

**Statewide Independent Living Council  
Thursday, June 24th, 2010**

**Attendees:**

**Members:**

**Joe Bellil, Nancy Trzcinski, Bonnie Jones, Merle Ferber, Brian Smith, Anita Amy Ashdon  
Jackie Higgins, Paul Mushrush, Judi Rodger, Betty King, Lisa Franklin, Janet Shaw, Mike Kennedy,  
Coreen Brinckerhoff, Richard Leland, Sharon Harrison, Karen Bureau, Becca Gutman, Bernard Bonsra**

**Nominees: Mary Dennesen**

**Guest: John Miller, Mary Margaret Moore, Steve Higgins, Paul Spooner, Bill Allan, Commissioner Carr,  
Betty Maher**

**Meeting opened at 10:48 by Chairperson Karen Bureau**

**Minutes for the March 18, 2010 Meeting were presented.**

Motion to approve with correction that Lisa Franklin did not attend by Merle Ferber, Second by Judi Rodger. Motion carried

**Chairpersons Report, Karen Bureau**

The SILC Coordinator, SPIL Committee, and I want to thank folks for their testimony presented on the State Plan for Independent Living for FFY 2011-2013. We would also like to thank all the folks that worked on the committee listening to testimony and taking that information and including it as part of our SPIL draft. It has been a pretty long process, as Steve can attest to, the number of pages that we had, and all the great input that we have received. The bulk of my time as Chair this spring has been spent on working on those committees and participating in the process.

Another thing that we have been working on includes training for new members & existing appointees and nominees of the SILC planned for this fall, who we were hoping we would have more information on coming up in the next few months on this event.

**Treasurers Report, Brian Smith**

The SILC Finance Committee has been meeting regularly on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 2 p.m. via teleconference call. Highlights include the following:

During the second quarter, which began in January, the SILC spent \$37,706.02. We are projecting that the SILC will spend \$48,507.83 by the third quarter which ends on June 30th, 2010.

Because the SILC did not actually receive the ARRA funds until late in the second quarter, some of the ARRA expenses projected for the second quarter will actually appear in the third quarter when the bills were encumbered. Included in that spending will be the remainder of the cost of developing the 2011-2013 State Plan for Independent Living, and updates to the SILC's office technology. All of the ARRA funds that the SILC received must be encumbered by June 30th, 2010. Coming into today's meeting, a little over \$2,100 remained, but that does not include today's meeting costs. I.e., costs for the SPIL, transportation for members, and other SPIL related activities.

Funding for the state IL Conference was requested in mid-February. It is uncertain whether we will receive the requested funds. The Executive Committee will be making a decision in July as to whether or not to cancel this year's conference, or should limited funding be available in our budget, modify our uses of those two days. This could include doing the SILC only, member and all board development training during this time.

The SILC's fiscal intermediary met with MRC about what has been an especially complicated this past year with determining the role of the funds. ARRA funds. Part B funds. All coming at different times, and in some case carrying new requirements for reporting that we have not had to deal with in the past.

Due to the complexity of this year's contracts, the committee is requesting an update from MRC as to how monies are being applied to ensure that all contract dollars are spent out in a timely manner.

Motion to accept Treasurers report as presented by Merle Ferber, Second by Nancy Trzcinski, Motion carried.

### **Nominations & Development Committee Report, Mike Kennedy**

There have been a lot of appointments and re-appointment activities taking place since Madeline Grant has assumed the lead at the Office on Gubernatorial Appointments. As of June 2010 there are 28 appointed members and 7 ex-officio members for a total of 35. We currently have 8 nominees in process, and three Independent Living Centers with open seats. This means that the Mass. SILC could be fully appointed this year for the first time ever and we could possibly have nominees without seats available if people get their paperwork in.

The following SILC members have been appointed since our last quarterly meeting: Anita Amy Ashdon, Joe Bellil, Bernard Bonsra, Karen Bureau, Leo Canuel, Becca Gutman, Mike Kennedy, Betty King, Sharon Liberty, and Nancy Trzcinski.

The following new appointments since our last quarterly meeting: Elizabeth Lisa Franklin, Nanette Goodwin, Bonnie Jones, and Janet Shaw. Welcome aboard new appointees, and re-appointees.

And unfortunately we have some potential withdrawals from our last meeting. Sharon Liberty has not been able to attend meetings due to health related reasons. Shawn McDuff is no longer seeking re-appointment. The Independent Living Center of North Shore and Cape Ann will come up with a replacement staff member. And James Tierney is no longer seeking re-appointment; BCIL will come up with a replacement staff member.

We have one new nominee since our last quarterly meeting. Mary Dennesen who we just met earlier today. Welcome, Mary.

