# NC Statewide Independent Living Council Meeting Minutes October 24, 2014

City Hotel & Bistro Greenville, NC

## Welcome/Mission /Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am by Kay Miley, Chair.

## SILC Mission statement: Keith Greenarch

## Meeting Accessibility Reminders: Kay Miley

**Introductions** were made around the room. Absences were explained and/or addressed; Mitzi Kincaid due to family medical, Barry Washington due to job conflict. Our Ex.Officio Pamela Lloyd-Ogoke was called back to her office, Stephanie Johnson has health issues, and Mercedes was going to represent Disability Rights NC but had a family health emergency.

## Meeting Agenda:

Motion to accept agenda was asked for

**Action:** (Keith Greenarch/Kimlyn Lambert) motion to accept was unanimous

## Changes and/or corrections to the Minutes:

A motion to accept the minutes was called for

**Action:** (Sandy Ogburn/Kimlyn Lambert) minutes accepted unanimously

## Chair Report: Keith Greenarch, Vice Chair

We had the election of new officers at the last meeting. During the months of August and September the Executive committee finalized and successfully held the IL Summit in Raleigh. We are hoping to hold the next IL Summit in March in an effort to be available to educate the General Assembly.

On August 26 I met with Elizabeth Bishop the Director of DVR to discuss the I&E (innovation and expansion) and Social Security Reimbursement funds,. These funds could be used the fund the SILC office which would then allow funds currently used by the SILC office to be used by the CIL’s to fulfill SPIL goals. I spoke with Elizabeth yesterday and was very positive. She asked me to schedule another meeting for just after the holidays. We are going to work as hard as we can to make this happen.

Gloria Bellamy: Please explain the acronyms used especially for our new members so they can understand what is being discussed.

We started working on the needs assessment for the next SPIL, which will start in 2016. Rene Cummins who will chair the SPIL committee along with myself and Julia Sain started the needs assessment yesterday by holding a session titled, “If you are not at the table, then you are on the menu” at the GREAT Conference. That means that if you aren’t there participating and not getting the information you aren’t being heard. We got a good start yesterday; a very good job was done. We will move across the state to gain this information so when we start constructing the next SPIL we will be fully informed to write the best SPIL for our state. Are there any questions regarding needs assessment or the presentation?

We are working on the SILC office lease which expires on January 31. Will Miller has been working with Brad Rice helping as a negotiator for moving or to obtain a better rate. Offices were toured for consideration at the Governor Morehead School.

One important issue is committee meeting attendance. There are some folks who are not attending or corresponding. It is important for all committee members to attend these meetings. If you are unable to attend, please have the courtesy to let your committee chairs know why. Your appointment and oath covers this as part of your job on the council. Attendance will be tracked. These meetings are posted on the website. For new members Kay as chair will be contacting you regarding committee assignments.

Chairs should request RSVP, attendance should be recording and all should be reminded of meetings.

## Executive Directors Report: Will Miller, Executive Director

A written report was provided for you in the E-blast.

Thank you for coming to Greenville. Hope you were able to attend the GREAT conference and last night’s nice quiet dinner and loud music and dancing.  *I think it was a lot of fun and am glad that we got to participate.* I hope you all enjoyed f at the conference.

Thank you to the staff for getting all ready for the meeting. All is appreciated.

One house keeping issue is the dates for our meetings next year. There was one tentative schedule sent out with your e-blast. Some of those dates turn out to conflict with the UNC school schedule. You now have another list; please let us know if there are any major conflicts. The tentative dates are January 8 – 9; April 16 – 17; (tentative) July 9 – 10; October 8 – 9, all these are Thursdays and Fridays. Will the July dates conflict with Youth Leadership Forum?

Rene Cummins: Youth Leadership Forum is an activity under Goal 2. The dates are still under negotiation. We should know that date within the next couple of weeks.

Will Miller: the July dates will be tabled until a final Youth Leadership Forum date is known.

Jennifer Overfield: Did we change from the third week of the month to the second?

Debbie Hippler: We found that 3 out of 4 of the first dates conflicted with school activities so the meetings were moved up a week.

Julia Sain: What is the point of the UNC schedule, why are we having to look at that?

Debbie Hippler: The dates affect 4 of our members either as faculty or students.

Will Miller: I think everyone knows that I am leaving on Monday to go to Seeing Eye in New Jersey. I will be trained to use a guide dog that will be a great help to me personally and professionally. Thank you to the council for allowing me to do that. I look forward to bringing my new companion to the January council meeting.

Please take a moment and think about why you are here today. What is your personal purpose for being here?

Now I would like you take a look around and consider why all the other people in the room and around this table are here. What is our purpose for being here?

Now I would like to ask you a few questions.

Isn’t it in everyone’s best interest that independent living services are improved in North Carolina? All answered yes.

Isn’t it in everyone’s best interest that we find additional funding for our Centers for Independent Living? All answered yes.

No matter who we are we agree on those things.

Isn’t it in everyone’s best interest that we write a solid SPIL? All answered yes.

Ok, we are all here for a common purpose. Imagine what we could accomplish if we cooperate with one another. Imagine if we could all collaborate, if we all communicated openly, between Centers for Independent Living, Statewide Independent Living Council, the Ex Officio members. Imagine if we all supported one another in our various organizations, no matter if it is a CIL, a state agency or the SILC. What if we stopped talking blame and started talking solutions when we come to the table. Wouldn’t that be better to consumers in North Carolina?

As we go into our new 2015 fiscal year I hope we can take this approach. I hope we can take this approach as we write our new State Plan for Independent Living. We are all here for a common purpose; we all have the same goals in mind. We may disagree on how to get there but let’s be supportive of one another, be cooperative and let’s communicate openly. Thank you.

Kay Miley: Thank you, Will. I would like to point out that in your E-blast packets you can view the committee appointments. I just wanted to let everyone know that if you are on a committee that you don’t want to serve on or have any issues with committee assignments, please let me know. The committees can use your expertise so contact me if you wish to serve other than appointed.

## Oath of Respect

Gloria Bellamy is going to lead us in an oath.

