce Council will be sitting down to start the process for what's known as collective bargaining for wages and benefits. So there's a lot of things going on. A lot of things about our future and our programs. It's real important if you're involved to stay involved and if you want to become involved, certainly let me know or some other folks in this room be Bill Allen is involved, a few other folks, I'm sure, Karen knows of these groups, she can help to make sure we get more people involved. It does need more consumer representation. It's a little top heavy with bureaucrats and service providers. We need more consumers who know about programs and want to make suggestions and recommendations for change. So it's real important to participate. But that's basically what I have for an advocacy

report.

Oh, wait a minute, I did forget one thing. Some of you and a lot of you were involved over the past year about the emergency preparedness task force, that DPH and MEMA, Mass. Emergency Management Agency have put together. They had an event back in October, where a series of recommendations were presented, running the gamut of sheltering, evacuation, registries, personal preparedness. There is a document in, that's currently in a process of major revision, based on all of the comments that were received, that will be coming out shortly, that has a pretty concise list of what the state needs to do, to better prepare for emergency preparedness, in case of, you know, hurricane, fire, nuclear war, pandemic, whatever constitutes an emergency, you know. It could be most anything, and it's a pretty interesting conversation to have with people about emergency preparedness, and that's been interesting to try to educate emergency planners about the very complicated needs that the disability community brings, to issues around emergency preparedness. So the report should be coming out shortly, and we'll see how the Governor's office responds to that and whether the State will actually put some resources into this or not. But if you're not involved in emergency preparedness, in your local community, you should get involved, because you know, that famous line, your life depends on it. It does. You know? Because when an emergency happens, you know, they're going to be -- local government is who will be entrusted to assist you in, you know, your emergency preparedness issues. So that's it. Questions? How did I know Dawn was going to ask him? How'd I know?! Is it because I didn't say anything about ya? By the way, Dawn was one of the chairpersons of that emergency preparedness group.

DAWN CLARK: Thank you. (Laughs) no, I fell asleep and I wanted to hear more about -- I think you told us about the fact that we all land in the Governor's office for a meeting with the Governor. We were told that after we, if we -- we were going to meet with Secretary on one of housing issues and I wondered if that meeting ever happened.

PAUL SPOONER: I can answer that. Let me give you a little background so everyone knows. There was an issue about -- remember

a couple years ago we worked on the housing bond bill and we got \$5 million into CBH programs, community-based housing, and there was a cut into that of \$4 million this past year so a number of us got really riled up about it, like we should, and we had tried to get meetings with, in the Governor's office about it, and we had also tried to get meetings with Tina Brooks. She's HCD --

KAREN LANGLEY: Undersecretary DHCD.

PAUL SPOONER: And a bunch of us went to the Governor's office and took over the outer office and, you know, I think we really pissed them off, because none of the people in the Governor's office are returning my phone calls now, so I know we pissed them off. And what Dawn was talking about was that this was on a Friday afternoon and you know, of course I'm sure they called Dr. McGuire -- well I know they called Dr. McGuire and said, "How come you're not taking care of your people" and Jean instructively told them "They're not my people. They have a right to express themselves." I'm sure the Governor's office called a few other people to try to rein us in and didn't happen so they were on the phone with Tina Brooks and a meeting scheduled for the next Wednesday or Thursday.

SYBIL FELDMAN: That Wednesday.

PAUL SPOONER: Yeah, and we tried to get it for a large group, but she wouldn't go for that so myself, Bill Henning, and Joe Tringali were scheduled to go. Amazingly, and we still haven't figured out how this happened, Miss Eileen Brewster somehow got past security and got into that meeting. We're not sure how that occurred, but they also damaged her wheelchair, so there was a whole interesting side story going on with that, too, but nevertheless, we had a meeting with Tina Brooks and a couple of the housing bureaucrats, and you know, the meeting was -- the meeting wasn't very insightful. It wasn't very helpful. It was a lot of talk about, well we've got more than \$5 million of projects in the pipeline and if we need more money, we can shift some money and so on, so you guys shouldn't really worry, and that we're committed to providing these programs. And quite frankly, that was a very unsatisfying answer. So we were told when we were at the Governor's office by Jacqueline Burton, I think that's her name, one of the assistant schedulers, that if we weren't satisfied, call her, and I have her cell phone number and regular phone and her e-mail address, call

her and she'd make sure that we got a meeting scheduled with the Governor. I have not gotten a return response from all three of those entities.

