
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
New Mexico Statewide Independent Living Council
Quarterly Meeting
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. May 20, 2016
Independent Living Resource Center – Albuquerque, New Mexico

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome/Call to Order

Ken Collins

- Mr. Collins called meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.; requested a roll call and introductions.

II. Introductions - Others in Attendance

- Michael Murphy – Independent Living Resource Center
- Audra Wilson – Choices
- Tim Carver – San Juan Center for Independence
- Marcie Davis – Davis Innovations, Inc.
- Katherine Werner – Davis Innovations, Inc.
- Gil Yildiz – Independent Living Resource
- Anthony Cahill – Center for Development and Disability
- C. William Shuttleworth – Brain & Behavioral Health Institute
- Greg Trapp – Commission for the Blind

III. Roll Call

- Norbert Archibeque – Arrived after roll call at 10:30 a.m.
- Curtis Chong – Arrived after roll call at 10:15 a.m.
- Ken Collins – Present
- David Hinkle – Present
- Sarah Michaud – Absent
- Albert Montoya – Absent
- Larry Rodriguez – Arrived after roll call at 10:40 a.m.

IV. Brain Injury Services in New Mexico

Because of time constraints of the speakers, this item preceded item IV and V

Anthony Cahill (Tony) began by stating that he and William (Bill) Shuttleworth were not there to speak about Brain Injury services in New Mexico, but also that upcoming changes to said services would include the closing of the Brain Injury Resource Center at the end of June. The Information Network will remain intact; however, there will be no more dedicated funding. Tony introduced Bill Shuttleworth and invited him to speak about two initiatives from UNM. Bill introduced and discussed the current development of the UNM Brain & Behavioral Health Center, citing three main areas of focus: 1) Education- involving higher education and community outreach; 2) Research – focusing more on needs of New Mexicans; and 3) Clinical Services – filling current gaps i.e. wait time and satisfaction. Through a community liaison, the center has realized deficiencies in diagnostic capabilities as well as funding. Because of these deficiencies, the New Mexico Brain Network (NMBN) was formed; NMBN consists of 18 different advocacy groups coordinating on legislative activities and merging resources. Ken Collins inquired as to whether or not there were any Independent Living groups involved in the NMBN. Bill said their goal was to include any group, which could be beneficial towards meeting community, needs. Ken remarked that there is little connection between ILC's and medical aspects of brain injury treatment, and that the SILC needs to be included in the NMBN. Bill

agreed and noted that funding for brain injury research would be more obtainable if partnerships could be formed. A partnership between NMBN and SILC is the goal. NMBN is working with a variety of groups focusing on various disorders, and now would like SILC's input and partnership. Ken mentioned that there should be an IL component to brain injury recovery centers to avoid the negative impacts of being discharged and told that your life won't get any better. Bill agreed and said that this idea of a plateau in terms of recovery is now being combatted with transcranial direct current stimulation. Tony mentioned a symposium on Tuesday October 4th during the Southwest Disability Conference to discuss funding, outreach, and introduction of training programs designed to allow non-medical personnel to screen for brain injuries; this isn't a diagnostic measure but rather a way to identify those individuals who could benefit from diagnosis and potential services.

Norbert arrived at 10:30 a.m. Ken thanked Bill and Tony and noted that a Quorum had been reached with Norbert's arrival.

V. Action Item – Approval of May 20th Meeting Agenda

Dave Hinkle moved that the Agenda be approved as written; Curtis Chong seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. Action Item – Approval of Minutes from January 25, 2016 Meeting

Ken Collins introduced the action item and allowed a few minutes for general review. Dave Hinkle moved that the minutes be approved; Curtis Chong seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

VII. SILC Chairperson Report

- Chair has been primarily working on completing the SPIL. Chair thanked Michael, Gil and Sarah for input and group input/discussion. Noted that he would discuss more efforts to improve brain injury outreach later in the meeting.

VIII. SILC Coordinator Report

- Coordinator thanked everyone for feedback and input towards the SPIL.
- Discussed updating group photo and to print more brochures along with other outreach material.
- Another idea that has been suggested was to create a Facebook page for SILCs.