Given the comments that Will, just made asking us to reflect on our cooperation and our real purpose for being here and our vested interested of serving people with disabilities in North Carolina, this is a good place to have this oath. At the end of each meeting we should come away with the feeling that we have made an effort to change the lives of people with disabilities in North Carolina in a positive way to empower them. Many of us sitting on this council have disabilities so we have a vested interest in seeing that this mission is fulfilled. Keeping in the front foremost thought with our comments, so that the way we conduct ourselves at the meeting must be courteous. If there is a differing viewpoint we need not become combative we need to consider, ponder, reflect on and take under advisement the comments made to reach a consensus. We now have an oath of respect, a measure with which we will conduct ourselves during our meetings. Kay has also asked me to speak to you about commitment. When we applied for the position on this council we committed to put our shoulders to the wheel to make a difference. We now have committees we’ve been asked to serve on. In a given quarter, you will give an average of 8 – 10 hours for committee work. You should make a courtesy call to your chair if you cannot make a meeting. You should have a partner on the committee who could bring you up to date with minutes and other discussions. Maybe committee chairs will start a telephone tree to help each member remember the teleconference so work can be done between the quarterly meetings. Our job is to monitor, review and evaluate the State Plan for Independent Living. I’m sayin this for the benefit of our new members, in order to do that, we have to do some work between the quarterly meetings. This is not something we do once a quarter to receive a reimbursement check. We now really know what we are supposed to be doing, we can hold one another’s hand and be committed to our goals, the goals in the State Plan for Independent Living and to one another. These are the things we have to do to become a more effective council.

I’ve asked Kimlyn Lambert to read an oath of respect to give us an idea of the type of conduct that will lead us into a collaborative and cooperative spirit to have an effective meeting allowing us to come away believing and knowing that we have made a positive difference in the lives of people with disabilities in North Carolina.

Please stand with me and recite after her.

Kimlyn Lambert: Oath of Respect

As a member of the North Carolina Statewide Independent Living Council,

I acknowledge that my participation requires courage, honor and integrity.

These virtues are necessary for the good of the council as a whole and my role as a council member requires that I conduct myself in accordance with these values.

Therefore I pledge that I will engage in discussion which is zealous, vigorous and diligent but never hostile or combative.

I further pledge that I will speak courteously and respectfully, in all professional communication whether oral or written correspondence. Furthermore, I will stand against incivility wherever encountered.

I will remember that any opposing comments or position is not a personal affront, but a differing viewpoint from another person who deserves my respect.

I will view this exchange as being part of the process.

In such instances I will work to a consensus and value the process as much as the result.

Thank you.

# Standing Committee Reports

## Finance Committee Report Ping Miller, Chair

As I review the reports the finance committee in lieu of this week’s meetings will review the financials of this month. For those who haven’t had a chance to review in august we knew we had to do budget revisions to burn down our balances for 2014. We are on track financially. We were able to spend $1,793.50 with 0 remaining. This month actual expenditure was 19,390.52. Some of the things Will and Kathleen had been focused on last month were primarily making sure we were able to allocate the funds to spend down to 0. Some of those things included our P&E report (Performance and Expenditure) paying some of the travel and registration for webinars, conference and things like that. What they were doing was scrubbing the books making sure we were down to 0 as planned. The balance of contract of $12,833.40 was received on September, 5 and our typical expenses for the month of September with no monthly committee meeting. So there were no expenses in that category. As we go into the P&E report without going through all the details.

Keith Greenarch: Will had sent out the final report for Part B monies and on that report it showed the monies spent by each center. I know that the Center Directors here there were monies left on the table from a couple of centers, Rene I don’t know if you know but was that money encumbered? It was a considerable amount of money.

Rene Cummins: I believe that the report was not up to date. There were small amounts that some centers spent down to 0 some had money in a line item that was too late to have an amendment to move it out, so it could not be accessed. I’d be glad to check with the centers specifically and meet with you about that. As far as I know we all encumbered the money or spent all but a small amount where it could not be accessed.

Ping: So as we are looking at the 2014 report it shows Pathways in Sylva with a remainder of $4,675.67 that’s about 41% remaining, Pathways, Asheville, 40% remaining, $4587.50, 13% remaining for Wilmington, $3,524.19.

Helen Pase: This report is not correct, I spent to zero.

Ping Miller: Perhaps we take time this month to true up the differences.

Rene Cummins: I think what may be happening here is the report that comes from Designated State Unit is for some reason lagging behind the invoices submitted. A lot of us seeing that report showing x amount of Part B funds left may be based on the fact that they have not paid the invoices, so technically the money has not been expended but we have past 90 day overdue invoices. The report is out of sync with what we have done. The Youth Leadership Forum was held in July outlaying over $21,000, but the invoice is not paid until much later. The money is gone, the amount you are quoting is wrong. I will double check with the two western centers. I will confirm the amount remaining. Mark can you shed light on this?

Mark Steele: Not really you pretty much hit the nail on the head. Gay, do you have anything to add? Once the invoices come to Vocational Rehabilitation they sign off on them and submit to fiscal services. There has been some delay getting payments out to vendors across the state. The checks may have not been written when the report was written but the invoices have been submitted.

Will Miller: this report was current as of earlier this week. There will be updates based on the money encumbered but not paid out as of yet. This will be addressed at a later meeting.

## Policy and Long term Planning Joshua Kaufman, Chair

For the policy and planning committee for this year we had a fair amount of activity. Most of the activity revolved around the Thursday trainings but we did have a couple other issues. For Thursday training we planned information to be presented by Executive Director of the New York Statewide Independent Living Council in July. I was not able to make that meeting but hope it was valuable to those who could attend. We also discussed and endorsed the combination of the SILC meeting and the NC GREAT Conference here in Greenville.

The policy committee discussed the idea of changing the per diem policy and in our research found that the Statewide Independent Living Council had a great deal of control of how per diem policy was written but decided not to move on that and leave it as is.

We did make updates and voted on mileage and personal care attendant payments, these changes were made to keep in line with national reimbursement rates at state and federal levels.

