Maine Statewide Independent Living Council

August 2022

Minutes

Members Present: Darcy Gentle (Chair), Wabanaki Vocational Rehabilitation Program Director; Trish Thorsen (Member-at-Large), Ombudsmen Program Manager, Long-Term Care Ombudsmen Program (LTCOP); Jessica Cyr (PWD), Disability Advocate, Moving Maine Network; Lee Glynn (PWD), Disability Advocate, Acquired Brain Injury Advisory Council (ABIAC); Diane Frigon, Regional Director; Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI); Stephanie Desrochers, Program Manager, Benefits Counseling Services - Maine Medical Center (BCS-MMC).

Members Absent: Tom Newman, Executive Director, Alpha One (CIL); Samantha Fenderson, Assistant Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR).

Public Present: Julia Endicott, Disability Advocate, Disability Rights Maine (DRME); Stephanie Crystal (PWD), Disability Advocate; Karen Mason, Associate Director, Office on Aging and Disability Services (OADS); Brendan Williams (PWD), Disability Advocate; Nicholas Alexander (PWD), Disability Advocate; Andrew Smith; Janice Cohen.

Staff: Cheryl Peabody, Executive Director (PWD).

Janice Cohen has agreed to be Maine SILC’s strategic planning facilitator at the annual training on September 28th. Janice asked questions to better understand what would be beneficial to council members. Members did speak on what they are hoping to accomplish with a strategic planning session. If anyone has questions or suggestions, please let Cheryl know and she will reach out to Janice.

Acceptance of Minutes:

The June minutes were accepted as distributed.

Julia Endicott was attending in Keenan Weischedel’s absence and offered some updates. Julia spoke on LD924 which is: “Resolve to Establish a Task Force to Study the Coordination Services and Expansion of Educational Programs for Young Adults with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities to Identify Barriers for Full Social Integration”. The task force has drafted a recommendation report that spoke in general terms only. More information to come.

Julia reported there is a new van in New Hampshire as an accessible vans to be used for driver evaluations for those who are mobility impaired. Programs may be able to rent this van on an as needed basis.

Financial Reports:

The FY2022 to date budget spreadsheet was shared with members. There were no questions.

The council members were not able to review the proposed budget for FY2023 so it was shared on the screen. There were several questions regarding various line items, which included: SILC conferences; public forums, and accommodations. Stephanie D will work with Cheryl to find the budget for the year that the last State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) was done. Cheryl will make the necessary adjustments to these line items. Cheryl will submit the proposed budget to the Designated State Entity (DSE) after it is voted on by council members.

Activity Table:

Everyone was reminded to fill out the activity table on the OneDrive. This table is required in the end of fiscal year report that Cheryl must submit to the Administration on Community Living (ACL).

Updates:

The Membership Committee has not met. Cheryl reported that she represented Maine SILC at the Disability Pride Month fair that Disability Rights Maine hosted in July. She reported that it was great to network and meet partners. Cheryl had made 25 packets to hand out and 8 were taken. She also had business cards for those who were interested. Stephanie C reported that she attended the Consumer Council Systems of Maine conference in July and did speak to several people about Maine SILC.

Designated State Entity Exploration Committee has not met. Cheryl said it didn’t look like the Office on Aging and Disability Services (OADS) has the resources to seriously consider being the DSE. Karen Mason reported that OADS is continuing to look at possible resources.

Moving Maine Network update was given by Jessica. Jessica reported that the Moving Maine Network provides a lot of resources. One thing she has learned is there are a lot of grants available. She wondered in Maine SILC could tap into those grants and possibly buy an accessible van for drive evaluations for those who are mobility impaired. Cheryl said she attends a lot of SILC peer meetings and other SILC’s have written grant requests. There is money out there. Stephanie D reported that in earlier years Maine SILC was gearing up to have a grant writer on staff so Maine SILC could expand its work.

Acquired Brain Injury Advisory Council (ABIAC) has been doing a lot of work. Lee reported that there is a new support group starting up in Augusta on August 25th. There will be a conference on brain injuries in Portland on September 27th. Early registration is open through Friday. Lee did send out a flier about this which was shared with the council. Lee also reported that Maine has a privately funded Trust Fund for those in Maine who are brain injury survivors. Grants will be given for acute needs like transportation or accessible technology. They are hoping to start giving grants on January 1, 2023.

Emails:

Cheryl gets a lot of emails but usually just passes on those that are related to Maine SILC’s SPIL goals. She wondered it members would like to see all the emails. It was decided that Cheryl will do a weekly report on the emails she gets and send one email out per week with all the information unless it is time sensitive.

Biographies:

Cheryl asked that everyone send her a brief bio about themselves discussing skill sets, work experience or experience working in their communities. This information can be used in the future when setting up committees or on special tasks. Please get your bio to Cheryl by September 16th.

Annual Training:

The morning portion of the annual training on September 28th will be the strategic planning session facilitated by Janice Cohen. It is a hybrid conference. People wishing to meet in person will go to the DOL location in Augusta. There is new technology available so those who wish to join virtually can do so. CART services will be provided. In the building is Britt’s Café where attendees can get lunch. Cheryl will send out the link to the café’s menu so she can place the orders beforehand and pay for them. This will save time. Cheryl will work with the café owner to see if he can bring the food to the conference room. Diane will check COVID protocol prior to the meeting so everyone is informed. Maine SILC will provide clear masks to attendees.

Announcements:

Trish announced that she has accepted a new job. Today’s meeting will be her last SILC meeting.

Adjournment: 12:01pm.