Group Discussion: Information posted to the SILC website seems too extensive so a Facebook page could remedy this. Curtis said that a Facebook page would have to remain a way to reach out to the public and not a way to communicate between members of the SILC. Ken assured Curtis that the Facebook page would be geared towards getting out into the public and not an inter-member communication method. A Facebook page would be a good way to put out event information without cluttering up the website. Dave Hinkle mentioned that even if the Facebook page wasn't entirely agreed upon, it would be beneficial to lay claim to the official Facebook page name. Marcie would be in charge of creating and updating the Facebook page so it would be at no extra cost to the SILC; overall a Facebook page would be more cost effective than constant updates to the website. Ken noted that a motion wasn't necessary and as long as it remained a vessel through which the SILCs communicated with the public.

- Marcie asked for any other input into how to spend budget allocated towards outreach; potentially nametags, pens, etc. Ken agreed that brochures would be a good use of funds, especially with the Southwest Conference on Disability coming up.

- Marcie noted that she met with the Governor’s Commission on Disability regarding their emergency preparedness efforts and highlighted some of the GCD materials in the SILC member packets.

IX. Independent Living Core Services

- Norbert discussed establishing a simpler way to have each center brief the SILC on a quarterly basis. Instead of digging through quarterly reports, they’d like the centers to fill out a brief form prior to the meeting; a more standardized way of reporting activities of the centers would allow for easier community access and less data-mining for CILs. It would be a comprehensive report, which would help CILs to promote center programs when they travel and speak to communities.

Group Discussion: Michael noted that because the services in question are direct services provided by the centers, there is no mandate that they be reported to the SILC. And, they produce an already high number of 51 reports a year, so the excess work would that the additional report would save the CILs would have to be done by the centers. The SILC has no direct oversight of centers so a report of this nature cannot be mandated. Because objectives name centers in the SPIL, this will serve as a report, but in terms of core services there are already those who have oversight so it would just cause extra work for the centers. Tim (San Juan) and Audra (Choices) agreed. Norbert inquired as to how CILs were supposed to sell the various centers if they didn’t have necessary information. Gil mentioned that the reports Norbert was asking for were dry as compared to reports covering community needs and areas of potential growth. Tim suggested that Norbert look into the core reports of the centers which provide general service information; Norbert hasn’t been getting those reports. The SILC Coordinator requested that she be copied on the email containing this report, so she could forward it to Norbert and other SILC members. Greg agreed with Gil, Tim, and Michael and added that the focus of the SILC should be on providing services and not contributing to the workload of centers. Ken concluded that reports should be sent to Marcie, which would help with Norbert’s request as well as completing 704s at the end of the year. Norbert also mentioned that this would help him advocate for funding.

X. State Agency Reports/Updates

a. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

- No one in attendance. SILC members expressed their concerns regarding DVR’s lack of participation and engagement with the SILC. Members discussed various strategies for reaching out to the DVR Liaison and DVR leadership. Greg Trapp provided an update on the current staff changes at DVR and encouraged SILC members to be patient in hopes that a new director would soon be appointed who was knowledgeable and committed to independent living.

b. New Mexico Commission for the Blind

- Greg Trapp began by outlining the recent state budget cuts they’ve suffered from; 5% of their budget (\$97,000) was cut and due to the decline in oil/natural gas revenues and the reduction of state income taxes, the state’s budget shortfall was supplemented in part by \$12,000 scooped up from the Commission’s budget. Greg also predicts additional cuts. The Commission is currently fully staffed with 9 IL teachers.
- They are working to increase the number of hours that their teachers spend working with Vocational Rehabilitation consumers in the area of independent living. This will allow the number of IL teachers to remain unaffected by further (predicted) cuts. The commission takes

its entire Social Security Reimbursement program income and allocates it to support the Independent Living program, they do the same with an additional \$4,000-\$5,000 of state general funds, and all of this is in addition to the baseline of (roughly) \$300,000 of funding that they receive from their part II, part b, and required state (maps?).