We also looked into and researched updating the leave accrual/flex time/comp time policy. We found that it was not something we could change or update ending that discussion in the committee.

For upcoming trainings we are currently in the process of organizing training, on adaptive communication and for April we are looking at bringing the NC Center for Non profits in to do a training geared for people who are board members of nonprofits. We hope this will benefit other groups outside of the Statewide Independent Living Council including board members of various Centers for Independent Living. This is something that NC Nonprofit provides free of charge assuming we can get together enough groups. I think if we get each Center for Independent Living to supply a couple board members we should be able to achieve that and provide the training to a large group of people in April.

The last thing for the policy committee at this point is, that we have spent time looking into background checks. This is something we took up based on the recommendation from a review of the Statewide Independent Living Council and the policies by some students at The Elon Law School. At this point I think we would like to open this to a small discussion and probably come back in January when we have more time to vote on it. This will allow thought between now and the January meeting. This will be an abbreviated discussion.

Rene Cummins: the study by the Elon School of Law was for the Youth Leadership Forum because we have minors involved. This is a whole separate issue and does not pertain to this council. Vicki Smith has expressed an opinion to the policy committee and has been passed it on to me. This is a great concern that this is a disincentive because none of the other major councils are doing this and this is not a good use of our limited Part B funds. I agree with this and said I would pass this along.

Oshana Watkins: I agree with Rene, I don’t see a benefit since us as board members are not dealing with money or anything. Maybe staff but don’t really see a need for that. It is not a good use of our money.

Jennifer Overfield: I know that there was one instance when I was on the membership committee there was one applicant that had a past with prison that wanted to be on the board. We would probably not have allowed them to serve on the board without the background check being done. That is probably the one reason I would vote to continue this.

Will Miller: I just wanted to give my perspective of this; it was my idea to start doing this so I will share my thinking. The primary concern and reason behind it was first and foremost the safety of SILC members, second the concern of liability for the organization, and third so that we can show that we have done our due diligence when endorsing members to the governor.

We could very easily have an applicant that has a history of violent crime but without doing a background check we wouldn‘t know about it. We don’t have a rigid rule about barring membership because of the report. The membership committee would then discuss the results. The member’s safety, liability and due diligence are the primary reasons.

The governor’s office does a check of North Carolina Courts but only on the one name, not on any variations or any multiple comprehensive checks.

The report allows the membership committee to gain information so they can use their discretion to make these decisions.

Another thing is, in my opinion and I’m a person with disability, there are some areas where a person is more vulnerable, considering me in that category. The way we compensate is that we are cautious in each situation that would result in this vulnerability.

Our cornerstone is consumer control and ultimately it is up to the members. Either way the vote goes I will support it.

Joshua K: How did the membership come across the information that an applicant had a prison record?

Sandy Ogburn: It was disclosed on the application, it was not a violent situation. We endorsed it. When sent it to the governor and it was actually a point of strength that the governor commented on being very impressed that the individual had overcome these challenges. It reinforced his endorsement

Joshua K: So one of the things I wanted to bring up was that originally as Rene had brought up the recommendation came from Elon based on the idea that were involved in Youth Leadership Forum, if the council chooses we could limit the checks o those involved with minors.

Rene Cummins: I would like to piggyback on what Sandy said. I represent the network of Centers but we have other center Directors here as well. We work with a lot of consumers who have things in their background. Some of them may have acquired their disability because of a spinal cord injury due to a gunshot, things in the past and now are working to get housing and employment. We work with them as a reasonable accommodation to say, that was a previous life and this person is no longer leading this type of life. In many cases it is a good point in their favor because they have turned their life around. It is not the kind of life they are living now.

What was suggested was that in lieu of money being spent, you request specific references. If the governor’s office is doing a background check, why are we putting in another barrier and not being consistent with other councils.

We had Elon doing an intense check and see what we needed to do; it fell back on Alliance because the Youth Leadership Forum contract is through us. We have to carry certain levels of different insurance. If we do have minors involved it would be best if background checks were run because it’s a 24hour day event. It’s a very different kind of circumstance. I agree with Will, we develop certain tactics, it’s not all of you I worry about its all those others I don’t know.

Kay Miley: we need to move on so we get through in time. The next report will be Membership by Sandy.

Membership Sandy Ogburn, Chair

I have recently taken over chair as Sierra termed off. Thank you for giving me the vote of confidence or maybe I was the only one that said I would do it.

I heard a quote this past week when attending the APRIL Conference. “Make a difference until the difference doesn’t matter”. That, is your food for thought today, it made me think.

I have a few little things. We did endorse two members and sent them to the governor’s office. Barry Washington was approved and will be joining us. Lacey Coward was not approved and I will talk about that in a second. The reason was that the governor suggested that we appoint a veteran. We have put the applications on a back burner still working through the ones we have doing the reference checks and interviews so they will be ready to go to the governor’s office when they can be moved on.

So with the thought of appointing a veteran, what we have done is discuss a little bit about getting a veteran to apply. What we came up with was I would develop an email and I will forward this to the SILC office to be sent out to all our contacts and you send it out to your contacts to reach a larger base of people. To summarize the email, you identify yourself as affiliated with the SILC and ask for veterans or contacts who know of veterans to ask them to consider applying to the council.

Please suggest to any of your veteran acquaintances to apply. I am also working on a PowerPoint of what a SILC is and will share for you to use to further our membership. This is for you to share with anybody that you think would be an asset to our council.

Break: 10:15 – 10:30

## SPIL Goal Reports:

Goal 1 Rene Cummins, chair   
Independent Living Services

The good news is we now have funding starting with October 1 of year 2 of our State Plan to carry out Goal 1. We did not have funding in year 1.

That also means though that I need a committee, if you are interested in being involved in building the network of our centers, developing part of the centers which we are now working on is activities to become a network and have uniform practices which requires us to have time together. One of the things this goal is doing is funding us to have those retreats, giving us sustained periods of time to work together to come up to make the decisions and to develop uniform practices.

We really appreciate this support that is now going to be in this goal starting Oct. 1. We have already acted upon it, we have had Mark Steele joining us from The Adaptables and Benita Williams was there from the Shabazz Center. A representative from each of the centers was at the meeting we held on Wednesday and ½ day on Thursday so we are off and running on goal 1.