SYBIL FELDMAN: Wow!

STEVE HIGGINS: Sounds like the old Governor's office again.

PAUL SPOONER: And the response from Tina Brooks in writing wasn't helpful but then again we've seen housing stuff that's put back, supposedly put it back to \$5 million. That was his bill.

KAREN LANGLEY: That's the future bill.

PAUL SPOONER: But it hasn't been put back this year at all. So we're out 1 million bucks on housing. And you know, I'm not -- I shouldn't say it but doesn't seem like the Governor wants to meet and hear our issues. So it's clear that we need to do some strategy and think what's next.

I know there was some movement and I don't want to speak out of turn, Bill, but there was some movement with folks with the Adult Onset group at DPC to have a meeting and they were talking to one of the Governor's staff and Bill, you know, graciously invited us in to some of the discussion on it, and you know, we all said, what are we going to meet for? Whose meeting is it and who is controlling the agenda and what are we really going to talk about, and quickly, when those issues were brought up, I guess it kind of -- well, we can't do the meeting. There was a push to have the meeting next Tuesday the 18th, with about two weeks' notice for us to try to organize the community to get there. Just -- it's not feeling good. So this is a tough administration to work with and I don't mean tough in the same sense as it was when we had Republican Governors, but you know, please, don't misconstrue what I'm saying, but it's -- I had a lot of hope but these days right now, it's not feeling very hopeful. The folks in the Governor's office don't seem to know as much as they should on how to do some things, and I just -- that saddens me more than anything else. I don't know what to say about it. It just doesn't seem to respond to what we're trying to get across.

STEVE HIGGINS: Dawn Clark.

DAWN CLARK: I just want to add another layer for the SILC to know about. The major transit authorities are in deep trouble fiscally, with the exception of the RID negotiation Boston, and we are facing

probably five years of no transportation. The state is not going to let that happen. What we do know about this is that the Governor has a plan for revamping the whole transportation issue in the state. Where the people I've been sitting with, talking about this issue, is that we probably won't know the Governor's intentions until he announces it.

I'm wondering if the Governor has -- I want to put a positive light on this. I'm wondering if the Governor has an idea about people with disabilities and not telling us until he announces it. I don't know, but I think we need to still keep our fingers in the pot and putting our hands in the Governor's office. And ears close to the phone to the Governor's office and advocacy but my hope is he does have a plan that we will eventually see.

PAUL SPOONER: Any more questions?

STEVE HIGGINS: Hollis Cotton. Wait for the mic, Hollis.

Hollis: Very briefly. Paul, how many times has you called her again, please?

PAUL SPOONER: Three or four.

Hollis: You didn't receive any response, is that correct?

PAUL SPOONER: Yep.

Hollis: I'm meeting with her on Monday. I'll call you on Monday afternoon.

PAUL SPOONER: Okay.

STEVE HIGGINS: Thanks!

PAUL SPOONER: Sybil, I didn't quite understand that.

SYBIL FELDMAN: On the PCAs.

PAUL SPOONER: Yep.

SYBIL FELDMAN: How many responses did you get back in reference to the PCAs. Do you know?

PAUL SPOONER: I think it was around 7,000, somewhere in that general range.

SYBIL FELDMAN: All right.

PAUL SPOONER: Which is pretty standard for a mailing ballot for an election.

SYBIL FELDMAN: Okay.

PAUL SPOONER: About 30% is pretty standard.