- Total, they are putting about \$1.1 million dollars into IL needs for New Mexicans who are blind. They are working to increase program income, which requires successful support of individuals in terms of independent living; program revenue increases when an individual is able to support him/herself and no longer relies on Social Security checks.
- Curtis discussed the recent updates in technology by recapping that over the last year they purchased a bulk load of digital handheld magnifiers to support the Low Vision population.
- He also introduced a handheld device called the Blaze EZ; this device is both a reliable handheld book reader with the ability to read aloud books from the Library for the Blind, as well as a scanner/camera which captures printed text and can then read it aloud; with additional technology this translation can then be converted into brail.
- While there are comparable apps available for the iPhone/iPod Touch, this device has the advantage of having physical buttons, which will be easier to use for the visually impaired.
- Greg reported that they are in the process of hiring Vocational Rehabilitation counselors; due to retirements and personnel transfers they are looking for 5 new counselors. Ken suggested and Marcie agreed that it would be useful to advertise these job openings on the SILC website.
- Greg concluded that the technology for children program will get another \$80,000 in funding to hopefully get assistive technology to New Mexican children who are blind.
- Ken extended the offer of posting job openings on the SILC website to the other members/center directors.

XI. CIL Reports/Updates

a. Choices – Roswell, NM

- Audra spoke about attending the Women’s Symposium with over 350 women in attendance.
- Biggest current project is the Service Dog program; they have their first dog out serving the community.
- June 4th Fun Run (through PBT); they’ve already raised enough money for another service dog, and they hope to raise enough money for one more.

b. New Vistas – Santa Fe NM

- No one in attendance

c. Independent Living Resource Center – Albuquerque, NM

- Michael began by stating that they have put in a bid to get a care coordinator to help with a newly signed contract with Presbyterian; this would help with home renovations and ensuring that each job gets done properly. There has been a gap in communication between contractors and center supervision; this new ability will allow the ILRC to have the ability to ensure care, oversight, and quality assurance.
- HSD said that ILRC supervision sounds like best practice; it looks like there is room for expansion. Gil stated that for the year they (had/have) 48 projects.
- ILRC gets a small fee outside of the \$5,000 membership budget allocated to members, and this allows the ILRC to help supplement if total cost of modification project exceeds \$5,000.
- ILRC hired a new person in (Moriarty) who is developing resources for consumers.

- ILRC had a transfer from (Socorro).
- They have the resources to move their HQ to a storefront in Albuquerque, which requires minimal modifications.

d. San Juan Center for Independence – Farmington, NM

- Tim is serving on a public health committee related to emergency management in San Juan County – collaborating with the Fire Department to talk to United Health to figure out a predetermined process in the event of an emergency – how to get data to the city of Farmington to access the people who need the most substantial help; i.e. people requiring ventilators, etc. Two MCO's agreed to work with them as a test pilot.
- They recently held their round table with the State of New Mexico Centennial Care (Mark Dunn) was there, the four MCO's were there, and Vice Presidents were there to discuss the issues of Centennial Care.
- Another topic of discussion was the roll out of (EBB's) coming June 1st.
- Electronic Time Sheets and how that will work with a consumer direct program like SJCI's; they have certain reservations about the company responsible for the electronic time sheets and their ability to produce the necessary software.
- San Juan Center for Independence held their Youth Transition Day at the end of April; all of the local schools were invited. Program/Day is specifically for HS Juniors and Seniors who will be transitioning out of HS, but most schools bring all students. This program started 8 years ago with six kids, now it has grown to include every HS in the area except for (Shiprock), and they had 167 kids in attendance. This goes into the (fifth) core service of Youth Transition; service providers come and speak directly to students to prepare them for the upcoming transition out of HS. Areas of service span from recreation, MCO's, to the care providers.
- They are in the process of purchasing property that is attached to their current property, and they just received a grant from BHP (Belington)- a mining company; they plan to establish a community orchard and plant 50 fruit trees which will allow consumers to have fresh fruit in the fall as well as have the opportunity to participate in canning classes.
- US Bank decided to no longer partner with New Mexico Seed Loan program, but Accion NM accepted SJCI for a new partnership. Accion NM is a non-profit in Albuquerque which handles small business loans and is expected to offer better services to loan recipients.
- The Access Loan program is going great- has given 5 loans in the last quarter; the value of the loans is roughly \$110,000.
- Ken Collins added that in Gallup his center partnered with the local school district for a Youth Transition Day and had about 480 kids in attendance from the various local HS's, including McKinley County and those located on the reservation. This is their second year attending that event which allows for increased and improved visibility.
- Ken has also been involved in local brain injury awareness groups. Ken has been giving presentations on brain injury awareness at Rohoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services (RMCHCS) Alcohol Treatment Center and NCI Detox Center. He believes many of these individuals' treatment can be improved if they are aware of the consequences of brain injury and by giving useful information about ways to deal with issues that are caused by a brain injury.
- Ken was recently asked by NCI in Gallup to speak to 31 people transitioning out of a 72 hour hold; Ken's guess is that every one of those people had a brain in Gallup and cares for anyone found inebriated.
- Ken's opinion, strengthening with time, is that before Gallup can remedy its alcohol problem they must first address the brain injury problem; it is unrealistic to expect people to just