Goal 2 Gloria Bellamy, chair   
Leadership and Empowerment of People with Disabilities report given by Joshua Kaufman

One of the main objectives is for youth with disabilities to be prepared for leadership roles. I am going to pass the microphone back to Rene on this one. Under objective 2.1, that youth are prepared for leadership roles. The main activity is the Youth Leadership Forum, the Youth Leadership Forum was held in July at NC State and there were 20 youth in attendance that received training about independent living. I’ll finish up the rest before I pass the microphone back to Rene for a short update on the Youth Leadership Forum.

Objective 2.2, people with disabilities in the community at large are educated on disability policy and regulations on Federal, State and Local levels. The two results that we have to report are the IL Summit held in September that was open to people with disabilities within the community. There is going to be ongoing work to increase attendance in the future. At this Summit there were presentations made both by the Youth Leadership Forum folks and people with disabilities. Topics included Disability History and Awareness. I think the disability history piece is particularly important. Why we do what we do is guided by the foundational philosophy that comes from the disability rights history. If we don’t know where we came from it makes it more difficult to know where we should be headed.

At this point I will hand the microphone back to Rene for specifics about the Youth Leadership Forum.

Rene Cummins: I first wanted to say that really appreciate the acknowledgement of Disability History and Awareness month because that is the bill we got through the general assembly when I had a lobbyist which was a wonderful experience. I hope someday that I get to have one again. It was one of the two laws that we worked to pass. There is a law on the books athat says that for schools k-12 Oct. is Disability Awareness month. There is going to be funding this year for this goal for the Centers to carry out that activity in the schools as well.

The one activity that Josh was saying was funded under goal 2 was Youth Leadership Forum; there were 20 delegates which is a full forum. It takes twice as many staff, volunteers, mentors, group leaders etc. This Forum was held from July 13 – 18 at the NC State campus.

Three youth were also able to go to the APRIL Conference (Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living), another wonderful training, because they have a track based on youth and training youth in their history and all kinds of different issues, advocacy, leadership skills etc.

The Youth Leadership Forum has usually come and actually does a more in depth presentation. I was told that if you want them to come in January that they would be willing to come and present as the contract calls for. You could see a more in depth presentation from the youth.

## Goal 3 Kimlyn Lambert, chair

Growth of Independent Living Services

I don’t have anything to report. Mitzi has been appointed chair since I’ve been reassigned.

Julia Sain: Backing up for the newer folks and others who may not know this. There is only one center director that is a voting member of the SILC. The Center Directors agreed last year that each of us would volunteer to be on one of the Goal committees. We committed to spending our unreimbursed time and effort to serve on each of the committees. Unfortunately in the last 3 months there has not been a Goal 3 committee meeting. I did not know who the chair was until today. I’m looking forward to this being an active committee as this is a huge responsibility.

I would like to roll in to Helen to include her Part B report here when I am finished. The point of Goal 3 is that the current service areas of the Centers for Independent Living do not become unserved and underserved.

So a report on last year, I went to the IL Summit and I will tell you that it is interesting to me and I am proud to say that the IL Summit was primarily presentations by centers and center staff. The centers provided workshops on Youth Leadership Forum, Disability History, adaptive recreation, youth programs at the Centers, transitions to community living and challenges to the IL network. It was very exciting to see on the agenda that the SILC recognizes the importance of knowing these things. I was a little disappointed with the attendance but that may be that I was the last speaker on the last day. I drove up from Charlotte to do it and there were very few people there.

The information provided regarding the challenges of the network of centers is something that this committee really does need to know if the responsibility of the committee is going to be carried out. We reviewed it again yesterday. Some of you at the GREAT conference got to hear some of the information that was provided.

One of the things I will say is that if the goal is that the current services areas of the centers do not become unserved or underserved that is in jeopardy. If you want to know why, we can have another training session. It is in jeopardy. Good news is that we all have signed our Part B contracts. I don’t recall that we have had an actual signed contract in place at the beginning of the fiscal year of which we are going to be doing work. Our year is October 1 and we usually don’t get the signed contract until December 1. So, to have it ready to hit the ground on October 1 is a blessing and we are very happy about that. Let’s do celebrate the small things.

However, reimbursement has become even uglier and tougher and I don’t know why. Reimbursement is such a struggle that more than one center at the end of the fiscal year had to dip into their reserves just to make payroll. There were invoices when I wrote this, that had been submitted in July and Vocational Rehabilitation has not paid. We don’t have a choice. We can’t do anything to get extra revenue. One center completely depleted all of their reserves waiting on the check to come from the state. We are talking as a network about what we can do regarding this. We do have a contract as a vendor with the state of North Carolina, so the state is going to breach contract. That is a legal issue. There is a guy named Bob somebody who is sitting on the money with no explanation or answers. We need to get with somebody to say this is a breach of contract, you are in violation.

I tell my center directors, my staff, and consumers that you only sue if they want you to. You only sue when they’ve done everything they can to make you have to. At this point the state of North Carolina is daring us to do that. There is a small window of opportunity for those of you that know anybody in the comptroller’s office to prevent it. But when it happens, can anybody in this room say they didn’t know it was going to happen. Is that vague enough, because I do get yelled at because I say things at this meetings and people say we didn’t know that was going to happen, you can’t say that now, now you know. Now hopefully as the new SPIL amendments or whatever is going to happen when the new DSE (designated state entity) is identified and we can get out from under Bob and his people then we will be able to have a DSE that pays bills on time and this will no longer be an issue. I don’t think we can wait that long. We may have to have two paths, one is legal or suits or whatever has to happen against the state, the second is getting a new Designated State Entity getting identified.

John Marens: Do you know this Bob guys last name?

Julia Sain: Duke, if anyone knows Bob Duke and who he answers to. This is not disrespectful this is truth, I heard the oath this morning and this is not disrespectful this is fact, when the emperor has no cloths it’s not inappropriate it’s just fact. Bob Duke is holding up the money and that is just fact. Even though the contract with the state of North Carolina signed by everybody says that Helen’s center will get an advance, Bob Duke said he wasn’t going to pay it because he didn’t have any word from the federal government that it was ok. So how long was your money held up because of that?