NANCY: Great. Thanks, Paul.

STEVE HIGGINS: Motion to accept.

NANCY RUMBOLT-TRZCINSKI: We hear a motion to accept Paul's report?

SYBIL FELDMAN: Aye.

STEVE HIGGINS: Second Betty King.

NANCY: All in favor? Opposed? Abstained, thanks again, Paul.

Next, Mike Kennedy and the development nominations committee report.

MIKE KENNEDY: All righty, thank you, Nancy, and thank you, Paul. Okay, nominations and developing committee report. Let me start with the nominations news. Unfortunately, this is sort of following along the same theme that Paul was alluding to of really not getting the kind of responses from the Governor's office that we had hoped for, and let me tell you what I'm talking about. Steve Higgins, our coordinator, sent a letter to Lillian Menendez, chairs the Gubernatorial appointments office at the State House. Steve invited her to participate in one of our upcoming teleconferences that we have, and he also requested a face-to-face meeting with her, and the reason being is because Steve had, you know, stated that it's been 11 months since the Patrick administration has taken over and we have had no appointments or reappointments made during this time. Despite the fact that every request that they have made has always been granted by the SILC office. Having worked with Steve and with Joe before Steve, I know there's a lot of work done behind the scenes at the SILC office for nominees and reappointees and I know it has to be frustrating. All I can tell you is that we're behind you. We just keep plugging away, we'll keep calling her. And you know, just in the same message to Lily he went on to say that these lack of appointments and reappointments is putting the SILC in danger of being out of compliance, which could jeopardize our State and Federal contracts. On some brighter notes, someday, when they do decide to you know, get around to these, we did receive word from Independence Associates that they needed to withdraw Brian K. Smith as their nominee, due to his recent change in employment status. That could be construed as bad news, but not too long after, we actually received nominations paperwork from Brian Smith, nominating himself as a consumer representative on the SILC. Clarification of this nomination status change was accepted by the Executive Committee and updated with the Governor's office. So when it comes to our

membership, that's actually good news for SILC and their membership composition.

We received nomination paperwork from Joanne Ciborowski and the spelling is C-I-b-o-r-o-w-s-k-i. And we received her paperwork to come on to the SILC as a representative of Independence Associates. Right now, she is their acting executive director. Next is Dwight Woodworth, many of you know him as Woody. His term on the SILC expired on November 12th and he is no longer -- he is not eligible for reemployment due to the fact that he's served two consecutive terms and he's also moved out of the Mass. SILC area to Maine.

Next, Robert Barker's nomination for the SILC, Bob moved to Kansas to be closer to his family due to health issues. And you know, Bob was actually a representative, he would have been a representative from most western Mass. part of the state. And Coreen Brinckerhoff executive director of CORD has been nominated by CORD as their representative and we as an executive committee approved her nomination and Steve will be submitting her paperwork to the Gubernatorial appointments office, and we also received nominations paperwork from a gentleman named Don Summerfield of Cambridge, and he was actually a nomination suggestion from Dawn Clark, sitting here on my left, and Don is a member of the Cambridge Commission on Disability and he runs a disability advocacy company on his own. And just on that theme, several SILC members have contacted the SILC with names of folks they would like to nominate, and they have all been given instructions on how to obtain the nominations form, and submitting it to the SILC office, and just for a, you know, informational purposes, the nominations form is actually right on the SILC website, and you can actually fill out the form right online or print it and fill it out the old-fashioned way, mail it in to Steve at the SILC office. So that's, again, the FYI.

Development, as we continue our quest to have full SILC membership, especially in our consumer category, AKA, Brian Smith being one of them, individuals who are not working for an ILC, DSU, it was determined we need to review our nominations criteria and objectives to ensure that we have active participation and contributions from all of our members. We also discussed the idea of having a formal training for our current SILC membership, many

who are on their first term. So that we all have a better understanding of why SILC exists and how to carry out our mission. That being said, current SILC membership stands at 29 members, with 12 waiting for reappointments, 9 nominees, 5 vacancies, 43 total. And respectfully submitted, Mike Kennedy. Any questions? Comments?