‘decide to quit’ and it is crucial to understand that brain injuries are more often than not the underlying problems causing the self-medication these people display.

- Ken has written a letter to the editor which was published in Sunday’s paper, and has also received good feedback supporting his claim, of brain injuries preceding dependency in Gallup, from a researcher out of Arizona Mason. She has conducted extensive research on the subject and generally came to the same conclusion that people with sobriety issues initiate these issues because they are ‘brain injured’. Recognizing this implication is the first step towards fixing an issue that truly impacts the community in question.
- Tim added one more point saying that his own PCS program and Michael and Gil’s PCS program will suffer from a 1% budgetary cut starting on July first, which is good because it is less of a cut than it could have been anticipated.

e. The Ability Center – Las Cruces, NM

- No one in attendance

XII. SILC Discussion/Recommendations from CIL Reports

- Ken asked if anyone had any additions/recommendations, etc., for the CIL reports; No one spoke so Ken moved the group’s attention to the SPIL update.

XIII. SPIL Working Group Update

- Ken introduced the item and thanked everyone for their input into the SPIL
- Marcie thanked everyone once again for their input; she has updated the document based on changes mentioned during the working group meetings, and Marcie thanked Curtis for his continued input as he had since made even more updates, but she noted that those have not been added yet as she received them so recently.
- Audra was thanked for how much travel she has had to do in the past week particularly
- Marcie asked the group for input into the SPIL noting that she didn’t want to do an entire run down of the document as all of the present parties had already read and critiqued it.
- Tim thanked those responsible for the SPIL both on his own behalf as well as on behalf of his center, but mentioned that the one issue they found was under Goal Four Objective Two.
 - Goal 4 Objective 2 refers to creating an Independent Living Division; Tim/SJCI’s stipulation as a center was that this would do the opposite of what is typically the goal of the SILC.
 - Their opinion is that this would only serve to create more bureaucracy and use up money which could instead be allocated to programs.
 - Their opinion when it comes to a DSE is that if they can’t go with DVR, the second choice should be the Governor’s Commission on Disability as GCD is a cross disability organization and a disability state agency.
 - Basically this objective will be counterproductive to the objective above where the SILC picks a DSE- as a center they don’t feel that within the next three years, this would be a reachable objective.

Group Discussion: Ken asked Michael to speak about Deborah Armstrong’s (legislator/ILRC) role in the topic raised. Michael said that Debbie is on their board and they were discussing the DSE with their board and came to the conclusion that it is up to the center directors to decide where to have their home. It became clear that the ease at which you can accomplish anything is based on “how high up the food chain” you are. This is why they want to push to be directly under a Department and achieve Division status. Right now they are a program under a division under a department, and the division and department don’t seem to be happy with this program being directly under them. It was essentially Debbie’s suggestion that they try and reach a better

position for program/policy influence and budget. Michael also mentioned that while he knows this objective is optimistic, he believes that an objective shouldn't be something that is easily and quickly accomplished but rather a goal and something hard to reach for. Tim replied and asked why it is a good idea to create more overhead due to the implied hiring costs if a department was created, and Michael said that this was still something that needed to be discussed- Tim said that he still didn't understand creating more divisions and that as a center their view is that this would just create more bureaucracy and use up money which should go elsewhere. (Tim or Ken) asked Greg for his opinion; Greg said that to him the language seemed full of ambiguity and that it was more along the lines of making recommendations instead of commitments, and that he doesn't read/hear that GCD is specifically mentioned. Curtis mentioned that the language could be softened. Greg went on to express his concerns with any entity as to whether or not they have the capacity to manage both state and federal funds. He said that GCD has taken on a lot with (EMTAP) and those federal funds and don't accurately estimate how complicated this will make their job. Greg concluded by saying that he has no problems with the language used because it looks to the future, but the complexity of managing federal funds is going to be more difficult than GCD seems to realize. Guy said that he agreed with Greg and that this language is good because it allows them to shop around. Greg stated that if DVR comes to the table with the right attitude, they could easily be in the running; this would help by simplifying the cost of managing federal funds and lead to potential grant money coming through DVR. He believes that they could be in the running but they would first need to show better commitment.