Helen Pase: From August 6 to October 10.

Julia Sain: He held her money because he could.

Gay Joyner: One of the reasons for the cash advance delay is that we cannot release those funds until we actually have the contract in hand. Signed by God and everybody so even though you submit it on August 6, the contract was actually signed the last week of September or sometime around there. We can process it at DVR and get everything ready to go but cannot release it to the controller’s office until a contract is in hand. So Bob didn’t’ sit on it for that long it was just from the time that we released it to him to when it actually happened.

Julia Sain: Did that rule just go into effect this year?

Gay Joyner: No.

Julia Sain: So the rule has been violated all this time, because the rules haven’t changed?

Ok Objective 3.1, Current areas don’t become unserved or underserved, I’ve spoken about that and the jeopardy.

So my recommendation is that one of the activities is that at a minimum that current funding is maintained and funding increases is the optimum outcome. We all know that as of October 1, all the centers will lose $30,000, and so that is federal money so you guys have made a commitment to make that up to us. One of the ways is we’ve talked about yesterday are the I&E funds as one of the opportunities. The comment was made that we need one of the recommendations was that perhaps there be a committee as we follow up with Elizabeth Bishop. Kay, Goal3 might be asked to put this as one of our duties.

# Part B Center Update Helen Pase

I apologize for my outburst earlier about the report being wrong because I have zeroed out all of my funds. Gay later came to explain why the report show s the numbers it does. We did spend the funds down to zero. The report will be corrected. In regards to Bob Duke sitting on the money, he did require more from Rehabilitation Services Administration before releasing the money. I can see that being a problem in the future.

I did get the advance and I did send in the letter from my landlord that I was past due on my rent getting charged $10/day for late payment. I’m still due $16,300 odd from the end of Sept. 30 contract. I think since the last SILC meeting I have hired Becky Tindale who has retired from Vocational Rehabilitation Independent Living, September 30 she came on the staff. She is busy with the conference and NC Housing. She is going to be so instrumental with her expertise.

The Center has been a little slow this year. I’ve had staff out on medical leave all year, one after another. So we have been short staffed but consumers are still coming in and we attend all community events we can to get our name out. I would like to volunteer to be on Goal 3 this year and would like to be on the meetings and notified by email ahead of time. I know that you all know that you will all be able to tour our center this afternoon. I would like to say Welcome, we are excited to have you and for you to meet the staff, to see where we go and spend our time daily. We are very proud of our org and our facility. It might be a little small but it gets the job done. So come on over, have your lunch and tour the building. Thank you very much.

Will Miller: I just want to comment from the SILC perspective. We have gotten our cash advance and contracts were executed in time. I want to thank everyone for that, Gay you have been helpful to us as we sat down and collaborated with Designated State Unit to get this done. This is the first I’ve heard of this reimbursement issue with the CILS. I’m not sure what is happening there, I don’t know any details of Bob Duke. I would offer that if you would like to have the SILC assistance let us know what the delay is and what reports have been sent and maybe we can help with that. I think that one thing that might help is taking a collaborative approach with the Designated State Unit rather than a combative approach. I have not found that doing that has been helpful.

Keith Greenarch: Any other discussion on that?

Helen Pase: I’m not trying to be combative but, when I can’t make my payroll and I can’t pay my rent, I get anxious. I have been here as a center director for 4 ½ years and have had this issue for 4 ½ years. It has not really been getting any better. It runs smooth for a while then gets bad again. It’s like a roller coaster, you never know what bump you are going to hit. I would like to see that our contract that says I have to have to report on a specific days of the month be compared to the state. There is no contract that says when the state has to pay me back. I have to be accountable and I feel that the state of North Carolina has to be accountable. They issued me this assistance contract and I need their assistance to do the job. Whatever we can do to make this not be a problem in the future would be so appreciated. I spend a lot of time that I could be spending helping consumers.

Keith Greenarch: As a member of the Membership committee we overlooked something earlier. We want to give our new members an extended welcome. Deja Barber and Ricky Alewine have joined us as voting members. We are glad to have both of you with us today. The membership committee will give both of you a mentor, it is in the process. If there is anything we can answer, please contact us and let us know. We are very glad to have you.

## Goal 4 Ping Miller, chair

Support the operations of NCSILC office

I’ll go ahead and report. It is my understanding that a different chair will be appointed.

For those who are new, Deja and Ricky, the Goal 4 states that Part B funds are used to insure the North Carolina Statewide Independent Living Council non-profit office operates efficiently and effectively in compliance with federal Rehabilitation Act and the written policies of the department of Health and Human Services. Our objective is to maintain an autonomous and independent North Carolina Statewide Independent Living Council non-profit office.

One of the activities with Part B funds that we talked about earlier we had requested funds in July and received in Oct. There are a couple of other activities such as sub committees from the Statewide Independent Living Council identifying and reporting on best practices. In our Eblast we have a summary of some of those activities, an example is Statewide Independent Living Council congress 2014, some of the other activities are that sub-committees contact other Statewide Independent Living Council organizations. I recognize that we have not reached out to other Statewide Independent Living Council organizations and that is an opportunity in the upcoming year.

The other activity we talked about this morning. We understand that some checks have not posted and there is some latency. We will monitor that in the upcoming months and see where we are. We trust that all the funds were burnt down.

Another activity is the dissemination of information, this information is provided quarterly. The Statewide Independent Living Council office also, when sufficient funds remain in the fiscal year, will implement an annual IL Summit to garner input and monitor the implementation of the State Plan for Independent Living. We successfully did that in 2014. The Statewide Independent Living Council retains representation from youth with disabilities. In 2014 we had two members under the age of 30 and I think that at the end of this report we can say that North Carolina Statewide Independent Living Council implements recruitment and membership procedures outlined in this report. The steps were taken to appointment on the Statewide Independent Living Council and welcome again to Deja and Ricky. The orientation training was received, membership and mentor were assigned, we have Mitzi and Sandy and Sandra and Kay and obviously we are working on mentorships for Deja and Ricky.

