

Draft Minutes
ADVOCACY, OUTREACH, AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Thursday, May 7, 2020
12:15 PM – 1:45 PM
Teleconference (802) 828-7667, 447601001#

Meeting called by:

Sam Liss, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:18 p.m.

Members Present:

- Ana Kolbach (via Skype)
- Bill Meirs (via Skype)
- Calla Papademas (via Skype)
- Courtney Blasius (via Skype)
- Diane Dalmasse (ex-officio, non-voting)
- Sam Liss (via Skype)
- Martha Frank (via Skype)
- Cari Kelley (via Skype)
- Sarah Launderville (via Skype)
- Olivia Smith-Hammond (via Skype)

Members Absent:

- Brian Smith
- Helena Kehne
- Sherrie Brunelle

SRC Liaison:

None

SRC Coordinator:

- Kate Larose

Interpreters:

None

Speakers or Presenters:

None

Guests:

None

1) Introductions (Sam Liss)

Discussion:

Those in attendance went around the table and introduced themselves.

Conclusions:

Thanks to everyone!

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None

2) Approval of Agenda (Sam Liss)

Discussion:

Sam asked for any proposed additions or changes to the agenda. Sam requested to add a grant update under other business. Martha moved to accept the agenda and it was seconded. No further discussion. All approved. Vote unanimous 8-0-0

Conclusions:

Motion passes: today's agenda accepted

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None

3) Open for Public Comment (Sam Liss)

Discussion:

No one from the public was present

Conclusions:

n/a

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None

4) Approval of Minutes for March 5, 2020 (Sam Liss)

Discussion:

Sam highlighted that there is now a discrete legislative updates page and those have been removed from the minutes. Sam asked for any proposed changes or amendments to the March 5, 2020 minutes. There were none. Calla moved to accept the minutes and it was seconded. No further discussion. All approved. Vote unanimous 8-0-0

Conclusions:

March 5, 2020 minutes were approved

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Upload approved minutes to the SRC website, **Kate Larose**, 5/12/2020

5) Cancelled Event Updates (Group)

Discussion:

- 1) **March 12th Disability Awareness Day**- the event was cancelled due to COVID. However, there were announcements in the well of the House and several relevant committee meetings. That same day the decision was made to not allow public members in so those who met at the Capitol Plaza (including VCIL staff, employers, and others) were unable to be recognized on the House floor as was previously planned. Sarah shared that they are working on events such as a virtual town hall and trainings that people can access in lieu of Disability Awareness Day, with a focus on COVID-19 response. Sam also shared that something might be happening in July around ADA commemoration. Sarah shared that it is likely in-person events will not be happening in the coming months, especially given that so many would-be attendees are people with underlying health conditions.
- 2) **April 2nd Card Room Event**- Given this current time of uncertainty, we will wait and see if holding this event next year will be a possibility. Kate shared that the 2021 Card Room reservation request was submitted in December and she will share any news she hears.

Conclusions:

See above

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

n/a

6) Legislative Updates (Group)

Discussion:

Sam provided [legislative updates](#).

National advocates are turning their attention to being ready for when the economy opens back up so that people with disabilities are not discriminated against in hiring practices. There may be a positive opportunity for people with disabilities in all of this stemming from the increase in remote work options.

Diane mentioned the project being done by the videographer who worked with the Spirit of the ADA Awards who captured testimonials from three different employers including The Alchemist. Given that many businesses have pulled advertising, there is now more PSA space available so these will be airing to highlight the positive impacts of hiring people with disabilities. Sarah said she recently attended a Green Mountain Self Advocate meeting and when one participant shared her experience being part of the project her pride came through which was wonderful to behold.

Sarah said we cannot rebuild the economy in the same way that it was built, and that we need to rebuild in a way that is more equitable to people with disabilities. To help with this, she requested that SRC members complete and

share [this survey](#) from the Economic Mitigation and Recovery Task Force.

