

# Indiana Council on Independent Living (ICOIL)

**August 13, 2014**  
**1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

Indiana Government Center South (IGCS), Conference Room C  
402 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana

## **Meeting Notes**

**Attendance:** Bonnie Bomer, Peter Bisbecos, Chrissy Elzy, Leslie Hawker, Dr. Allen Piening, Peri Rogowski (Designated State Unit Representative - DSU), and Eric Zagorac.

**Guests:** Lotasha Higgins, Kylee Hope; Ranae Jackson, Greg Jinks, Theresa Koleszar, Beth Lutes, Tiffany Mulligan, Richard Simmers, Debbie Spikes, Emma Sullin, Carole Surratt-Bradley, Teresa Torres, Rudy Velasec, and Nancy Young.

### **I. Meeting Called to Order:**

Board Chairperson Leslie Hawker called the meeting to order at 1:06.

### **II. Roll Call:**

Roll call was taken.

### **III. Pledge of Allegiance:**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### **IV. Council Discussion - Quorum:**

A. Council members and guests didn't agree on the number of council members required to constitute a quorum. Discussion varied from those that thought a quorum consisted of four (4) council members, to those that thought eleven (11) council members constituted a quorum.

B. Chairperson Hawker added the following comments regarding discussion about a quorum:

“The BRS repeatedly told us we did not have a quorum because we didn't have at least 6 members present. Leslie Hawker stated that our by-laws state a majority of the voting members, and since neither

the two new appointments or any reappointments have been made, we have 7 voting members currently that are duly appointed. No where in the by laws does it say we have to have 50% of 11 members. It talks about how the council should have a minimum of 11 members, but the by laws never state that we need 6 people to make a quorum, it only says 50% of the voting members. Leslie Hawker stated how could the council be held responsible for what the Governor's office hasn't done. If that were true then all councils could be rendered useless because of the unnecessary delays for appointments. The discussion was really between the BRS and the chair, and really didn't include other council members, but did include audience members.”

C. Clarification will be sought concerning being out of compliance and the number of council members required to have a quorum.

**V. Council Business:**

A. Approval of Agenda for August 13, 2014.

- 1.) Motion to approve the agenda by Dr. Allen Piening.
- 2.) Motion seconded by Chrissy Elzy.
- 3.) Council members voted and approved the agenda.

B. Approval of Minutes for June 11, 2014.

- 1.) Motion to approve the minutes by Dr. Allen Piening.
- 2.) Motion seconded by Chrissy Elzy.
- 3.) Council members voted and approved the minutes.

**VI. Report from the Designated State Unit (DSU), The Indiana Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) – Peri Rogowski, Greg Jinks, Kylee Hope, and Latosha Higgins:**

A. ICOIL Executive Director Consultant Vacancy.

1. Ms. Rogowski updated attendees about progress on filling the vacant position.
2. The application review team was selected and will review applications.
3. Peri expects the contract to be awarded in the next few weeks.

B. Travel and Honorarium Reimbursement

1. Greg Jinks of the BRS shared information about reimbursement for travel and honorariums.

2. He shared that once travel vouchers are signed and received it should take 35 days for mailing and/or directly depositing funds. This is not as quick as previous reimbursement via a contractor.

C. Discussion about Reimbursement Delays.

1. Greg's comments resulted in a lively conversation about the delay in receiving reimbursement.
2. Conversation included concerns about the ability of some to attend meetings due to costs associated with attending ICOIL Board Meetings.
3. In an effort to clarify the 35-day waiting period, Greg indicated that contractors were able to reimburse much faster than the state.
4. "During the discussion of reimbursement, Leslie Hawker stated" the following:

"...the SPIL states that ICOIL is responsible for making it's own decisions about the expenditures of funds, not the state and pointed out the section" from the Indiana Code with her comments, as follows:

"IC 12-12-8-6(a) states explicitly "The Council is not a part of a state agency." To ensure ICOIL's independence, BRS has executed a contract with an entity for purposes of allowing this contractor to act, essentially, as a fiscal agent serving as a conduit through which agency funding for the council will flow. How that funding is allocated or apportioned is left entirely to the discretion of the council. Even as to matters such as travel reimbursement, the council need not seek permission from BRS, the DDRS, or the Indiana FSSA. ICOIL will follow state procedures such as the IDOA Out of state travel request process."

"Leslie Hawker also pointed out that Al Piening still has not received his reimbursement from June meeting, and these delays only serve to create problems for persons with disabilities to really have a place at the table because they can not afford all the expenses up front."

5. Chairperson Hawker stated that she wanted to speak with whoever makes decisions about reimbursement.
6. Conversation also included some concerns about decisions relative to the spending of ICOIL funds.
7. After much discussion, Kylee Hope stated that we must follow state and federal laws governing the use of funds marked for

ICOIL. Kylee also indicated that ICOIL had the ability to make decisions regarding expenditures however; it had to abide by state processes.

8. Latosha Higgins shared that the ICOIL board oversees how funds will be spent, and that we must follow state and federal procedures for expending these funds.
9. Kylee assured members that she would look into the matter so that the board could move on to other business.

D. Kylee shared about Restructuring Plans for BRS.

1. The proposed plan is to add staff to support and free-up VR Counselors' time so that they can actually counsel and guide VR Clients.
2. A specific timeframe for restructuring has not yet been determined.
3. VR Policies and Procedures are being examined and revised with an expected draft available sometime in October.
4. A VR Transitions' Coordinator has been hired. This individual will provide education and outreach to serve students ages 14-22 as they transition from school to work.
5. Transition staff will work with Special Educators to better serve students of transition age.

