The meeting was called to order at 9:20 AM by Romel Mackelprang, SILC Chair.

Members Present:
Romel Mackelprang, SILC Chair, Cheney; Devin Beach, Ellensburg; Charity Drummond, Seattle; Gilbert Garza, Toppenish; Trina Forest, Lakewood; Linda McClain, Spokane; Andres Aguirre, Ex Officio Member - DVR, Olympia

Members excused absent:
Jana Finkbonner, Bellingham; Sandra Carr, Spokane; Al Neely, Yakima

Staff:
Debbie Cook, Interim Executive Director, Seattle; Kim Canaan, Administrative Support, Seattle

Guests:
Jim Morris, Olympia; Lucille Walls, Seattle; Mark Leeper, Pullman; Eric Raff, Olympia

Service Providers:
Darlene Pickard, CART provider; Gina Diaz, ASL Interpreter; Felice Shays, ASL Interpreter; Mary Ann Schappals, SSP

Motion:
Linda McClain moved to approve the January 13th Olympia Meeting Minutes. Trina Forest seconded. The motion passed.

Review of Agenda:
Romel Mackelprang asked for any changes, comments or additions to the agenda. No changes were proposed.

Romel Mackelprang: Chair’s Report

APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & RELOCATION TO UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON:
• Romel Mackelprang stated that Robert Honan gave his resignation at the January meeting. Rob left the SILC at the end of February and has joined his family in Germany. At the January meeting, Debbie Cook offered to fill in as Interim Executive Director. She was appointed on March 1 and has been ably handling the position for the past six weeks. We owe appreciation to Andres Aguirre and Debbie in coordinating this transition and establishing a contract for part time staff. The transition has not been entirely smooth
with much to learn and do in a short period of time. Romel and Andres explained that the contract with University of Washington is an Interlocal Agreement for staff and management services and does not mean the SILC headquarters has permanently moved. It is merely a convenient and efficient arrangement for all parties. This also gives us time to be deliberate about our process for recruiting and hiring a new executive director.

- Romel stated that the exempt position of Executive Assistant held by Barbara Hathaway has been terminated following consultation between Debbie, the SILC Executive committee and Andres at DVR. Support for the SILC will be provided as part of the UW contract to consolidate the work in one location until a new ED is hired. Barbara’s position with the state was exempt and will be filled again by the new ED. Barbara expressed interest in the ED position and was advised that she is welcome to apply. Romel acknowledged Barbara’s significant contribution, dedication and commitment to the SILC.

RECRUITMENT FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

- Romel said that DVR was not able to locate the job announcement for Rob’s position. Fortunately Debbie was able to get Rob’s last job description and performance review from DVR. She will use this to help the SILC draft a job description and announcement which DVR will post through the state personnel system when we are ready.

- Linda McClain stated that the Centers feel strongly that they should be included in all parts of the hiring process including establishing a new job description and helping to choose from among the candidates. Romel said the first step would be reviewing any historical information related to the job description. Then we will determine what skills, characteristics and experience are important and what tasks we want the Executive Director to focus on. Romel emphasized that the SILC should be deliberate and careful in planning. Romel thought that by the July or October meeting we could begin the recruitment.

RECRUITMENT FOR SILC VACANCIES:

- Romel reported that he talked with Stacey Tichenor who coordinates appointments for boards and commissions in the Governor’s office. The following Council members will complete their terms in September and cannot be renewed: Linda McLain, ACIL-WA Rep, Spokane; Al Neely, Yakima; Sandra Carr, Spokane; Romel Mackelprang, Spokane; Gilbert Garza, Toppenish; Jana Finkboner, Bellingham. The following positions are eligible for another term: Trina Forest, Lakewood; Andres Aguirre, Ex Officio Member - DVR, Olympia.

- Romel said the Governor’s office may delay some appointments in order to assure that half the council is not replaced at one time. The Council must also determine a positions rotation to ensure that members transition off at an even rate in the future. Debbie and Romel will draft a position chart for consideration at the July meeting.