STEVE HIGGINS: Joe Bellil.

JOE BELLIL: Mike, nice report. A question on the five vacancies especially with Woody being out. Has anyone done any outreach, like missing, I mean do we have a vacancy in the central Mass. area, and has anyone thought about like sending just an e-mail to the various IL centers that may have, you know, where representation is needed and looking for outreach that way?

MIKE KENNEDY: The answer to your question, Joe, is yes. I know Steve and Nancy, you know, have been in contact with other ILCs constantly, offering to go to their, the sites and actually do a presentation there, whether it be during the day with the consumers or actually at a board meeting, which is a great place to see SILC nominees, so that is in the theme, but I honestly, there's absolutely nothing wrong with independent living staff who represent the SILC just in their own communications methods get that word out that they're always looking for new members.

STEVE HIGGINS: One of the things we do, Joe, throughout the years, we touch base with each of the centers.

JOE BELLIL: Yep.

STEVE HIGGINS: And the whole is, one of the goals I established about a year and a half ago was to make sure I visit every single center in the state. So we go to at least one event per year at every center. We try to go to even more than that, so in some cases, and it doesn't have to be in the middle of the day. I got home at 1:00 in the morning from Ad-lib the other night, because I got the invitation to be at the annual dinner, which was a great thing and it's the things like that, that establishing our presence throughout the state, and then we're at events like that, we get the opportunity to talk to folks and we meet a lot of folks, and that's how we've started to grow the membership. Five vacancies, that being said that's five vacancies now and we're also going to have folks that their nominations will run out at the end of

November of Federal fiscal year 2008 and some cases those folks are ineligible to be reappointed because they've served two consecutive terms. We're looking at five vacancies right now, but the bottom line is, we need to identify probably another 12 to 14 people around the Commonwealth that can come on, in some cases, centers have folks lined up, as their person runs out, they already knew who the next person appointed.

JOE BELLIL: A quick follow-up. I wanted to make sure the centers are told if there's representation within their area, but if it changes that's a great idea. I want to put more responsibility on the centers, you know, because I think the centers could find out, you know, identify folks. The other thing is, I'm the chair of the State Rehab Council and we're having the same, we experience some of the same problems about the whole nomination appointment process. However, I think right now, we don't -- I mean we have enough people applying so we don't really have any vacancies, so if people are applying for the State Rehab Council and aren't able to get on, I may suggest they think about the SILC.

STEVE HIGGINS: You know, if they're folks, especially consumer representatives that understand independent living centers and what their qualifications are to be on the SILC, that would be a great thing. We've tried to work together with the two councils in the past year or so as much as we can. Karen Langley, I see your hand.

KAREN LANGLEY: I think, Joe, what you were talking about is some targeted outreach, based on some geography that maybe doesn't have good representation.

JOE BELLIL: Right.

KAREN LANGLEY: We also should think about disability representation, making sure that we're looking at cross-disability representation, but recently I've been doing a lot of mailings for my AT Grant, and the Mass Office on Disability was very nice, and they gave me a mailing list for all the disability --

JOE BELLIL: Commissions.

KAREN LANGLEY: Commissions. So if you have that list, that could be an outreach, targeted outreach to particular cities and towns, you might want to see if you can get some nominees from there.

STEVE HIGGINS: Um-hum. We work together great with the MRC Council, MOD. Obviously we see folks that represent all of those

organizations here at the SILC meetings, too. Our SILC event that will happen in the spring, I know Mary Margaret is our, on the consumer council at MRC, has expressed that, you know, the word has come back the MRC consumer council wants to participate in that event at the State House, too. So a lot of that. The whole development piece of it, you know, as you know, dealing on one of the other councils, can be a little tricky at times, and we also want to make sure that as Karen said, we're getting a broad statewide representation and we're covering all disabilities within the council and we are doing a fairly good job of that. It's just getting the actual nominations approved and things like that right now. Merle Ferber is asking a question.