Kim Lambert: I would like to take this opportunity to chair this committee.

Rene Cummins: I know that our SILC was selected as a mentor role from the peer to peer mentoring from APRIL (Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living). I was not at the July meeting but I understand that we had our peer mentor working with our silc. But I do know that process that we were mentored once before by Patrick Rineheart from Alaska. There is a report, when can we expect the report from the mentor sent to us from that program in APRIL. I would like to see that report because I was not able to attend in July since it was the same week as the Youth Leadership Forum was held. I appreciate the consideration of the timing of the July meeting so as not to conflict with the SILC meeting.

Will Miller: I do not have a report there was not one provided but I will ask about that and will share it with you. Since we are just upstairs from your office you can stop in and we will discuss it.

Rene Cummins: The report should be shared with the entire council.

## Goal 5 Kay Miley, chair

Promote Community Living – Given by Rene Cummins

Although this goal was not funded in the current year of the State Plan, three Centers elected to use their General Operations funds to support transitions in their areas.  The 3 Centers assisted 22 individuals to transition to community-based living during year 1 of the current State Plan; $10,887.32 was the total expenditures for these transitions, which is an average of $494.87 per transition.  In contrast, Money Follows the Person provides up to $3,000 in assistance to support each transition.  These Part B funds were utilized for such expenses as deposits for rent, security deposits, first and last month’s rent, deposits on utilities, home modifications, transportation, furniture, appliances, household items and supplies, groceries, assistive technology, and medical supplies.  Staff time and travel expenses were funded under other sources of funding as these expenditures were solely related to the transition itself and expenditures necessary for the individual to return to the community.

Will Miller: At the April meeting, when we discussed the reallocation of the $13,500 to go the centers, the understanding and discussion would be that the Center’s P&E reports for the Part B funds would be provided to the Statewide Independent Living Council. They were to be emailed to Sandy. I don’t think those were received. Would the centers make those available to the Statewide Independent Living Council?

Julia Sain: Absolutely. I have just a couple of comments. Rene is going to make sure that the Center Directors follow through with that. Just to be clear to everybody, especially the new folks. The new contract where we got money for transitions started October 1 and we can’t invoice until November 10 for everything we did in October. So you will know that what Rene was reporting was what was under last year’s contract. We don’t know how much we are going to spend and do in October. I don’t think any of us have a problem with sending the P&E to everybody there are no secrets about what we do. I think that is a really good idea.

The other thing I was going to tell you is that coming up on the end of the year we won’t meet again before all the Centers are required to do a 704 report, our annual report about everything we do. Helen has to do a 704 report but it’s to you because you are her funder. We send ours directly to the feds. You guys have to do one as a Statewide Independent Living Council. If you want to know what’s been going on in any Center or the Statewide Independent Living Council that is how you can find out. It is required by federal law that each Center submits a copy of their 704 report to the heads of the Designated State Unit and to the Statewide Independent Living Council and so we have to do that. Eddie Weaver and the head of DVR will get one. My question to you at this point is, Is it more advantageous to send it to Kay or Will? Whoever receives them will have eight of them and can disseminate it out to all of you. So you would know who it’s coming from.

Kay Miley: Ok, send it to the SILC office and I will review. Can you touch base to what is the meaning of institution? It was some kind of question a month or two ago, please describe it for us.

Rene Cummins: In the discussion the consensus that were taking part is that an institution is anywhere where you don’t make your own choices, when to go to bed, when to get up and what to eat. You don’t have a place where you live where you can go inside and shut and lock the door and no one comes and goes unless you say so. If you are out in community based living you should have a place where you go inside and it’s your 4 walls and you make your own choices and decide who you want to be a part of your life. I don’t know if we hit upon what you are looking for.

Julia Sain: The reason it came up was because transition meant nursing home transition. The WIOA now calls that community transition. We had to be sure as Center Directors that you all understood the change. That means that I can use Part B funds to help someone out of a domestic violence shelter or a homeless shelter. Nursing homes will discharge people to the shelters so when they are in the nursing home that is one thing, if they are in the nursing home for rehabilitation only you can’t go home because you don’t have a ramp or grab bars whatever. So the nursing home rehabilitation worker will discharge you to the shelter as a successful transition. So I wanted to make sure that there was a discussion on a Statewide Independent Living Council level so you all know that we can use the funds to get a person out of a shelter.

Will Miller: I want to frame this in the context of the State Plan for Independent Living. Goal 5 is promote community based living and the description is people with disabilities live in the community of their choice. Objective 5.1 says that residents in institutions transition to community based living. So the question we got was, under our State Plan for Independent Living, What was the definition of institution? The executive committee took that up. No one had any objection to the board interpretation. I appreciate Julia coming to us for a further interpretation. I don’t know if any further interpretation is needed. The executive committee thought a broad definition was good so the Centers could use the funds. If there is no objection, it seems that the executive committee is in agreement with this broad definition.

## Goal 6 Kimlyn Lambert, chair

Designated State Unit Independent Living Services

We have had several meetings doing so bimonthly. There are 8 people on my committee, thank you to all who join the conference calls.

Objective 6.1, People with disabilities have greater access to transportation in their communities. We have a lot of discussion on that. Deidre provided us with a list of transit advisory boards and reported on what dsb is doing.

Objective 6.2, People with disabilities have the supports necessary to live independently and safely in the communities of their choice. We have several different activities under that objective and I have copies of this so I don’t have to read all of this.

In the last packet sent out I am not sure you got the minutes of the most recent meeting. We did meet on October 10, so if you don’t have those minutes go on the website, they are posted under Goal 6.

Objective 6.3, Veterans with disabilities receive seamless supports and services that allow them to live independently. We have had a lot of really good work with that.

The other comment was that we don’t have a representative on this committee from Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. We generated a list of questions for Pamela to get answers for some of these activities to see what Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is doing. Within those questions we asked her, understanding that all are real busy, that she designate someone to participate on this committee to provide the answers requested. I have not received a response.

