Maine Statewide Independent Living Council

(Maine SILC)

Minutes

March 2021

Members Present: Cheryl Peabody (Chair), Person with a Disability; Darcy Gentle (Vice Chair), 121 VR Program Director; Trish Thorsen, (Member-At-Lfarge), Long Term Care Ombudsmen Program (LTCOP); Tom Newman, Executive Director of Maine’s Center on Independent Living (CIL), Alpha One; Samantha Fenderson, Assistant Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR); Diane Frigon, Regional Director, Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI); Stephanie Desrocher, Program Coordinator, Benefit Counseling Services Maine Medical Center; Jessica Cyr, Person with a Disability. Staff: Beth Mogan, Maine SILC Executive Director.

Members Excused Absence: Lee Glynn.

Members of Public Present: Julia Endicott, Client Assistant Program (CAP), Disability Rights Maine (DRM); Julie Hovey, Alpha One.

Acceptance of Minutes: The January minutes were accepted as distributed. The February minutes were accepted as distributed.

Financial Report: Discussion was regarding the invoices that were submitted in January for October 2020 – December 2020. Maine SILC has not received reimbursement for those expenses. Eric Dibner has not responded to emails. Libby Stone-Sterling was notified of this oversight March 16th. Sam will follow up on this.

Committee Updates:

Membership Committee: Jessica and Diane, Committee Co-Chairs, have worked on the PowerPoint to be used for education and recruitment. Stephanie will see if she can post the current version to the OneDrive so Council members can view and offer suggestions/corrections before finalizing the PowerPoint.

The Council took time to review the list of agencies/organizations Council members belong to or work with so everyone can add their connections. This information will be used as a starting point for presentations done by Maine SILC.

Designated State Entity (DSE) Exploratory Committee: Tom reported an initial meeting was held with SILC, Alpha One, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and Office on Aging and Disability Services (OADS) representatives present. Karen Fraser (BRS) sent out some documents for review by members of the Committee. A follow up meeting was not scheduled due to the work OADS and Alpha One is involved with regarding COVID vaccinations. Next steps: Review documents and schedule the next meeting.

Unrelated to the DSE Committee, Tom shared that Alpha One is using CARES Act funds to buy Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for clients. This includes face masks and hand sanitizer. Alpha One is preparing to send 550 kits out very soon.

Activity Table: An effort is underway to get the Activity Tables set up on the OneDrive so Council members can start completing the tables. It was decided at the last meeting that a table will be set up for each month of the fiscal year.

Program Performance Report (PPR): Still no word from the Administration of Community Living (ACL) on how or when to submit PPRs for FY2020.

General Announcements: Jessica shared a little from the transportation group she is a part of – Moving Maine Network. Recently the Maine Legislature looked at a bill that would expand MaineCare transportation for more than just medical appointments. It could also cover grocery shopping, social events, etc. This bill was LD17. This bill was tabled by the Legislature.

Julia shared that the bus route, specifically the peninsula route, in Portland has some proposed changes. If implemented, the bus stops may be moved. This will pose a hardship for those in certain living areas (for example: senior living facilities).

The search for our Executive Director’s successor was discussed. Trish volunteered to sit on the Hiring Committee. Cheryl will reach out to Tom, the Center for Independent Living (CIL) director, to see if he would be available to sit on this committee. It was decided that the committee will start work next week by reviewing the ED job description. Before sending it to be posted, the draft description will be shared with the Council. The Council agreed that the Hiring Committee will keep the Council posted during the search and hiring process. Some great tips were given on how to make this process flow well. Cheryl asked that everyone submit ideas to her regarding how to best transition from one Executive Director to the other by the end of day on Friday.

As part of the discussion on training, Stephanie brought up the treasurer capacity. Stephanie reminded the Council that Maine SILC made an amendment to its bylaws in order for the Executive Director to fulfill the treasurer’s duties in absence of a Council member being able to fill this roll. Stephanie said the way Maine SILC is operating now is not best practices. Stephanie suggested Maine SILC look into hiring a fiscal agent. This would be in addition to Maine SILC payroll agency. Stephanie said that many banks offer payroll services. She is concerned that potential ED applicants may be overwhelmed with having this responsibility and, as previously stated, it is not the best way to handle treasurer duties. Council members were in agreement with Stephanie. Cheryl will reach out to Stephanie in order to start this process. Hiring a fiscal agent does not involve interviews.

Cheryl reminded members that if they are not otherwise compensated for attending this meeting, they can request an honorarium. This can be done by contacting Beth.

Time was given for public comment. None was offered.

Adjournment: 11:48am.