MERLE FERBER: As a consumer, who's been involved for almost 25 years, this has been personally discouraging to me to have to wait so long for the appointment. So I haven't been as excited about this as I'd like to be or as committed, and I was, you know, someone who spoke with Bob Barker and he was very aggressive and assertive, and I was looking forward to working with him on this. I'm hesitant to ask anyone else, a consumer, because of just not feeling recognized. Not by you, not by the SILC, but by the, being sworn in is an exciting thing, you know, all of these things are little, what I call little big things that you can't really pay for. It's a piece of paper, but it does mean something.

STEVE HIGGINS: One of the things that I try to relay to folks and certainly I understand your frustration. One of the key things to understand about the SILC and several of the other councils that are out there, but I can only speak on behalf of the SILC, so I will. 90% of the work of the SILC is, as you guys all know, done in the committees. When we come to our quarterly meeting, we're getting the committee reports, hearing some things that are happening. The great thing about our committees is you don't have to be an appointed member by the Governor to serve on the committee of the SILC. If you're a person with a disability that wants to work and do stuff for the SILC and just have the satisfaction of the great things that are happening, you can participate in those committees, and that's where 90% of the work of the SILC gets done, is truly in the committee. So your voice is definitely heard in the committee, because as a member of the committee and

participating, those committee chairs are hearing exactly what you're saying, and that input is going into all of the decisions that we're making. So one of the things that I like to encourage folks and really, even as a development tool, we get more than the five nominees that we need, if we find 15 people, we want to encourage folks to get involved with the SILC and start getting involved with the committees, because what that does is it goes to that famous word called development. Then when it comes time to have somebody appointed to fill a slot, we'll know that we have somebody that's already developed and qualified and ready to fill a slot, versus having to come on and get up-to-speed and do all kinds of things like that. One of the things that, one of our goals is to encourage, even as we get five, we don't stop there. We keep trying to find more folks that are consumers and encourage people to come on to the SILC, you know, you can come to the SILC meetings. You can participate in the committees and do things like that, and then as vacancies open up, then we'll have people appointed and do things like that. We want to have the development piece. We want to have you involved with the committees because that's where the work's done.

NANCY: You're on my blind side.

STEVE HIGGINS: I'm on your blind side.

NANCY: Maybe that's a good thing, I don't know.

(LAUGHTER)

STEVE HIGGINS: Both sides of your blind side!

NANCY: No, no, no, I have a pinhole out of this side. Anyway, thanks, everybody. And I'm one of the people who's waiting for appointments, so --

STEVE HIGGINS: Reappointment.

NANCY: For reappointment so I'm sitting in limbo as well as, you know, as many other people here. So the frustration and actually speaking with Steve, on a weekly and sometimes more basis, and Mike as well, I know the work they've done in trying to get to the Governor's office, and the communication both via phone and via letter, and it's a lot of Steve and Mike's time and we're being met with a stone wall. So I understand your frustration, but know that everybody's working on that.

We need a motion to accept Mike's report.

STEVE HIGGINS: Betty King makes a motion, seconded by Bernard Bonsra.

MIKE KENNEDY: Thanks, guys.

NANCY: All in favor? Opposed? Abstained? Good. Okay. And now, Steve for the SILC consultant's report.

STEVE HIGGINS: As if you guys haven't heard enough from me, right?

PAUL SPOONER: Yep.

STEVE HIGGINS: Thanks, Paul. Just things that are happening in the SILC office. Of course, you heard pieces of this earlier today. Next week is a good chunk of the week dedicated to working on the 704 report on the SILC portion of that, so that as Karen cringes over there, I can get all of the exciting papers over to her, so that she can work on the compilation. If anyone would like to help on that, I'd be glad to accept the help, but what the 704 is, for those of you that don't know, each year annually the centers are asked to fill out a report, the Rehab Services Administration in Washington D.C., and that report just basically gives them an idea, are we doing the tasks that we set out for throughout the course of the year. It's basically a report to the funders, so there's the piece of it that are the numbers. There's, you know, the number pieces, things like that, and I think Karen Bureau is shaking her head, the exciting part called the narrative. Is this your first full narrative, Karen?

