Maine Statewide Independent Living Council

Minutes

June 23, 2021

Members Present: Cheryl Peabody (Chair), Person with a Disability; Darcy Gentle (Vice Chair), Program Director 121 Vocational Rehabilitation Program; Trish Thorsen (Member-at-Large), Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP); Diane Frigon, Regional Director, Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI); Samantha Fenderson, Assistant Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR); Lee Glynn, Person with a Disability; Jessica Cyr, Person with a Disability.

Members of the Public Present: Julia Endicott, Disability Rights Maine; Julie Hovey, Independent Living Specialist, Alpha One; Karen Mason, Associate Director, Office on Aging and Disability Services (OADS); Samantha Stone, Summer Intern, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS).

Members Absent: Tom Newman, Executive Director, Alpha One; Stephanie Desrochers, Program Manager, Benefits Counseling Services – Maine Medical Center (BCS-MMC).

Acceptance of Minutes: May 2021 minutes were accepted via email due to the need to get Maine SILC’s former Executive Director off the bank account and to add Stephanie as an interim signer until the new Executive Director is in place.

Financial Update: Jessica reported that Pat Elwell has not been contacted regarding taking on more fiscal responsibilities. This will be done as soon as the new Executive Director is in place.

Executive Director Job Opening: Samantha F reported that the first posting of the job opening did not result in a viable candidate. The job opening is being posted again.

Committee Updates:

The Membership Committee’s PowerPoint is complete. The group discussed several options moving forward. Maine SILC could put out a two-minute introduction to Councils and organizations Council members serve on in the hopes that Maine SILC could then schedule a more in depth presentation to these Councils and organizations. Samantha F reported that DVR is discussing doing a quarterly email blast that would provide information about DVR events. It is possible DVR could include information about Maine SILC. Julie reported that Alpha One does a staff meeting every Monday so she would be happy to work with Maine SILC to do a SILC presentation at a meeting. It was suggested that SILC members do outreach to individuals they may know to recruit them to serve on the SILC. Jessica reported that she found out about Maine SILC through her Alpha One Independent Living Specialist. Jessica reminded everyone that the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), requires all SILCs to have 51% of Council members be individuals with disabilities.

The Designated State Entity (DSE) Committee has not met again but Karen did send a reminder to the DSE Committee Chair, Tom Newman.

National Couincil on Independent Living (NCIL) Conference: Cheryl reported the NCIL conference is being held July 19th through July 30th. Maine SILC members were encouraged to go to the NCIL site and click on the registration link to get to the agenda to determine if they would like to attend any of the sessions. Cheryl asked that individuals contact her by COB on June 28th if they wish to attend so Maine SILC can get the Early Bird registration rate.

Annual Training: The annual training will be held September 22nd. Samantha F suggested having transportation as a topic. She suggested Maine SILC contact SILCs from states like Maine in terms of its rural nature to find out what other states are doing regarding transportation work. Some suggested states were New Hampshire, Vermont, Montana, and Washington. Julia suggested that Maine SILC contact the University of Montana’s Rural Institute. Jessica suggested contacting the Moving Maine Network. The Council discussed having presentations on what Maine is doing and what other states are doing. Another topic that was suggested for SILC’s annual training is what is the purpose and process of completing a State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). The SPIL is the guiding document for what the SILC works on over the three-year period of the SPIL so understanding the SPIL’s purpose and process would help Council members understand their roles better. Diane suggested a topic of understanding how the SILC and both State Rehabilitation Councils (SRC) and the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council can work together. Maine SILC can invite individuals from these councils to be a part of a panel or join the SILC to report on their goals and activities. Maine SILC is tasked to work collaboratively with both SRCs and other partners who are part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

General Updates/Announcements: The Council discussed the petition to support LD1373 An Act to Keep All Maine Students Safe by Restricting the Use of Seclusion and Restraints in Schools. It was decided that this is out of Maine SILC’s purview.

The Council discussed the email that was received from the Administration of Community Living (ACL) regarding the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) looking for comments on the Text-to-988 project which is a project to assess individuals with disabilities barriers to be able to contact to the Suicide Prevention Lifeline in an emergency. It was decided that this is out of Maine SILC’s purview.

Samantha Stone reported that she is a summer intern at BRS. The project she is working on is to get the word out about DVR programs through social media. This could include information about Maine SILC.

Samantha F reported that DVR is now providing new counselor training. They could highlight other resources like Maine SILC.

Diane reported that DBVI is working with the Iris Network to hire a part-time job coach for their summer work experiences.

Julia report DRM is hiring for a paralegal position. It is a entry level position.

The next Maine SILC meeting is August 25th.

Adjournment: 11:30am