

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

May 14, 2024
5:30 PM - 7:00PM
Virtual meeting via Zoom

Minutes

On screen:

Kathy Pellerin, President
Scott Baecker, Secretary
Sharon Heddle, Exec Director
Erin McBride, Prospective Board member
Sharon Barrett, Prospective Board member

Absent: Emily Petrik

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by K. Pellerin.

II. Public Comment:

None

III. Approval of minutes:

On a motion by K.Pellerin and seconded by S. Baecker, the April 16th minutes were approved.

IV. Executive Director Report:

A. See attached Executive Director's report.

V. President's Report:

A. Kathy has done further work regarding the proposed Trivia Night fundraiser. More info will be presented for discussion at our September meeting.


VI. New Business:

A. None.

VII. Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM. Next Meeting (our Annual Meeting) is June 11, 2024.

S. Baecker - Secretary



Date

2/4/25

Executive Director's Report – Sharon J Heddle – 5/14/2024

Staffing – Gabby started her maternity leave early and will be back at the beginning of July.

Kathi Russell is no longer with DNEC – she has moved to employment services which is where her background is. I have not done anything about replacing her yet. Kim has had some PTO, Gabby is on maternity leave, I have been swamped. Kim does the training, so I need to arrange it around her upcoming PTO. My goal is to have someone start right after 4th of July. Kim will be attending a NCIL Conference in Washington DC in July for a week. She is going as a SILC Board Member. It is Kim and as a representative from the SILC board. She and 3 others will be attending from CT.

We have been continuing our weekly staff ASL classes and everyone seems to be enjoying it and learning from it – at least learning how to finger spell which is the most important part.

I am taking everyone out to lunch next week – just a last-minute decision to say thank you and to prepare for the summer season. Alyson, our deaf services advocate, works primarily remote in the summer when the kids are home from school, so I wanted to do this now to be sure she could attend. When we prepared the budget this year, I had put in Employee Appreciation money to use for these kinds of things. I found an interpreter, Joy, who is available on Tuesday 5/21/2024 so that is when we are going. If anyone would like to join us, just let me know.

The updated Board Opening – this is on our website, on our FB page, and on our LinkedIn page. I asked the Greater Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce to post it for us.

We had two staff members attend the Tech Tools for Life Conference last week, they said they learned quite a bit that will help them with their consumers. Most of what they learned about were apps. They were most impressed with apps for people with low vision. We shared a table in the vendor hall with the other CILs and had our materials, including information about the board, out on the table.

The staff attended the Disability Rights & Justice Rally at the Capitol on 4/18/2024. The topics – Mental Health Peer-Run Respite, Husky C without Forced Poverty – Timely Wheelchair Repairs at Home – Accessible Medical Exam Equipment.

This has been a busy few weeks and I see this continuing for at least another month. I thought I would let you know what I have been up to in addition to the things you have come to expect.

We have a SILC meeting coming up next week and through the SILC I am on a few committees. I have had to turn down a few that I saw my name pop up on without checking to see if I had time. On Friday I saw my name appear on the Candidates Forum Committee. When I asked if I had volunteered for this, they said they just thought this is something I would be interested in. I removed myself, I just have no more time to fit another committee, along with all the other regular meetings and regular work that needs to be done.

I am on the Recruitment Committee for the SILC. After joining the committee, the SILC members changed the duties and have us creating a recruitment plan to create diversity in the membership – there has never been a documented plan before so we are starting at zero. I have been in 5 lengthy meetings over the last month so we can present it to the full SILC board next week. Saturday's was a 3 hour meeting. None of us know how to do this, so I can only say we are doing the best we can. Since I could see the other members were floundering, I contacted the chair of the committee and asked if he wanted help to get this moving.

The Data Tech Committee has been looking at a new database, but the CILs have agreed that right now we just don't have time to invest in this the way we would need to – that is unless the cost of what we currently have goes up for our next contract renewal. Rumor is that it will be going up 33%. DNEC's invoice

comes first, in August. Currently \$2,200. CACIL has sent a request to CILS First to speak with our person about this. We are also looking at consistency in what and how we report our activities to ACL and ADS.

The SPIL Committee has been meeting twice a month until this past week. Now there are two Public Forums to attend to help create the plan and then the SPIL Committee will reconvene with weekly meetings until we are done. The new SPIL must be submitted by 06/30/2024. I sent you links to the two public forums and hope you can attend one of them to help with this process.

I am still participating in REV UP Committee, finding ways and opportunities to spread the word through CT to the disability community. **Register, Educate, Vote – Use your Power. I have added this to the acronym list.** We have Kim Smith who will attend a presentation with DRCT (Disability Rights CT). They have done many of these presentations and the expectation is Kim will learn and be able to incorporate this at any of our outreach events.

CACIL (the 5 CILs) have our monthly meetings. We go over so many things I can't even list them. But anything that affects the five of us is brought up here.

The ADACC board meeting – we just approved ADACC's amended by laws. **I have added this to the acronym list.**

I am working on the CTPIE workgroup (Pathways to Integrated Employment). Right now we are meeting monthly. This is working towards eliminating Sheltered Workshops for people with intellectual disabilities and finding a way to involve them in competitive integrated employment. This is an ADS project that we would be called upon to help with independent living skills training such as budgeting.

BRIDGE CT is a grant ADS got from ACL to work with the CILs and school districts to help youth who have disabilities, prepare for the world. This is for youth age 10 – 21. We will play a part, the school districts will play a part, and ADS will play a part. ADS will determine what specific schools this will be in. For the pilot year it will be in 4 school and a detention center on the western side of the state. Nobody is exactly sure what the deliverables are yet because they haven't given us anything. Although we are participating in the meetings, there is some hesitation since we don't know what they expect. It seems to change at

each meeting. We are currently meeting with ADS to review our MOU (memo of understanding). Once that is signed, they will move on to the MOA (memo of agreement). This would be where the money is attached. It is a 5 year grant, will have specific deliverables, specific type of staff will need to be hired, the value over the 5 years is supposed to be \$400,000 for each CIL. Two weeks ago had a meeting in Naugatuck with ADS and other stakeholders in BRIDGE CT.

BRIDGE CT – Building Resiliency, Independence, Dignity, Growth, and Empowerment Project – A program with ADS.

I have a monthly Executive Director meeting that is for all ED's across the country. A person from ACL talks to us about changes, about things that could get a CIL in trouble, the PPR, policy handbooks, board involvement, different topics each month. The focus this month was on the changes to the PPR directions, but not to the form, so don't be tricked.

All of this in addition to Kathi leaving, Gabby being admitted to the hospital, and Kim taking 2 weeks PTO – all at the same time. This isn't me complaining, it is keeping you informed and letting you know that if tell you I don't have time to take on anything additional now, you now know why.

What is coming up for the next 2 weeks? A two-hour **NCIL meeting** on the issues affecting the Independent Living Program, relationships with SILC, DSE, ACL, payments to the CILS and the SPIL. **Data Tech Committee, meeting with ADS** to go over the MOU, **SILC Recruitment Committee, CACIL meeting, SILC board meeting** – and as luck would have it, each of these are two-hour meetings.