KAREN BUREAU: With some assistance, yes.

STEVE HIGGINS: There's some exciting pieces to. Karen Bureau's experiencing the excitement of the 704 from an executive director's position now.

PAUL SPOONER: Wow, really? He's kidding, right?

KAREN BUREAU: No.

PAUL SPOONER: You're not really excited about it?

KAREN BUREAU: Sure.

PAUL SPOONER: Want to do mine?

STEVE HIGGINS: Paul's trying to sell his, as we speak.

PAUL SPOONER: I'll pay you to do mine.

KAREN BUREAU: There's got to be an easier way to do it.

STEVE HIGGINS: The 704 is a piece we all have to do, in some cases as exciting as going to the dentist and having a root canal, but it's something that we need to do. So we're working on that piece.

Other pieces and things that we have coming up in January, from the 23rd to the 29th, myself and Nancy will be traveling to New Orleans, Louisiana, for the SILC Congress.

PAUL SPOONER: Another junket t.

STEVE HIGGINS: Works out well, at the same time around as Mardi Gras. We're staying on the corner of Canal and Burton Street, so that should be fun.

PAUL SPOONER: Look at Nancy. She's really looking forward to that.

STEVE HIGGINS: We're headed to New Orleans to do some work and that will be SILC Congress. One of the things that's interesting at SILC Congress and why I want to talk a little bit about that, RSA you've heard that word several times today. RSA is coming to SILC Congress. RSA's goal, they wanted to come to SILC Congress to address us. We said you could come to SILC Congress but if you want to address us, we don't want you to be there. They didn't particularly like that idea. And we got a letter back that said, oh, what do you mean, and I say we, because I said as part of the executive committee, I'm the secretary for our SILC Congress of the national meeting, and RSA didn't particularly like the idea that we sent them back a letter that said you could come, but not to address us, and so interestingly, I got into a phone conversation with Tom Kelly, and because I'm the secretary of the SILC Congress I had to write the letter and he said what do you mean by that? I said you're perfectly welcome to come to SILC Congress but the SILCs and the folks participating at the SILC Congress would prefer if we could address questions to you, and have you respond to them, because you haven't responded to the SILC community in a couple years, and we really need to do this. His comment to me was, "I'm not sure that will happen but let me see." I got a call back a couple days later, and he's committed, and RSA will be coming. In fact, a bunch of the senior management from RSA is coming to the SILC Congress, so many of the centers, many of the SILCs are submitting questions and we're going to be taking questions right up until two days before that. That meet something actually going to be on Sunday the 25th, I want to say, of January. And during the Congress, and myself and two other folks will be mediating that meeting with RSA, so we're taking the input from all of the SILCs

around the country, and we're going to look in obviously questions that are trends, we want to get those questions answered, and so we'll be mediating that meeting with RSA, and it's hoped that we can see some output, you know, from that. One of the things that RSA seems to be starting to push on is the SILCs, the centers as a whole have the standards and indicators. There's never been a separate set of standards and indicators for the SILC, and this seems to be something that RSA is pushing on, about three to four years ago there were standards and indicators developed. It was before I was coordinator. In fact, Joe Bellil, I think, was under the SILC Congress when there was a huge argument about the standards and indicators.

JOE BELLIL: Oh, yeah. Mary Margaret.