We continue to meet bimonthly, we would welcome any participation. Thank you to the people who are on the committee who give us the good answers. Until we get the answers from Division of Vocational Rehabilitation we can’t provide an up to date report.

## Discussion on Ex Officio Reports

Does anyone have any questions regarding the reports provided in the E-blast packet?

## North Carolina Assistance Program John Marens, Director

I did not provide a written report but am willing to give a brief verbal report. First of all I want to apologize for coming in late. I have been going back and forth between the GREAT conference and that is why I was late.

I would like to tell you a couple of things related to Client Assistance Program activity. In relation to what you are experiencing there are a number of issues around the state regarding problems with reimbursement. They are related either to the new software, BEAM which has a lot of bugs and they are working tirelessly to get them out. Unfortunately the other issue is with the controller’s office. There are delays with people being reimbursed with transportation and other and is being held up there. It is not just with your folks.

As far as our particular activity goes: One is an Independent living consumer contacted us not too long ago. We were ready to go to appeal, based on her functional issue and medical condition required a walk in tub to be able to take care of her needs and also some therapeutic benefits. When requested, she was denied. When we researched it there was a policy that stated that Vocational Rehabilitation will not purchase walk in tubs. We communicated with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Independent Living folks and reminded them that Rehabilitation Services Administration policy states that you cannot, by federal law, deny any particular service based on the fact that you don’t want to provide that service. There was an initial concern that these tubs frequently leak or have problems. The reality was that the policy is what caused this person to be denied. We were able to negotiate. Independent Living no longer has that policy.

Secondary issue, we have been involved in a case with a young lady who was denied a purchase of a van. This was a Vocational Rehabilitation case. I bring it up because transportation affects people independence. This young lady had done a great deal in her life to move forward. Her functional issues are related to a vehicle accident. She had a van on its last legs; she was in the process of getting a new van when policy changed where purchase assistance was no longer going to be provided. To make a long story short we went to appeal. We unfortunately lost, however we feel that we lost because we had a brand new hearing officer, hearing her first appeal, who did not understand the ins and out of Vocational Rehabilitation policy. We have asked for the Secretary of Health and Human Services to review the hearing officer’s decision. It is rare that the Secretary’s office overturns a decision, but we are hopeful, because of the circumstance of this case, they will do so. We are prepared to go to court in civil action to overturn the decision.

The argument in this case was; that the way the new policy is written regarding assistance of the purchase of a van does not allow for an exception. Federal regulations say you cannot have a policy where there is no exceptions based on the needs of an individual.

I’ve been in contact with RSA, unfortunately while they have issued an informal policy directive, there isn’t anything definitive and they are so caught up in writing the new regulations for the WIOA act that I don’t anticipate them taking a stand on this. I do know in talking to other Client Assistance Program directors across the country this is an issue across the country. I’m hoping that Rehabilitation Services Administration is going to take a definitive stand because, where I am sitting, I think it is a basic denial of a service. And again federal regulations say you can’t deny when it is clearly based on cost.

Kay Miley: Any discussion or questions regarding Ex. Officio reports?

## Old Business:

Keith Greenarch: John I want you to know that the way you tell your cases and stories, you are that person that if something is denied you step in and bring it to a resolution. The Client Assistance Program is something we tell all our consumers about in Independent Living.

I know Julia touched on this already, we sent this out earlier in the year. Julia was kind enough to provide this, “How are your CILs(Centers for Independent Living) doing”? She mentioned earlier what each Center for Independent Living is facing come October 1 of next year. I hope every one of you understand what the repercussions of this cut means to consumers. That is who we have to think about, consumers with disabilities in North Carolina. That is why we are here and what we do. We are here to represent the people of North Carolina as we are appointed to represent. In saying that we have to be stewards of the money, but it’s also our responsibility that the funding is kept at levels so that a center can function. I’ve had the opportunity to visit every Center for Independent Living in the state. Each one is out there daily working their tails off with a little amount of money. If you look at the overall budget that comes into the state for Independent Living, we operate on a very small percentage of that. We do more than anyone else with that.

In reference to the document mentioned earlier, I want each one of you to print this out and look at it every week and keep us in your thoughts. Share your ideas. As we move forward this funding is significant. I’m going to run down this briefly. It comes out to a $30,000 loss to each center. One person cannot do this. We have to do this as a group. Write your legislators, we need to get in front of them and let them know what is coming and the devastation it will cause for independent living. It’s not about centers having money; it’s about the amount of services that will be lost. The people of NC deserve better.

We were asked yesterday why there were not centers in every area. We do want to move into these unserved areas but there has not been any money allocated since 2002 or 2003. Folks think that you can just apply and get the money but it does not work like that. Do what you can to engage your legislator. We are sort of in the drain, circling around and around. We don’t want to go down.

John Marens: I just want to segway onto that. This issue does not affect just the Centers for Independent Living, the difference between Designated State Unit, Independent Living program is that Vocational Rehabilitation gets federal as well as state money, where as the Independent Living gets no federal and only gets state money. So this isn’t an issue that just affects you, the sad fact is that the Independent Living program has been cut every year for I don’t know how long. There is less and less money with more and more demand. This is why there is a wait for people to get personal assistance services. This is why no new users can be helped unless someone already receiving these services gets off. You have this big push from the state to deinstitutionalize people while at the same time cutting service to the community supports for these people to be able function independently. It’s not just you, people need to call their legislators and call these people who make these decisions. Tell them that when they cut money in the name of good government, it affects people’s lives in very significant ways.

Keith Greenarch: That is passionate. We need to get ticked off and get the emails going. That is why I totally agree that Goal 3 needs to take charge. We need to go and say that we want I&E funds.

Kay Miley: Are there any questions?