Gil reiterated that this would basically be a process of shopping around. Tim still doesn't like Objective two and creating a division seems still like a bad idea, but he has no issue with Objective one. Ken replied that to him, this is the SILC making a statement that they don't like what has been going on, and so they are going to create their own division. Tim said that he still doesn't think it can be accomplished in three years, and also that they don't want to see a repeat of what happened with the old SPIL when so many things stated in it weren't accomplished. Gil said that this is so relevant to what is currently going on that having the objective puts it in writing for everyone to see and makes the objective a point of discussion where it previously wasn't. Ken said that having Deborah Armstrong on board as a legislative force was very helpful and that if Division status could be reached, they would all have more power. Curtis answered and said he argues that the language is too specific. Because the word Division is capitalized, this prescribes exactly where it will go instead of achieving the overall goal of simply raising Independent Living in the food chain. He says that this objective locks them in terms of what position they are going for. Specifying that it become a Division is unnecessary and too specific; this also makes it easier to overlook on the part of legislators. Tim argues that they should move it under an activity instead of an objective. Michael argues that the overall objective is to develop a division to support Independent Living legislation. Tim replied that if an already existing state agency can't run the program effectively, a brand new one wouldn't be able to do it and that this plan doesn't make fiscal sense. Michael said that all they have to do to create the division is to develop and support legislation, and if the legislation gets knocked down so be it, and if it goes through they will have a division.

Curtis argued again that the language is way too specific because it decides what level of government they will try and reach. Michael said that they thought creating a department would be too high of an objective. Greg asked where the funding for the division would come from. Michael replied that this is where Debbie Armstrong said they "need to create budget" and in order to do this you need legislation. Guy said that it was his opinion (not speaking on behalf of GCD) that GCD offers more commonality and is a more natural fit. He says he is supportive of choosing the best possible model but he also agrees with Tim. Curtis still thinks it is still prescriptive and that they should word it so that they aren't locked into one specific level.

Michael says that that is what shooting for division level is doing. Gil says that they are setting up barriers for themselves before they have started talking with legislators. Tim says it is just their opinion as a center that they don't like the language. He wants to see something that creates funding and doesn't take away funds from where they should be allocated. Greg mentioned again that there were significant financial benefits to choosing DVR in terms of Social Security and (other) funds. Michael mentioned that the next step up from a program is a division, and Curtis posed that it made more sense to just aim for elevated status instead of specifying the level. Tim asked Greg if IL became a division (currently under ED), would that be division status? DVR is currently a division, but Greg doesn't feel that IL has the full authority of even being a program under DVR, and that with the right head of DVR, IL could be much more empowered. Greg also mentioned that with the designation of Division, IL would have to go through a separate audit process, which is another reason why ambiguity/flexibility in the language is a good thing. David Hinkle suggested getting rid of the term "Division" and instead replacing it with "... a new and improved administrative structure". Curtis modified this to "...establish an improved Independent Living administrative structure." Tim asked if Division status would exempt them from access to Social Security funds through DVR? Greg replied that if you aren't under DVR, you can't access that program income. Curtis reiterated and stressed the importance of the fact that if IL moves out from under DVR, they will be completely cut off from even the potential of the Social Security money.