Diane reported that VR has been working with Legal Aid and developmental services providers around unemployment as there is unemployment insurance (UI) and there is [pandemic unemployment assistance](#) (PUA). PUA is open to many more people who would have been ineligible for UI such as low wage earners and those who are self-employed. What this means is that people are eligible for PUA in the amount of roughly \$800 a week through July and it is retroactive. There is tremendous concern about supporting guardians, families, and low-wage workers to protect their eligibility for SSI and Medicaid (for example through ABLE accounts) when these funds go away and the focus is on getting the word out broadly and forming a working group. Martha shared that VFN is recording a webinar on this topic which can be broadly shared when complete. Diane said that Betsy Choquette is also working on training around ABLE accounts. Sarah shared that untangling benefits eligibility would be great topics for town halls. Diane shared that VR's 5 benefits counselors—soon to be 6 once the state hiring freeze is over—could assist in this. Olivia thanked Diane for mentioning PUA and also requested that Section 8 and food stamps also be included in the larger benefits discussions. She asked if there was a deadline for PUA.

Conclusions:

Sarah will send the survey to Kate who will disseminate to SRC members. Kate will share any additional information about PUA with the committee.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Email SRC Members with survey link, **Kate Larose**, 5/8/2020
- Email committee members information about PUA, **Kate Larose**, 5/12/2020

7) Calendar of Upcoming Events (Group)

Discussion:

A. [Virtual Youth Summit and Workshops](#)

Martha shared that on May 28th there will be a no-cost, virtual youth summit. Hassan Davis, who was the originally scheduled summit speaker, will be doing a webinar available for up to 500 people on Zoom. He will also be doing an interactive workshop for young people and those who support young people on finding their voice. There is limited enrollment for the workshop because it is interactive in nature, but there will be a repeat workshop offering on June 2nd. Other topics of interest are navigating special education for youth. Jackie from the Agency of Education will be conducting a workshop which will be shaped after speaking with youth advocates which will be shared as details firm up.

B. SILC Olmstead Summit- June 2nd

The State Independent Living Council (SILC) hasn't had this event for three years. We were asked by the Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition and Housing Conservation Board to present before the Olmstead Meeting.

September 5 Update: This is the 20th anniversary of the SCOTUS Olmstead decision that forced the integration mandate in 1990. The Vermont Olmstead Plan is gathering dust with legislators never hearing of it. We are looking to find out what has been done to date to fulfill the Olmstead requirements and what needs to be done going forward.

November 7, 2019 Update: There has been much interest and more information will be available as the date approaches.

January 9, 2020 Update: Much progress has been made in the planning. There are new partners aboard and it will most likely be held at Capital Plaza. The planning team is currently looking for sponsors to help cover the cost of the event.

March 5, 2020 Update: The date has been set for June 2, 2020 at Capitol Plaza. It will take place from 10am-2pm and will include a working lunch, keynote speaker, and a panel discussion. More information will be sent out to members soon.

May update: The event has been moved to a virtual event which will be held on June 2nd. Tom Hamilton will be sending out invitations with the exact time and the platform to be used through the VCDR, Pathways, and other listserves. Patrick Flood and all three congressional offices will be participating.

Conclusions:

See above for events to attend.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Forward Olmstead Summit invitation to SRC Members once available, **Kate Larose**.

8) Other Business (Chair)

Discussion:

A. **SILC Emergency Preparedness Kit:** DBVI and possibly VCIL will be distributing hard copies. The [electronic version](#) is included on several websites.

B. **New SILC Website:** The new website is about to launch momentarily. Sam will send out the link to committee members. If you have a chance, take a look at the different pages and resources.

C. **Revised Include! Curriculum:** The revisions are geared towards additional

cultural and ethnic inclusion, and mental health. Will be distributed to schools in the fall.

D. Getting the Record Straight Project: As previously reported at past meetings, this work is well under way and aspects will be included in SILC's new website under their employment page.

E. Other: Grant Opportunity: ODEP recently granted \$20k for a project submitted by David Stapleton. The intent is to get the word out on a Career Access type pilot project. The name of the project will be Transitioning to Economic Self-Sufficiency (TESS). David is also working on another project idea for people who apply for SSDI to help support them to moving to employment and careers, though it is currently stalled.

9) Adjournment (Sam Liss)

Discussion:

Sarah moved to adjourn. All approved. Vote unanimous 7-0-0

Conclusions:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:44pm

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Draft minutes uploaded to SRC website, **Kate Larose**, 5/12/2020
- Draft minutes emailed to Committee members, **Kate Larose**, 5/12/2020
- Minutes approved, **Committee**, 9/3/2020
- Approved minutes uploaded to website, **Kate Larose**, 9/8/2020