STEVE HIGGINS: Yeah, he can vouch for it entirely. But this is something that's really, really, really being pushed and basically, what RSA is saying, you know, they're going to develop their own, so we better get off our butt and give them some ideas of what we want. So that whole standards and indicators piece is going to come back up in Washington. Nancy will receive some of that in advance, and so she'll know kind of an idea of what those pieces are. So those things are going to happen. There's going to be a lot of business. It's about a six-day meeting for -- six days for me, four days for participants from the SILC. Nancy is going as our SILC representative, I as the SILC coordinator, and so the event should be pretty interesting. The other thing that's happening is at the same time, I know some of you know NOD just met in Boston. NOD is also going to be meeting in New Orleans the same weekend, so I was asked by Mike Collins the other day, when he was up in Boston, if I would come over to present at the NOD meeting, so I'll probably be presenting at the NOD meeting on behalf of all of the SILCs, because they went to the SILCs around the country to hear, too. So I'll probably be presenting at the meeting at the same time down in New Orleans. I actually might end up coming back a day later or something like that. But we're working on that.

We have, this is an informal invitation that I'm going to let folks know about, but there were red fliers on the table back there. We're housed inside of Metro West Center for Independent Living and sometimes I don't say thank you enough.

PAUL SPOONER: Warehoused. Way in the back.

STEVE HIGGINS: In the meat section of the east wing. But Metro West is having their open house this Friday, and they consider the SILC part of them. So of course we get to -- well some days they consider us part of them, it depends, you know. (Laughs) Depends on who we ask. There's an open host at Metro West this Friday from 1:00 to 4:00 in the afternoon and certainly because the SILC is housed there, if anyone would like to stop by, you're certainly more than welcome to. You guys are welcome to stop by and pop in and see the SILC office at any time or if you have questions to come in but this is specifically, we have a little open house for the day. It's Friday from 1:00 to 4:00 so if anybody would like to pop by. It's not an official SILC event so that simply means, we're not able to provide for transportation reimbursement, things like that, but it's an event that if you're there, if you're in the area, we'd love to have you come in.

Other things that are starting to hit the target, July of 2007, is when the next NCIL conference is.

PAUL SPOONER: 2008.

STEVE HIGGINS: Yeah, I'm still 2007 mode here, sorry. I missed it in July of 2007, no. In July of 2008 will be the NCIL conference in Washington D.C. The SILC generally participants in that. The executive committee will be talking about that between now and our next quarterly meeting and making some decisions as far as that goes. But one of the things that we need to look at is the NCIL conference which we generally participate in, is also falling at the same time as the anniversary of ADA Day. Generally we do ADA Day here in Massachusetts right on July 26th, which is the anniversary. We would have shifted that this year to begin with, because July 26 falls on a weekend so we probably would have on the Friday before which would have been the 25th or 24th, I'm not positive. And done the ADA Day. But that's the week that NCIL is happening down in D.C. so our thought at this point in time is that we're going to move the ADA Day celebration up a week earlier this year and we'll probably be doing it the middle week in July. So that we can get full participation from SILC members and still be able to do that event out at Dunn Pond. We can't apply and work on that date until after the first of the year because of some new

changes at the Department of conservation and recreation, and it's a whole process to go through to get the dates set up, so we don't have the date for ADA Day yet, but we're expecting that it will be closer to the middle of July this year, as opposed to the end of July, where we've run it the past few years. So that's really the only issue that we have to change there. Paul, of course, mentioned that we have the event coming up on April 22nd. We can officially say that now, because we just, we officially reserved the date with the State House this past Wednesday. I met with the Senator that is sponsoring it and got his signature and met with the bureau of buildings on the State House to get all of that squared away so that event at the State House will be April 22nd. Our goal this year, quite frankly, Paul said T I'm going to put it out there, we need to have at least 200 people at the State House, and that's not hard to do. If we asked each center to bring at least ten people, we partner with the Rehab Council, we partner with other folks that are out there, it's not a hard thing to have at least 200 people at the State House for that event. So our goal is to have at least 200 there for that event on April 22nd, and then before that prior to that, again we're working, we've already sent out a letter to each of the independent living centers and we're working to coordinate to have those local events before that. So that's everything that I have right now, unless anyone has any questions. Everybody's running away here.