Gil and Michael jointly said that they don't currently get necessary support from DVR and that losing something that you never had isn't really losing anything. This argument went on and Curtis said that he would still feel more comfortable with language that turned them into an improved administrative structure and that didn't lock them into a division level. He also mentioned that you could turn it into a division level when you turn it into legislation, but being too specific at this time is a potentially bad idea. Gil says that every entity is on the table including GCD and DVR, and that this wasn't meant to lock anything in but rather to start a discussion. Michael agreed that a goal would lock them into division level, but because the item in question was under an objective, this makes the commitment softer. Greg doesn't see this language as concrete or as a problem. He agrees with Curtis however that it may be helpful to allow for a little more flexibility but doesn't overall see a huge problem. Ken suggested that they take out the capital "D" from the objective and replace it with a lowercase "d".

Michael said that the goal isn't to create a division the goal is to select a DSE, creating a division is just an objective or something to shoot for. Even if the objective of creating a division level isn't accepted, that they still have to make a decision about where Independent Living's home will be, which will be the selection of the DSE. He thinks that shooting for Division status is a good reach because that is the closest step up from the current position of IL. Tim asked how objective two ties to the overall goal, to which Michael responded that if they were turned into a Division, that would give them a home and that would be the DSE. The previously mentioned modified language was repeated to the group and Michael gave his opinion that because Vocational Rehabilitation only helps people 8 hours a day 5 days a week and Independent Living helps people 24 hours a day 7 days a week, VR should really be a division under an Independent Living Department. Because of this, Michael feels like reaching for a division status is a mediocre goal at best. Tim said that this issue wasn't a deal breaker, and that he was simply sharing their opinion as a center but that they would still support it. Several people started reiterating their points and Curtis said that because Tim is willing to accept it as is, it doesn't really matter if they modify it or not but that the discussion should move on.

- Everyone agreed that they should just begin the process of signing the SPIL, but Marcie brought up that Greg had recently brought to her attention some missing

language in the Agenda, the effect of which precluded them from being able to sign the SPIL. She asked Greg to explain it to the group.

- Greg cited the Open Meetings Act which dictates the process through which public bodies that make policy can act. Because the SPIL is a public policy document, if something isn't on the agenda listed as an action item, the body cannot take action on the item since the public hasn't been given notice. He then asked when the SPIL is due.
- Marcie replied that it isn't due until June 30th and that sharing the SPIL with their local representatives was something she and Ken had discussed at the national SPIL meeting. She suggested that they do that so that they can get the input, and that they have another meeting wherein the signing will take place.
- Ken asked if the CIL's have to be there for the meeting.
- Marcie replied that they really should in order to have a true collaborative effort.
- Due to mobility constraints of some CIL directors, they agreed that the document can be Fedexed in order to get signatures. Greg mentioned that the feds will typically accept a preliminary scanned document before the original.
- Marcie suggested that they pick a date for the meeting; the group agreed on June 17th.
- Gil expressed concern about submitting it so late, and Marcie replied that Sarah said that within 90 days of submission she received feedback even though it extended past the technical deadline. Gil is still concerned that it is better to submit it on time and then receive feedback.
- Curtis reminded the group that they can't sign it today because it wasn't an Action Item posted to the Agenda.
- Audra asked if the three present centers could sign it now before it is approved by the SILC in order to avoid excessive travel.
- Greg said that if they were to sign it with the understanding that it isn't being approved and that it was a secretarial process to enhance efficiency, and that if they were to sign it with the understanding that changes to the document would nullify their signatures, they could proceed.
- Michael said that it was important to set another date so the public has a chance to participate if they'd like.
- Ken asked if June 17th would still work and Marcie confirmed that the current location would be available again. Ken wanted to make sure that they get it in on time and understand that amendments will have to be made when the Federal Regulations are published.
- June 17th was decided on and Greg told the group he has a meeting that morning and Marcie assured him that they would get the document to him since his meeting would also be in Albuquerque.
- Ken brought reminded everyone that Paul Aguilar from DVR has to sign it.
- Michael brought up that the only thing Paul Aguilar would be signing is that they are accepting responsibility as the DSE.
- Marcie said that Anna had said that she talked to Adrian Apodaca at DVR about the boilerplate language and he said no changes were currently necessary.

XIV. Adjournment

With no further discussion, Ken asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Norbert moved to adjourn; Dave seconded. Ken noted that the next meeting of the SILC would be June 17th at 10:00 a.m. at the Independent Living Resource Center in Albuquerque.

Meeting adjourned at **12:46 p.m.**