

**STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
Holiday Inn Express, Minot & Virtual  
November 2 - 3, 2023**

**Call to Order:** Brittney Hogan called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

**Roll Call:**

**Members Present:** Angie Bosch, Scott Burlingame, Leon Dietrich, Peter Yung, Jerry Christiansen, Jan Beddes, Brittney Hogan, Russ Cusack, Ali Brown, Joe Yasenchack, Nancy Ludson, Gillian Plenty Chief

**Members Absent:** Hope Wolbert, Emma Leigh Miller, Robyn Soiseth, Chelsy Sondrol

**Non-Council Members Present:** Royce Schultze, Aimee Volk, Brittany Hanson, Jana Johnson, Randy Sorensen, Jamie Hardt, Kenzie Larson

**Approval of the November 2023 Agenda:** Scott Burlingame made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, Angie Bosch seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

**Approval of August 2023 Minutes:** Nancy Ludson made a motion to approve the August 2023 SILC minutes as presented, Joe Yasenchack seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

**Correspondence – Brittney Hogan:**

The SILC State Plan for Independent Living Technical Amendment was submitted in June and was officially approved.

Aimee is currently working on the PPR report for FFY 2023.

**Treasurer's Report – Shannon Cook:** Reviewed the Treasurer's Report. At the last meeting we voted to send two people to APRIL however no one was able to go.

**Peter Yung made a motion to accept the Treasure's Report as presented, Jerry Christiansen seconded the motion to approve. Motion passed by unanimous decision.**

**Community Court Panel – Judge Ashley Beall, Attorney Nick Schmitz, Attorney Corban Dickerson**

They explained what municipal court is. Most of the cases seen are due to mental health crisis or substance abuse. Typically, they are misdemeanors and do not rise to district court. This is the first court that typically one would experience for a petty crime. Some people do not have the knowledge to know about options, lack of education, poverty, etc. They have worked with Independence, Inc. to assist with the process and next steps. They explained that Independence, Inc. help and support individuals and carry out the plan.

Jamie Hardt talked about some things that Independence, Inc. next steps would be to be accessible in the courthouse. This way the individual does not have to go to Independence or finding a time to call.

Some suggestions for better services would be a mobile medical unit (this way people do not miss medications). Better collaboration from all agencies working together and not just passing them off and no follow up. Better access to front end mental health services.

### **Roundtable Discussion on Innovation**

- How has independent living (IL) changed in the last ten years? They feel that Money Follows the Person (MFP) and Aging and Disability Resource Link Transition and Diversion Services (ADRL) has taken over and much of their time is dedicated to these services. The other core services are falling to the side.
- How can we be more innovative for independent living? Discussion was held on if rebalancing dollars could be used for salaries. Some other thoughts were refocusing outreach efforts, data for a cohesive reporting system, if someone is coming in for one service once seeing if they have other goals, etc.

### **Peer Support Group – Independence, Inc. – Kenzie Larson (Independence, Inc.), Hope Grossman, Billy**

The group shared their experience and what brings them to the group. They explained how talking to others with similar experiences helps. Hope shared her successes with working with Independence Inc. She came to assist with housing. She worked with them and now she has her own place, a successful job, paying bills, got a car, etc.

Billy shared that his success with Independence Inc and has achieved goals working with them for two years.

### **Committee Breakout**

**Friday, November 3, 2023**

**Call to Order:** Brittney Hogan called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

#### **Roll Call:**

**Members Present:** Scott Burlingame, Angie Bosch, Nancy Lundon, Gillian Plenty Chief, Brittney Hogan, Shannon Cook, Jerry Christiansen, Leon Dietrich, Peter Yung, Jan Beddes, Ali Brown, Joe Yasenchack

**Members Absent:** Russ Cusack, Emma Leigh Miller, Chelsy Sondrol

**Non-Committee Members:** Aimee Volk, Nina Arias, Royce Schultze, Brittany Hanson, Jana Johnson,

### **Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic and Crisis Intervention Teams – John Butgereit and Sargent Jared Foley**

John talked about the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) during the 2023 legislative assembly provided funding to ND Health and Human Services for up to three human service centers to begin the process of becoming a certified community behavioral health clinic. At North Central Human Service Center, they have a residential substance use treatment, crisis residential treatment for adults, walk-in/drop off crisis intervention for adults (988 phone lines), and outpatient behavioral health treatment services. The changes that have occurred over the last two years are community-based services versus clinic-based services due to workforce shortages. They have increased services to those in the most need and transitioned from symptom-based eligibility to functional impairment and are out in the community more.

Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (about a 2–4-year process to become certified) is an integrated community behavioral health model of care that aims to improve services quality and accessibility. They provide integrated, evidence-based, trauma-informed, recovery-oriented and person and family centered care. They offer a full array of CCBHC required mental health, substance use disorder and primary care screening services. They have established collaborative relationships with other providers and healthcare systems to ensure coordination of care.

With CCBHC serve anyone who walks through the door, regardless of their diagnosis and insurance status. They have had workforce shortages (90% turnover rate) likely due to the nature of the work as it is draining on people, so they are looking at ways to increase retention and satisfaction.

Sargent Jared Foley is the team leader for the crisis negotiation team. Sargent Foley and Lisa with North Central Human Service Center have done two Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) trainings. The training was geared towards law enforcement, but they are looking to get it out to everyone. The training is one week (40-hours). The goal is to get the entire law enforcement team trained in Minot and then expand to others interested in the community.

**Quarterly Director's Report:**

Angie for Freedom.: See attached.

Royce for Dakota Center for Independent Living: See attached.

Scott for Independence, Inc.: See attached.

Randy for Options: See attached.

**Committee Reports:**

Governance Committee – Royce Schultze: Full council.

Internal Affairs – Nancy Landon: Filled out the GRID.

External Affairs – Angie Bosch: Filled out the GRID.

**State Rehabilitation Council – Russ Cusack:** No report.

**Traumatic Brain Injury Council – Shannon Cook:** Met in August and focused on their State Plan related to brain injury. They also talked about person-focused training. Their state plan goes through 2027. They have three subcommittees focused on making the meetings worthwhile. Rebecca Quinn came to state that their legislative budget was increased. A study was approved for the care and treatment.

**Committee on Aging – Royce Schultze:** Leacey Brown presented on Voices for Home Modifications of the Dakotas.

**Olmstead Commission – Scott Burlingame:** They met in August and they had a presentation on Olmstead versus Florida which can help with guidance in ND. An inquiry process was approved and you can visit [Olmsteadnd.org](http://Olmsteadnd.org) under the inquiry tab. They meet again next week.

**NASILC – Aimee Volk:** Alabama has decided to break away from the designated state entity with vocation rehabilitation.

**Monthly Region 8 Conference Call:** No report.

**Public Comment:** No Comment.

The next SILC meeting will be February 1-2, 2024, in Bismarck, ND and will have the virtual option.

**Scott Burlingame made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Angie Bosch seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.**

# Freedom ND SILC Director's Report – November 2023

## MFP/ADRL Updates

- Both programs continue to be very busy! We have had 129 ADRL referrals in the past quarter with 46 consumers transitioning. MFP has had 21 referrals and 10 transitions. With these numbers our Independent Living Advocates are extremely busy every day assisting consumers at various stages of the transition process.

## Office Updates:

### Lisbon

- We have hired a new Independent Living Advocate/Transition Coordinator in the Lisbon office. Her name is Kristine Green.

### Fargo

- We have filled the newly created position at our Center. Michelle Stocker will begin in November as our Transition Assistant.
- An officer from the Fargo Police Department presented at our Freedom In Action last month of being safe in your home and your community. A great connection was formed between the IL Advocate and the officer, each learning they can be a resource for one another.
- Freedom In Action events have been well attended. Upcoming events include:
  - Cookie Jar and Thank You Cards Tuesday, November 14
  - Holiday Meal at Dakota Medical Foundation Thursday, December 7

## Consumer Story

A consumer that has been working with us on and off since 2016, has been trying to prove her US Citizenship to SSA for almost a decade. As of last year, she was told she would lose her benefits if she didn't prove her citizenship. Freedom helped her apply for a passport early this summer, and they wouldn't accept it unless she had more proof. She spent the last 3 months working really hard trying to get the right proof, with limited income, and minimal support. We mailed the documents to the passport agency a few weeks ago. She just left a voicemail today saying she has her passport now!!