**VII. Report from Standing Committees/Ad Hoc Committee:**

- A. Executive Committee - Chairperson Hawker wants to schedule Conference Calls. Peri will look into this.
- B. Finance Committee – No report.
- C. Marketing, Outreach/Membership Committee
  1. Committee Chairperson Peter Ciancone is attending a conference on Transition Services. He will share highlights at a future meeting.
  2. Chairperson Hawker shared that we need to be proactive to better serve individuals of all ages.
  3. Leslie also led discussion about the need for council appointments and reappointments.
    - a.) This is especially important since six council member terms expired June 30, 2014.

- b.) Other concerns of not having a full council resulted in discussion about the possibility of:
  - 1. Being out-of-compliance and
  - 2. The need for a quorum. After discussion with the board, Leslie Hawker and Kylee Hope shared that they intend to continue following-up with their contacts in the Governor's Office about appointments and reappointments to the ICOIL board.

D. Planning Committee

- 1.) No report.
- 2.) Kylee suggested that the ICOIL board develop an action plan to reach their goals.
- 3.) Discussion about goals and objectives may be a topic to include on the September ICOIL board meeting agenda.
- 4.) It may be helpful to review the State Plan for Independent Living prior to the September meeting.
- 5.) The ICOIL Website includes information board members may want to review, such as: demographics, by-laws, and related information.

**VIII. New Council Business:**

A. Moving Forward and Education

- 1.) Leslie wants to educate council members on their roles. Part of this may include reviewing applicable laws and the state plan.
- 2.) She envisions being an Active and Pro-Active Voice for those with Disabilities.
- 3.) Leslie talked about looking at where we have been, where we are going, and the need for a compass or GPS to follow.
- 4.) Chairperson Hawker asked board member Peter Bisbecos to share Information with the board. Peter shared as follows:
  - a. The Waiver System evolved out of Institutional Care and Service Delivery.
  - b. CMS' new rule for states is to evaluate all waiver services and review how states have community access. Each state must determine this.
  - c. We must also determine how to address the growing demand with our shrinking for services resources.

- d. The aging of Baby Boomers is a growing concern for service delivery. And, individuals with Developmental Disabilities are outliving life expectations and often continue needing services.
- e. Structured Family Care Giving pays for a Caregiver to care for someone 24/7 with a daily rate. Caregiving for the DD population pays \$100.00 per day. Caregivers must make notes of their caregiving service.
- f. Kylee suggested that the board consider action items to get Independent Living Information out and to tie-it-back to the Centers for Independent Living.
- g. Peter asked “How do we increase services with reductions in funding?”

#### B. Membership Recruitment

- 1.) Leslie shared that she thinks Independent Living needs to be more diverse and to better represent our communities.
- 2.) It was suggested that we look at youth, parents, and schools for board member consideration and possible board appointment.
- 3.) See VII. C. 1-3 for earlier discussion on filling vacant ICOIL Board appointments.

#### C. Travel and Expense Procedures

- 1.) Latosha Higgins presented on clarification of additional paper work for ICOIL Board members.
- 2.) Going forward, the IRS will take taxes out of board member stipends. This is an IRS requirement. BRS was not involved in this decision.
- 3.) Strong opinions were expressed about taxing the stipend.
- 4.) Peter Bisbecos asked if there was a way to formally refuse the stipend so that it doesn't effect one's retirement.

#### D. ICOIL Budget

- 1.) The ICOIL Budget discussion began with Chairperson Hawker stating that she hadn't signed anything budgeted-related in some time.
- 2.) Peri offered to research and provide the ICOIL funding balance.
- 3.) A new fiscal year begins October 1, 2014.
- 4.) The ICOIL Budget was also discussed earlier in the meeting.  
Please see VI. C. 1-9

**IX. Update from Part B or Part C Center for Independent Living**

A. CIL Update

1.) No update.

B. Statement from Everybody Counts, Inc.

1.) Ms. Teresa Torres was invited to address the board.

2.) A copy of Ms. Torres' comments is attached.

3.) Prior to forwarding her comments electronically, Ms. Torres made some minor revisions.

C. Public Comments

1.) Renee Jackson from Everybody Counts was welcomed to address the board.

2.) Ms. Jackson stated that she was appalled as she sat through the board meeting.

3.) She suggested that the ICOIL Board include representatives of the following to "fix things" :

a. Parents,

b. Indiana State Department of Health,

c. Indiana Department of Transportation,

d. Indiana Department of Workforce Development, &

e. The Indiana Division of Aging.

D. Meeting Adjourned.

1.) Motion to adjourn the meeting by Peter Bisbecos.

4.) Motion seconded by Dr. Allen Piening.

3.) Council members voted and approved the motion to adjourn the meeting.-

Future Meeting: **September 10, 2014** at 1 p.m. in Conference Center Room C. Individuals needing disability accommodations must contact the DSU Program Director at least **48 hours** prior to the ICOIL meeting by calling 317-232-7115.

Please note: Pre-Board Education Meetings will be conducted prior to 2014 ICOIL Board Meetings. The Education meetings are scheduled from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. also in Conference Room C in the IGCS. Attendees will have an hour break for lunch or other personal business between meetings.

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