

Disabilities Network of Eastern CT
19 Ohio Ave.
Norwich, CT 06360

Sept. 12, 2023
5:30 PM - 7:00PM
Virtual meeting via Zoom

Minutes

On screen:

K. Pellerin, President
S. Baecker, Vice President
E. Petrik, Board Member
R. Topper, Potential Board Member
E. McBride, Guest
S. Heddle, Executive Director – DNEC
G. Molly Cole, Executive Director SILC/ Guest

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM by K. Pellerin.
Erin McBride was introduced to attendees. Erin is eager to learn about DNEC and will be attending meetings with an interest in becoming a Board member.

II. Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

III. Approval of minutes:

On a motion made by S. Baecker and seconded by E. Petrik the minutes of May 9, 2023 were approved as written.

IV. SILC/SPIL

Guest speaker, Moly Cole, Exec. Dir. of SILC, explained that the next State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) was being written in collaboration with the five Centers for Independent Living (CILs). The plan is updated every three years with the purpose of developing policies and practices designed to support individual with disabilities, assisting them to fully live their lives.

The Board and guests were asked important questions that will help guide in the development of this plan. An example of the questions asked – name the biggest challenge that we see as a detriment to one living independently in our communities...travel, housing, medical availability were just some of the topics discussed. A very active discussion followed.

V. Election of members:

Renee Topper was voted in as a new board member. K. Pellerin made the motion to approve. E. Petrick seconded. The motion carried.

9/12/23

VI: Election of DNEC Board of Officers:

Presented slate, as approved at the June 13th annual meeting.

K. Pellerin – President

E. Petrik – Vice president

S. Baecker – Secretary

K. Pellerin made the motion to approve. Renee Toper seconded – motion carried.

VII. Executive Directors Report:

Highlights:

- A. Sheyla has been terminated. Sharon plans to seek a replacement in Nov/Dec.
- B. SILC annual meeting this Sept. 27th – K. Pellerin, and some staff attending with Sharon. Kim Smith is DNEC's representative at SILC.
- C. Staff appreciation day is Nov 15, and will include Painting with Pam and lunch. Senior Resources will be joining DNEC staff that day.
- D. Sharon has worked with Greg DeFrank, Accountant, to give staff bonuses for this year.
- E. Beth Vargus continues to work on attaining grants for DNEC consumers
- F. Kim Smith will be promoted to Program Director by the end of Sept this year
- G. Raises for staff were discussed.
- H. Approximately 100 people attended the Open House in June, including Erin McBride who expressed an interest in DNEC and was invited to attend our meetings.
- I. Conflict of interest forms to be sent to BoD, with a request to sign and return promptly.
- J. Discussed our upcoming comedy night fundraiser.

See attached report.

VIII. President's Report:

Highlights:

- A. Continuing to grow Board membership growth.
- B. Sharon's evaluation will be completed during October.
- C. Our accountant, Greg DeFrank, will join us for the October meeting.

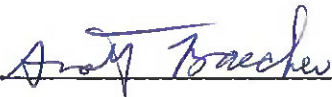
IX: Old Business:

- A. Continued discussion regarding next steps to develop an investment policy.
- B. The 2 Appeal letters that were previously reviewed and approved will be sent In Nov/Dec.

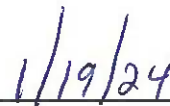
X: New Business:

XI Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 7 PM

S. Baecker - Secretary



Date



Executive Director Report – Sharon Heddle 9/12/2023

- a. CD's – asking Emily to work on this with me.
- b. Franco Fundraiser - update
- c. Staffing remains the same – Sheyla terminated today
- d. Upcoming SILC meeting – I have sent you all the invitation for the SILC annual meeting. You are all welcome, I need to give a headcount so I need to know by Thursday. It does include lunch. It will not be on Zoom.
- e. Staff appreciation day 11/15/2023 – Painting and Pizza – I am looking for more ways to thank our staff for their hard work. I want to do something quarterly for them. Since it will be getting close to the holiday I thought we do have Pam come in and do a painting party like she did with our fundraiser. Sr. Resources is going to join in on this as well for their staff. It will be a fun time. I will invite you all and if you want to join in, you are welcome to. We are painting something wintery, I haven't decided what yet.
- f. Bonuses for staff in September – I am giving bonuses next week. It needs to be next week to be in the correct fiscal year. Our final day of processing checks through payroll will be 9/21/2023 and everyone will have access to the money at their bank on 9/25/2023. I will meet with each person on 9/21/2023 to tell them about it. It looks like our base amount is going to be \$1,400 and it can go up or down from there.
- g. Promote Kim Smith to Program Director. – I am promoting Kim to Program Director effective 9/25/2023. I will talk to her about this on 9/21/2023 – giving her time to think about it if she needs to. I will be sending out an announcement to the board and

staff about the promotion. Her current role is Advocacy Coordinator. We currently have no need for both an Advocacy Coordinator and a Program Director so I do not plan to fill that position.

- h. Raises for staff???????????? Will decide after budget prep – I always want to give a raise that first year. That means I have 3 people that will be getting a \$1 per hour increase this year. As for the others I am not sure yet. When Greg and I finish the budget we will see if it can happen or not. I honestly believe we can afford it, but seeing is believing so I will wait until the budget is done.
- i. Our website statistics
 - i. May 2023 – 355 visitors & Services Page had the most views (168 views)
 - ii. June 2023 – 279 visitors & Services Page had the most views (217 views)
 - iii. July 2023 – 313 visitors & Services Page had the most views (185 views)
 - iv. August 2023 – 309 visitors & Services Page had the most views (191 views)
 - v. **Fun Facts that you may like to know:**
 - The most common pages that were visited on our website were the Services page and the Resources page.
 - In the last quarter, our website had the most referrals (how people found our website) from Google Search Engine. It was then followed by Facebook, 211ct.org, and ILRU.org.
- j. Our open house from 6/28/2023 successful – there were approximately 100 people wandering through the building.
- k. Improving working conditions still the plan and will be in the budget – I had set aside money from the budget for improving our working conditions – unfortunately we have not begun that yet, other than some planning. I will carry that forward and we still plan to move forward with that this year.

- l. Focus right now is on fundraiser, then time to work on annual reports

- m. ADA Connecticut Coalition – I was invited to become a board member. I attended their meeting last week and turns out they voted me in before I even attended the meeting. They are a bit more laid back than I am, and we will see how that goes for me. The best way I can describe them is ‘loosey goosey’ .

- n. Forms – Conflict of Interest, contact form, statistical information, sending through DocuSign later this week – is everyone ok with that?