A consumer met with Freedom for the first-time last year and was crying during the first appointment. She had a hard time prioritizing her goals, didn't know what goals to set for herself and was feeling very lost. We worked on prioritization goals and organizing her paperwork. She started to learn skills and gain confidence during our appointments. She did eventually stop coming and stopped responding. She came back this month and shared all the great things she's been doing with the skills she's learned here at FRC. She is more empowered and able to do more independently. She also had more confidence in herself as she shared updates with the staff, she's been doing that she did not see herself accomplishing last year.

## Wahpeton

### Freedom In Action

- Halloween themed crafts Monday, November 20

## **Jamestown**

### **Freedom In Action**

- Gratitude Jars Tuesday, November 21
- Holiday Craft Thursday, December 21
  
- IL Skills classes are being facilitated weekly with transition students in Valley City

## **Event Planning**

- We are in full swing planning for a few different events.
  - Giving Hearts Day is coming up February 8, 2024. We have just started the planning for this but looking to keep our same theme as last year: “Nothing about us without us.” – Judi Chamberlin.
  - Appreciation Luncheon is back! After a few years of trial and error, we have decided to go back to having our annual awards event as a luncheon. This will involve giving awards to people in our communities that are advocating and improving the lives of people with disabilities. Community members can nominate a person, business, group, or organization for our awards that will then be gone through by a panel of judges to determine who will get the 2024 awards. We will also include a Silent Auction that will be online a few days before the event starts and will end after the event is over. This event will take place on May 16<sup>th</sup> from 12-1:30.
  - Lastly, we are in the beginning stages of planning activities and themes throughout 2024 around our 35<sup>th</sup> year of Freedom Resource Center!

## **Dakota Center for Independent Living Director’s Report**

### **Staffing**

Kelli Richey - Admin Assistant/Marketing Specialist  
Program Director Brittany Hanson  
Delores Nagel ADRL Diversion Specialist  
MFP TC in Dickinson - open  
Staff attended the APRIL Conference

### **Outreach**

Staff attended and set up booths at the State VR Conference, LGBTQIA2S Summit. Veterans Stand Down and the Monster Mile, sponsored by Heartview.

### **Advocacy**

Staff assisted the Gladstone Senior Center with ADA issues the City of Gladstone put on the center before opening it.

### **Technical Assistance**

504 assessments at the Flasher City Hall and Beach City Hall

SILC Directors Report - Independence Inc.  
11/3/23

**Direct Services**

**Success Stories:**

An 82-year-old male from Minot with physical health issues came to us when having difficulty maneuvering up and down his stairs. We helped him by applying for grants, finding appropriate assistive technology, and coordinating installation. He is now living in his home independently without the risk of being institutionalized.

A 29-year-old male from Minot with mental health issues and who has a criminal background was having difficulty securing employment. We helped him fill out employment applications, practice for his interview, and call possible employment options. He is now successfully maintaining employment.

A 70-year-old male moved out of the nursing home (after three years) into an adult foster care home where he is thriving. He was able to ride a pontoon for the first time.

We assisted an 81-year-old female with widening her bathroom doors and getting a contractor to make a new sidewalk path for her to be able to access her ramp to be more independent and not reliant on her family to get her out of the house.

A 58-year-old woman in active recovery from addiction. She has been in recovery for seven months. She has gotten her own apartment, become gainfully employed and promoted, paid off almost all her debt that she accrued while using her credit cards for living expenses while in addiction, and repaired relationships with her children and grandchildren. Her goal this winter is to save money and continue taking public transportation so she can purchase a car in the spring. We assisted her with a deposit and first month's rent along with purchasing household necessities through the ADRL Grant.

An 18-year-old high school from Des Lacs Burlington School got the opportunity to job shadow at Gooseneck Implement (the local John Deere Dealership) and made great connections for his future.