New Business:

Keith Greenarch: New business, I want to talk just a minute about the Adaptables and the school program. At the second grade level we have a program called “Different but Alike”. It features disability awareness anti-bullying concepts, school access, diversity and design ideas and hands on learning. Our staff goes into their school day and provides this information. There was an idea about little mail boxes, put in each in of the schools. The kids could write letters to Uncle Jim; that was Jim Whalen who just left. Jim would then reply to them, the next edition letters will be addressed to Mark. We have published the book and I have one for each of you. Titled, “*Everything You wanted to Know But Was Afraid to Ask*”. These letters or questions are from second graders. It’s awesome. I’m giving each of you a copy. Please share it with your family and friends or someone in your school system, libraries whatever. There are more copies available for $12.00. I hope you enjoy it.

Mark Steele: We are very proud of this book. A staff member did all the illustration, Daniel Moody an aspiring artist.

Keith Greenarch: Yes, we are extremely proud of the staff that worked on this. There were a lot of tireless hours that went into this program. Everyone that has seen this has just had a fit over it. Please share, because it’s meant to share. The funds go into a like program.

Rene Cummins: Thank you both Mark and Keith, it’s nice to get a gift. Quick announcement, Keith mentioned about getting started on writing the next State Plan. We’re going to have a teleconference call to identify whether the week of December 8 or December 15 is best. If you are interested in working on the next state plan, get in touch with me. We will work on identifying the time that will accommodate the majority of the people who want to participate. If you have a time that doesn’t work, don’t give up or go away, we will include you at a later time. We will send out emails to identify a time to have the teleconference for the first meeting getting started on issues we need to address working on next State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL).

John Marens: I just wanted to make quick announcement to say that I have something for everyone. We try to come up with promotional items to get our name out there. We came up with one this year, I want to share with you, a very nice lunch bag which is insulated. Some of you got one yesterday, some didn’t I have enough for everybody.

Sandy Ogburn: I will speak while those are being passed out. I just returned from the APRIL conference (Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living) and I made a decision on the last day that I hope you will support me on this. They have a youth conference that goes on at the same time. The last day, they put the youth on the stage and each one talked about what the conference meant to them. It was very inspiring. One of our little girls from North Carolina said, “Screw every doctor that told me I couldn’t do anything.” We were really proud of her. I made a commitment and hopefully you can back me on this. They had 70 something youth attendees. The goal next year is 100. They asked all attendees to make a commitment to bring youth. I would like to see this committee or SILC sponsor 1, 2, 5 every how many youth to send next year. I know the Centers for Independent Living send youth. I would like to partner with them because they are the future. These people will be caring for us as we get older. We need to empower them as much as possible. I volunteer if it’s in Hawaii to take the youth.

You said that Goal 2, the empowerment, may get together and talk about that with finance. Have it in the minutes to talk about this at a future meeting.

Gloria Bellamy: I am now chair of Goal 2 and will be working with Rene and the Youth Leadership Forum. We’ve already started thinking about some resource building ideas to finance some of these things.

We can’t expect the Centers for Independent Living to shoulder the responsibility or just the whole Statewide Independent Living Council. Before we get guidelines it would be a good idea for us to come up with some ways to start raising money now. We’re going to have to do more than wait for Washington to send the money down. We may not be selling KrispyKreme but come up with new ways of raising money. We just received a $12 book. A good idea would be for us all to pull out our checkbooks and pay $12. In the future we could have door prizes or something else to get our name out. We need to become ambassadors, invest in business cards. So when we say we represent the Statewide Independent Living Council, we have talking points in our head, be sure we are knowledgeable enough about the organization to talk about it, to work, to be able to refer a person to their closest center.

It’s time to have money to back up some of these ideas. We ask the Center Directors to be here. They provide us with a lot of training. What are we putting in their pockets to help with their gas? We need to come up with ideas to raise money and get some activities executed that we have been holding in our heads. Thank you Sandy, Goal 2 will take that under advisement.

Kay Miley: I also want to add Sandy; we have sponsored some youth to attend the APRIL (Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living) Conference and the Youth conference in the past. It just depends on funds.

Is there any other new business?

Helen Pase: Disability Advocate Resource Center is having a fund raiser here in Greenville on November 12 at the Rock Spring Center, “Shagging for a Cause” featuring the Band of Oz. They charge me way less than usual. The owners of the Rock Spring Center have a child with a disability. They donate their facility for this event, a very top drawer facility.

We have 200 plus folks that look forward to this every year. This is our 5th annual. In 4 years we’ve raised over $21,000 and we earmark the money to help people with disabilities during emergency situations. The money is used when they can’t afford a new appliance or a deposit on a new house. If someone with a service animal is in the hospital, for boarding and veterinarian fees. Many types of different situations, so if you have any extra change; send me a check as a donation for our fundraiser.

Debbie Hippler: When we are aware of fundraisers, the events are listed on the Statewide Independent Living Council’s website.

Kay Miley: Debbie will provide directions for our lunch.

Debbie Hippler: The printed directions to the Greenville Center for Independent Living, Disability Advocates and Resource Center (DARC), are on the podium as you leave this room. Lunch will be served there. So go tour the center and get your lunch.

Kay Miley: Do I have a motion to adjourn?

(Oshana Watkins/Kimlyn Lambert)

## Meeting Adjourned at 12:03.

## Meeting: tentatively set for January 9th at the Country Inn and Suites in Burlington, NC.

Attendees: P = Present / T= attending by Teleconference / A = Absent

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Members** |  | Ogburn, Sandy | P | **Center Directors** |  |
| Alewine, Ricky | P | Overfield, Jennifer | P | Julia Sain | P |
| Barber, Deja | P | Staley, Teresa | P | Mark Steele | P |
| Bellamy, Gloria | P | Watkins, Oshana | P | Helen Pase | P |
| Cummins, Rene | P | Barry Washington | A | Benita Williams | P |
| Greenarch, Keith | P |  |  |  |  |
| Hicks, Sandra | P | **Guests** |  | **Staff/Support** |  |
| Kaufman, Joshua | P | Gay Joyner | P | Will Miller | P |
| Kincaid, Mitzi | A |  |  | Debbie Hippler | P |
| Lambert, Kimlyn | P | **Ex. Officio** |  | Mark Lineberger | P |
| Miley, Kay | P | Dockery, Deidre DSB | P | 2 PCAs | P |
| Miller, Clare “Ping” | P | John Marens CAP | P |  |  |