JOE BELLIL: Steve, can you send out a "save the date" on the 22nd?

STEVE HIGGINS: Joe asked if I can send a "save the date" out on the April 22nd event. We can do that. Hollis you had a question?

Hollis: I may have been out of the room at the time the 22nd was announced. You can tell me the context?

STEVE HIGGINS: The 22nd will be our SILC educational day at the State House. The quote is education. We're not allowed to do advocacy with federal dollars. We can do education though so it's our SILC education day at the State House. Generally the SILC does two events a year at the State House, one major event and then local education events throughout the state. Sponsored by our advocacy committee. So it's a day where we get together and really celebrate at the State House, but also advocate, and you know, meet in the hallways so our goal as I said will be to have at least 200

people show up on that day so that we can do those things. Any other questions? None. You can have the mic back, Nancy.

NANCY: All righty. Okay, thanks, Steve. Good job. Do I hear a motion to accept Steve's report?

KAREN BUREAU: Motion.

JUDI RODGER: Second.

NANCY: Karen has a lot of seconds.

STEVE HIGGINS: Judi won the race.

NANCY: All in favor? Opposed? Abstained? Good. And now we have other. Is there any other?

EILEEN BREWSTER: I have other.

STEVE HIGGINS: Eileen Brewster.

NANCY: Eileen has an other.

PAUL SPOONER: Oh.

EILEEN BREWSTER: Okay, Eileen Brewster. All right, I have another petition that I'd like to pass around and I'm collecting signatures of a project called This Way Everyone Wins as it has to do with the City of Boston being fined \$500 a day for the brick sidewalks on Huntington Avenue. We're now owed over \$300,000 and we're asking the City of Boston to use that money to remove the bricks and put back concrete. If anybody's interested, I would appreciate their signature.

STEVE HIGGINS: Do they have to be a Boston resident?

EILEEN BREWSTER: No, just live in Mass. Mass. resident.

NANCY: Thanks.

STEVE HIGGINS: Karen Langley.

KAREN LANGLEY: Hello, I'm putting on my Massachusetts rehab Commission AT hat. How many people have seen the assistive technology survey? How many people filled out your survey? Oh, good. If you haven't and you want to fill occupant the survey or if you want to pass it on to somebody who will fill out the survey or put it on your website, you can just get it off of MRC's website which is www.mass.gov/mrc and on the right-hand side there will be a link to the survey. It's an online survey so you can do it online and it gets collected online. If you want a hard copy or alternate format or different language, you could call our office and we have it translated into six languages. We would appreciate your help getting that distributed. And also, just to let you

know, probably within the next two to three weeks, we'll be putting up our new AT website, in which we're giving lots of information about AT events, and resources, and where to find things, and how to pay for them, and it's still in development but we're going to get up our first version of it, and third thing, for those of you who are not aware, Independence Associates is under new management and also in process of redevelopment and looking for board members so if anybody knows of anybody with a disability or interest in the area, please get in touch with their office and we'll forward their nomination forms to you.

NANCY: Thanks, Karen. Any other other?

SYBIL FELDMAN: Yes.

NANCY: Sybil?

SYBIL FELDMAN: Karen, could you write it down?

KAREN LANGLEY: The website?

SYBIL FELDMAN: Yes. I have some old business, please.

STEVE HIGGINS: I didn't understand, sorry.

Nancy: Old business?

JIM TIERNEY: What about the old business?

KAREN LANGLEY: She's got to leave.

STEVE HIGGINS: We're done with other?

NANCY: Is anybody else got anything else before we adjourn?

STEVE HIGGINS: Nothing old, nothing new.

JOE BELLIL: Motion to adjourn.

NANCY: Oh, gee, Joe. Quick, raise your second.

SYBIL FELDMAN: Okay.

STEVE HIGGINS: Eileen.

NANCY: All in favor? Opposed? Abstained? Happy holidays, everybody!