**Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council**

**Minutes**

**December 14, 2023**

**Call to Order:** The Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council met virtually on December 14, 2023. Robyn Block, Chairman, called meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with a quorum present. Meeting expectations were reviewed.

**Members Present:** Crystal Hellekson, Deborah Gleason, Jennifer Clement, Judy Sanders, KiloMarie Grande, Larry Lura, Dr. Mohamed Mourssi Alfash, Paulo Matheus Carvalho Chaves de Castro, Robyn Block, Rosalie Eisenreich, Stephen Larson, Tom Ree.

**Members Excused:** Joe Dailey, Karen Larson, Jacob Schuller

**Member Absent:** Monique Doward

**Ex Officio Members Present:** Ed Lecher, Anne Paulson

**Guests:** Linda Lingen, Madeleine Hammerlund, Ray McCoy, Michele Severson, Randy Sorenson, Andi Bosch Brad Westerlund, Lindsey Hanson

**Staff:** Jo Erbes

**Approve the Agenda**: Rosalie Eisenreich made a motion to approve the agenda, Judy Sanders seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

**Approve the Minutes – October 12,2023 –** Judy Sanders made a motion to approve the October 12th minutes of the MNSILC meeting as presented. Stephen Larson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by voice vote.

**DEED/VRS Update –** Anne Paulson provided an update on activities at VRS. She noted contracts are being written to distribute the new funding from the legislator, reviewing the employee safe and sick policy and recreating regional leadership meetings. VRS no longer has an order of selection.

**SSB Update** – Ed Lecher provided an update on SSB activities. He noted that SSB is hiring due to staff turnover. SSB is revisiting the statute about the functions of SSB and holding public meetings to review the statute. Ed noted SSB no longer has an order of selection, they are down 2,000 applicants since the Pandemic.

**Presentation: Our Future Starts at Home** – Madeleine Hammerlund provided a presentation about the efforts of Our Future Starts at Home. She noted that MNSILC and the CILs could help spread the word about the need for affordable accessible housing. It was noted that affordable housing is central to the quality of life for people living there. While MNSILC cannot lobby for the amendment, individuals can or MNSILC could advocate for affordable housing. Our Future Starts at Home is asking MNSILC to join the coalition and to educate others why affordable, accessible housing is important. They would also like an opportunity for CILs to connect with Madeleine and for help in spreading the word.

**Update – SRC B** – Judy Sanders reported the SRC – B is working on an annual report and developing a month-by-month work plan.

**Update – SRC G** – Deborah Gleason reported she has been officially appointed to the SRC – G. They have been looking at the VR section of the state plan.

**Report – MN STAR Program** – Tom Reed noted STAR is looking for a representative from a CIL to serve on the council and encouraged MNSILC to reach out to Amy Perron to help. STAR is moving to the Administration Building.

Public Comment – Students at Bemidji State University engaged the university president in looking at accessibility on campus.

Robyn Block extended kudos to her welding instructor for his patience in working with students with disabilities.

Rosalie Eisenreich has attended meetings of the Olmstead Implementation Office. She noted that the Department of Health is working to include people with disabilities in their equity measures. She suggested inviting MDH to a MNSIL meeting.

Judy Sanders recently flew to California and experienced people constantly offering her a wheelchair.

**Review PPR** – The report is not ready for review. I was noted that in creating the section of the report that documents the number of people on the council with disabilities, MNSILC has fallen below the 50% threshold.

**Presentation – ERAF, Ray McCoy,** - Ray McCoy and Lindsey Hanson presented information about the Employer Reasonable Accommodation Fund (ERAF). Ray reached out to the CILs for their assistance in promoting the program. He would appreciate it if MNSILC would promote the program and encourage the CILs to promote it.

**Election of Chair and Secretary** – Robyn Block asked for volunteers for chairman. Deborah Gleason volunteered. There were no other volunteers. Judy Sanders made a motion to elect Deborah Gleason as chairman by acclamation. Stephen Larson seconded the motion. The motion was passed by voice voted.

Robyn Block was thanked for her remarkable efforts as chairman.

The position of Vice-Chair was opened with Deborah’s election as chair. Dr Mohamed Mourssi Alfash nominated Rosalie Eisenreich as Vice-Chair. Rosalie conditionally accepted the nomination noting she needed to check with the Executive Director of SEMCIL. Stephen Larson seconded the nomination. The motion was passed on voice voted.

Election of Secretary – it was noted serving in this position is a good way for people to move up in the organization and to develop leadership skills. Crystal Hellekson volunteered. Judy Sanders nominated Crystal Hellekson to the position as Secretary. Stephen Larson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Report – APRIL Conference –** Dr. Mohamed Mourssi Alfash noted the most important takeaway from the conference was connections with other participants. He attended breakout sessions about guardianship, boosting employment for people with disabilities, team dynamics in independent living to build stronger communities, and a session on outcomes and evaluation and implementing opportunities.

**Committee Reports**

**Advocacy –** Reviewed the challenges with PCA pay increases; sent a letter to the editor of the Patriot regarding service dogs in schools.

**Finance** – created the budget for 2023-2024.

**Outreach** – Deobrah and Mohamed served on a COVID committee with the University of Indiana. Fliers about COVD were created and sent to MNSILC. The fliers were shared with CILs for distribution to the public. Thanked Stephen for reaching out to youth. The Outreach Committee will continue to work on that issue.

**Executive** – Reservations for three people were sent to SILC Congress. A decision on who will attend will be made at the January meeting.

**Farewell to Larry Luray and Robyn Block** – Deborah Gleasonthanked Larry Lura and Robyn Block for the service on MNSILC.

**Adjourn/Next Meeting** – The next meeting is scheduled for January 11th. At 1:30 p.m. a motion was made by Larry Lura and Stephen Larson to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Crystal Hellekson, Secretary

Recorded by Jo Erbes, MNSILC Coordinator

mnsilc/meetings/agenda/2024