A 22-year-old Minot female who has been part of our High School Transition Services got to move into her dorm room and have her first day of college.

**Barriers:**

A 69-year-old female we assisted out of the nursing home (she there for seven years) is now back at the nursing home and is at risk of losing her apartment and everything we worked towards.

A 43-year-old male experiencing homelessness. We have been working with him for over 6 months to find housing. The feedback on his most recent housing application with a rental company in town was "no matter how many programs he is involved in" they would not rent to him due to low credit.

A 70-year-old woman living in her own home. She was beginning to have difficulty living independently, as her bathroom had a tub that was too high for her to step into. Through the ADRL program and RAP Grant, we were able to pay for a new walk-in shower to be installed. She is now having no problems living independently in her own home.

A 22-year-old Minot female has her permit, but no way to practice driving so she can get her license.

## Community Services

**Housing:** The City of Minot is undergoing a comprehensive study of housing in the city. I had the chance to sit in on a public meeting and listen to the input of the company doing the survey. One of the early things they discovered is many people in the city are house poor, meaning they pay more than 35% of their income for housing. It likely means people who are living in rent-controlled housing are having more problems moving out when they have chances to earn more money. I was also able to share how the lack of accessible housing in diverse areas of town is creating problems.

**Transportation:** Over six months ago, the City of Minot added two new public bus routes. Unfortunately, as a result of being unable to hire new drivers, the routes have not yet started. Minot has been without a taxi service for about two years. It is expected that they will have a new service next week. This service will include one accessible taxi that can be used on demand, however, they are asking for 24 hours notice whenever possible.

**Recovery Reinvented:** Seven of our staff were able to attend Recovery Reinvented at Minot State University on Oct. 5. At the event, state and national addiction experts shared their insight into how to turn 'Advocacy into Action' at the event dedicated to ending the shame and stigma surrounding the disease of addiction.

**Outreach:** We have been busy going to a lot of community events. We were at the Veterans Stand Down, the Out of the Darkness Walk, the Minot Food Truck Festival, the Magic City Pickleball Tournament, and more. We also held our Independent Living Fair on 11/1.

## Office News

On Monday, the Building Dreams Community Kitchen construction was completed. This kitchen will be used for IL Skills training and will also be available to be used by community partners. The funding for this project was in part a \$50,000 grant from the Minot Area Community Foundation and funds from the Building Dreams Capital Campaign. This is the end of our remodeling project. We are currently waiting for two new desks to be delivered, but in total we have added six new work stations this summer. However, by the time we are done hiring, we will likely need to add at least two more. Speaking of hiring, we currently have four Independent Living Advocate positions open. Two of those will work as the ADRL Transition coordinators, one will work as part of the FTR/Community Connect Program, and one will work out of the Bottineau satellite office.

Only two of these positions are a result of turnover, the rest are because of interoffice changes and new positions. Katie Schestler has been promoted to Assistant Program Director. In that role, she will work to provide services, assure quality assurance, and assist with training in the MFP/ADRL programs.

Nicole Beech, who has been part of the FTR/Community Connect program since 2020, is moving to Williston. She will now work as part of the MFP/ADRL program providing transition services remotely. This will be the first time we have had a staff in that area in over 10 years.

When this is all said and done, we will have at least 17 FTE's.



## Options IRCIL

Nov 2, 2023

With the retiring of the Program Manager and the imminent retirement of four additional people, most in positions of management, Options has reworked its hierarchy, departmentalizing management responsibilities by program area. Options currently has a manager for its North Dakota Relocation Services, one for its Independent Living Direct Services and a Manager for its Community Services. These three employees will be provided training to expand their management knowledge and prepare them for greater management duties as their competencies increase. Since the last SILC meeting Amanda Glimsdahl has come back to us from the ND Dept. of Aging and taken many of the Program Manager responsibilities for the IL Direct Service Program. Amanda had a great deal of responsibilities with North Dakota's ADRL Program and prior to that worked with Options providing Direct Service in Minnesota and North Dakota with special duties related to assisting people on a contractual basis with Minnesota providing benefits planning on a referral bases as received from Vocational Rehabilitation Councilors in Minnesota. Heather Everson Options former Advocate Trainer will take on additional responsibility for its community activities which will include its Accessibility Services, Durable Medical Equipment Program and Information and Referral Program. She will maintain some of her community-based service activities as well as increase her knowledge of the AIRs standards. AIRs the Alliance of information and Referral Providers set the standards for the collection and dissemination of information and referral services.