We truly do have a goal of having the SILC fully appointed for the first time in the existence of the SILC. We are going back to since the Executive Order when Governor Weld created it. It has never been fully appointed. The Governor's Office is on board with that and working with us. So if you have lost paperwork, or need paperwork, please let us know.

Mike reported that if you have received your letter from the Governor, there are also instructions in there that you need to take the ethics test, you have to go out and do that, and then you also have to be sworn in. If you can please send a copy of your oath and exam paper to the SILC office for your file. The reason we do that is because that's what saved us in the past. In all honesty we have had the Governor's Office call and say "this person never got sworn in." And we can take out a piece of paper from the file and say "as a matter of fact, they were sworn in, here's the date, let me fax it over to you so that you have it." Madeline's been doing a great job of organizing all of our files in the Governor's Office. So we are hoping that doesn't happen in the future.

Motion to accept Nominations & Development report as presented by Bonnie Jones, Second by Betty King, Motion carried.

### **Public Education & Information Committee, Paul Spooner**

Motion to change the committee name from the Public Education & Information Committee to the Public Information & Education Committee by Brian Smith, Second by Bonnie Jones, Motion Carried

The main thing to report on is the state budget has been sent out of Conference Committee today. It should be voted on in the House and Senate, and the goal is to get it to the Governor tonight.

Technically he has ten days to sign it completely, sign parts of it, veto sections, or send it back. And then both the House and Senate have to leave it or attempt to override those vetoes and get that all done by July 31st.

This budget does include the cuts of what we have all been trying to get from the Feds, which is the Federal match assistance money, better known as FMAP money, which is primarily Medicaid money, but that's too simple of a description of it. It is approximately \$700 million bucks that the first House budget and the Senate version were counting on, including the Governor's budget was counting on.

It appears that for the most part that the three disability commissions haven't been hit any harder than have already been hit. And in fact, the \$80,000 is in there for the Housing Registry. This new plan didn't give money back into the increased loss for the HomeCare on the MRC side. And then there are a few other issues that the MRC and Mass. Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, also. And I think there is some money lost for Mass. Office on Disability, too.

Motion to accept PIE Committee report as presented by Merle Ferber, Second by Mike Kennedy, Motion carried.

**Meeting was suspended for lunch by Karen Bureau Chairperson at 12:20 PM**

**Meeting Resumed by Karen Bureau Chairperson at 12:50PM**

**State Plan for Independent Living Committee Report, Mary Margaret Moore**

The SPIL State Plan for Independent Living has been meeting, as you all know, rigorously, and consistently, with a primary focus since last summer on the new State Plan for 2011 to 2013. And I really want to acknowledge all the work that the committee has done on this. This has been a monumental task for a couple of reasons.

I would like to acknowledge Joe Tringali, Jim Tierney, Paul Spooner, Wini McGraw, Coreen Brinckerhoff, Karen Bureau, Lisa Pita, Nancy Trzcinski, Joe Bellil, as well as Cindy Wentz, Ann Shor from the Mass. Rehabilitation Commission, and Lynn Paulson, Richard Leland, and Patricia Hart from the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, and Commissioner Carr and Commissioner LaBreck. I'd like to thank all the committee members for their hard work in developing this plan which will set the stage for Independent Living Services and the network of centers from October 1st, 2011 through September 30th, 2013. And then there is a special kudos to Steve Higgins, for pulling all the information together, getting it out to folks; both on the committee and public, getting the hearings, getting everything set up for all the hearings, getting all the outcomes from the hearings up on the web page, and circulated, from the CART support that we have had at the hearings, and keeping the information flowing for all the meetings, and getting the draft documents out for review, and going out to Nevada with me to learn how to deal with this new format.

Every member of the Statewide Independent Living Council, DSU's, & interested parties who participated and gave input, have gotten a copy of this draft that we are asking for approval on today. We also have additional paper copies today. Today's the time for the Council to approve this, as well as for both with the Council's approval, acceptance and approval of this, Commissioner Carr and Commissioner LaBreck will be accepting this plan so that we can get this sent out to the Department of Education Rehab Services Administration, before July 1, so that they can then process it and see what we have done right, and hopefully not too much we need to fix so that it can go into effect at midnight on September 30th.