Hiring has proven very difficult since COVID with Options trying various methodologies to fill positions. Currently, Options has found itself hiring persons in their final year of Social Work instruction. The students are attending web-based programs and in instances where a student has to attend class in person Options has adjusted their work hours to compensate.

Options currently has an opening within its Devils Lake Office, its long time Devils Lake worker deciding she would take early retirement. Within our main office Options North Dakota direct service employee providing direct service chiefly in Grand Forks and the surrounding area gave her notice and moved to Mpls. An employee who had been employed at Options to deliver MFP services applied for and was hired for this Direct Service position. Options has expanded the number of people providing relocation services contractually with the State of North Dakota to five people. These employees will be providing both MFP and ADRL services throughout Options ND service area freeing up Options independent living direct service staff from having to fill the service gap.

To date Options has assisted 33 people relocate back into the community and prevented the institutionalization of 15 people.

Options held its 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Deer Hunt which provided 18 hunters with disabilities from three states with the opportunity to hunt deer. Hunters possessed various types of disabilities including total blindness, muscular dystrophy, triple amputation, traumatic head injuries, developmental disabilities, mental illness, post-traumatic stress disorders, and various orthopedic disabilities. The youngest hunter was 16 years of age and the oldest 83.

Of the 18 hunters, 16 actively participated in the hunt while two canceled after the first day. The second hunt day was windy which raised havoc with deer movement. By the end of the hunt, we had 5 deer taken. One young female hunter accompanied by her grandfather got her first deer, another young man with MD, and a young Amish hunter all got a deer. The oldest hunter at 83 got his deer as well as a Gulf War vet with PTSD. We had some 25 volunteers assist Options to get ready, conduct the hunt, and clean up with over 800 hours of service provided by them.

In the greater Grand Forks area during the last couple years Options has seen an increase in the number of restaurants setting up outside sidewalk cafés. Usually, municipalities have to give approval for these since it is on the right of way. For the most part the common impulse of the restaurant owners is to place the tables next to the buildings which is almost always the accessible route portion of the sidewalk. This causes anyone using mobility devices to have to go along the curb where the cross slope is generally greater than what is required since it was not meant as the accessible route. As Options identifies these, they contact the Cities, raise their awareness of the problem, inform them it is their responsibility to ensure accessible routes are maintained and inform them of the recourse people with disabilities have. In instances where this has happened tables have been moved to the curb side or in one case the whole sidewalk was redesigned extending the accessible route farther towards the curb.

Options Access Specialist has been assessing various apartment complexes coming out of a Fair Housing Act Complaint to ensure court defined remedies have been implemented in line with the Courts decision. As part of that the Access Specialist has assessed some six complexes with over 60 units providing the Dept. of Justice and ultimately the Court with summaries of the evaluations. Options Access Specialist has continued to provide home evaluations for Consumers when home accessibility improvements are needed. These have encompassed both interior and exterior accessibility evaluations and involve a home visit and report of recommendations the consumer can consider.

Options continued to provide direct service serving 155 people during the last two months. Of those served the largest group are people with physical disabilities followed by persons with mental disabilities. The Consumers served represent all the counties within Options 14 county service area with the addition of two counties where a Consumer resides outside our service area and is interested in moving to a county within our service area. The largest age group represented are people from age 25 to 60 followed by those over 60 years of age. The most common goal requests can be categorized in the following hierarchical order: Community Based Living, Self-Care, Personal Resource Management, Relocation Services, and Community/Social Participation.

Options conducted various outreach activities throughout the period which included manning outreach booths at two events, visiting various nursing facilities, and direct person to person meeting with other service providers. Options also held various outreach trainings on various topics requested by the audience members including an agency serving people with developmental disabilities.