We think this plan is a fair reflection of the input from everybody. And is a jointly acceptable plan by both members of the committee and Mass. Rehab Commission and Mass. Commission for the Blind and all the work that we have done. To lay forth some key priorities. We believe for the committee what we have really put forth is laying out that we are going to be working collaboratively, cooperatively, rigorously, and diligently to make sure that we are advocating for Independent Living Services and a strong network of centers between 2011 and 2013, with a very defined relationship with the services for

the Mass. Commission for the Blind, with the older and Independent Living blind program, and the Mass. Rehabilitation Commission, and the Independent Living, and VR department, and as well as our senior partners because there is a piece in here about the role of the SILC, as well as the centers and the network of services in centers through the Aging and Disability Resource Consortium. This will give us a stronger voice for all of us to collaboratively keep what we believe, which is our values for Independent Living, our autonomy, self-determination, our freedom, economic sustenance and independence, and make sure that the services are there to support us and do that. That's global, there are many specifics. So I would entertain at this point that this document become the plan.

COMMISSIONER CARR commented; Well, first of all, I want to say this is an impressive document that Reflects a lot of hard work.”

COMMISSIONER LABRECK commented: “I want to thank everyone. This is a very difficult subject given the economic times we are in. So I just want to thank everybody involved for their hard work. I think that this plan looks pretty comprehensive”.

Motion to accept the State plan for Independent Living by Nancy Trzcinski, Second by Judi Roger, Motions carried.

The meeting was suspended briefly for a signing ceremony where Commissioner Charles Carr, Commissioner Janet LaBreck, and SILC Chairperson Karen Bureau signed the official documentation accepting the SPIL for 2011 – 2013.

The meeting reconvened with the remainder of the SPIL Committee report by Mary Margaret Moore,

I would just like to add one more thing to my report. Nancy Trzcinski has agreed to take over as Co Chair with me on the SPIL committee over the next three years. I would like to respectfully ask the Chair of the SILC if they would approve the appointment of Nancy with me as Co Chair of the State Plan for Independent Living Committee.

Motion to accept the State Plan for Independent Living Committee report as presented Betty J. King, Second by Merle Ferber, Motion carried.

### **SILC Coordinator's Report, Steve Higgins**

First I want to thank everybody on the committees for the work that has been happening. And another person that I want to be on record for thanking, even though she is not here, is Madeline in the Governor's Office. She has been doing an amazing amount of work with us, and really working collaboratively with us because unfortunately what happens is when you have changes from administration to administration, sometimes those things like committees don't necessarily remain as the highest priority. And she has made a real concerted effort to work with us to be sure that we are all on the same page. And so we can truly say that the files in the Governor's Office match the files in the SILC office, which is a really great thing.

Steve reported that he would be heading to Washington DC in July along with Nancy Trzcinski as the representative of the Massachusetts SILC at the National Council on Independent Living Conference. In full disclosure he also mentioned that his wife Andrea would be attending the conference as a volunteer

representing MASILC. All of Andrea's expenses to attend NCIL have been paid by Steve & Andrea personally.

Steve reported that the National SILC Congress Committee met yesterday afternoon. The focus for the next SILC Congress, which will be happening January 8th through 11th in Atlanta, is going to be "all right, you've written your SPIL, now what do you do with it?" It will be looking on this whole piece of monitoring and evaluating the State Plan for Independent Living. And collaborating and working together with DSUs.

Steve reported on the progress of the ADA Anniversary event that is going to be taking place in Boston July 26. We have had a huge representation of the Disability Community in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts at the table in planning this event, and are expecting to have a huge representation of the Disability Community in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts at the event itself. Somewhere between 1200 to 1500 people are expected to attend.

Finally, Steve reported that there is going to be a conference later this year that is going to be a first of its kind conference in our state. And that's going to be a conference where Mass. Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Mass. Commission for the Blind, Mass. Rehab Commission, and the SILC are all going to be working together. The dates haven't been set for that yet. The logistic stages are just starting to happen on that piece yet, you know, as it stands right now.

Motion to accept SILC Coordinators Report as presented, Merle Ferber, Second Amy Ashdon, Motion carried.

### **Old Business**

Karen Bureau reported we do have one thing, during the last SILC meeting Joe Bellil had asked if there was anyone that was interested in serving as the SILC's representative on the State Rehab Council, and of course he had mentioned that earlier today, but it was on the table and needs to be mentioned under old business. We would like to hear from you because Karen would be able to appoint you as our rep. What that is going to require is the State Rehab Council meets quarterly. And of course they have committees that do work. And it would also require that you would sit as a member of the SILC, this SILC's Executive Committee because what you would be doing is you would be reporting back what is happening at the State Rehab Council. So your requirements would be on a monthly basis the Executive Committee meets for about an hour, to a hour-and-a-half each month. And that's via conference call.

### **New Business**

None

### **Announcements**

Jackie Higgins from the Massachusetts office on Disability presented several pieces of legislation working through the house and asked SICL members to consider their support.

Motion to adjourn by Betty King, Motion carried

**Meeting closed at 3:17 PM**