- Devin Beach expressed concern about members of the Executive Committee transitioning off. Romel said that Jana Finkbonner and Devin would not be transitioning off and he commented about Jana’s positive leadership on the SILC.
• Gilbert Garza asked about the appropriateness of members helping to recruit their replacements. Romel said this was a very important role for outgoing members to play. Romel encouraged the council to think not only about disability and geography diversity but also about the skill sets needed to make a strong council.

• Devin asked about the application process for membership. Romel said that prospective members must complete the state application for Boards and Commissions. The Governor’s office will coordinate with the SILC executive team regarding Appointments that meet federal requirements and the SILC’s needs. He stressed that with this being an election year there are many important things for the outgoing Governor to do and Board Appointments may fall low on the list of priorities.

• Jim Morris talked about his experience filling positions on the Governor’s Committee GCDE. The Governor likes to have lots of choices. The GCDE developed a scoring process for applications based on important characteristics. The Governor followed GCDE’s recommendations because they were well explained. Romel thought this was a good idea and if we have enough applications to make choices we should consider this process for the SILC.

Debbie Cook: Executive Director’s Report

INTRODUCTION & ORIENTATION TO SILC LOGISTICS AT UW:

• Debbie Cook began with some background information about herself. She has worked in state government since 1974. She has worked for DSB and for DVR and is now employed by the University of Washington where she manages the Older blind program, provides technical assistance to the Assistive Technology program, works on a national voting project and now is assisting the SILC as Interim Director. Her first love is access to information technology—web sites, software and any other aspect of making technology resources more accessible to people with disabilities.

• Debbie stated that the challenge was to figure out how the Centers, the SILC, and the state agencies could work better together and define their roles. (This is critical so that we’ll know what we want the Executive Director to be doing.) Debbie is not competing for the permanent Executive Director position. She will be 40% time through September but can be extended if needed.

• Debbie introduced Kim Canaan and explained that support would be handled through her office at UW. Kim will be assisted by other UW support staff as needed. Debbie explained that procedures were slightly different at UW but most activities would be similar to DVR for travel etc.

• Debbie said she was committed to helping the SILC have a successful process for recruiting new and effective members.

• Gilbert asked if there was a limit to how many State Councils someone could serve on. Debbie said that there was no official limit but the application does ask if you serve on other councils. The Governor wants to involve as many people as possible. Of course
there are some requirements that result in a few people being on more than one Council such as the SILC rep on the SRC.

STATE PLAN:

- Debbie stated that the State Plan (SPIL) is the basis of SILC activities. Developing and monitoring that Plan is a major role of the SILC. And we have not really been doing that effectively. The next SPIL will be submitted in 2014. She suggested that the SILC begin by reviewing one Plan section at each meeting. As we review the sections we should think about what we really want to do and can do with our resources. We should also think about meaningful ways to engage the public in helping to decide priorities. She also proposed that agency reports at each meeting should be more closely related to the SPIL rather than just an agency general update.

- Trina Forest commented that she really liked all the current SPIL goals but agreed that they were not achievable or measureable. She hoped we could include a reality check in the process.

- Romel Mackelpnrgan also commented that past SPILs have been overwhelming and he would like to simplify the process and include reasonable steps toward accomplishing objectives.

DVR PART B REVIEWS:

- Debbie stated that Brenda Boles from DVR contacted her about participating in the monitoring reviews for Part B contracts. This is 3 days at each Center which is a major commitment for the SILC. Debbie stated she would like to do this if the SILC anticipates her being on board beyond September. Debbie thought it might be helpful for the SILC to better understand issues between Centers and DVR and might be helpful to the Centers in negotiating the next contract.

- Linda McClain commented that she thought having someone from the SILC participate in the reviews was useful for learning and communication if the SILC understood the contracting process. She noted that Centers felt they often had to educate the contract managers about the IL process.

- Trina commented that she thought a 3-day audit was arduous for a $60 thousand contract that only allowed 10% administrative overhead. She said that this was discussed at the ACIL-WA meeting and that Debbie had offered to look at the contracts and assist with the negotiations. Meanwhile, the process was taking away valuable time from service.

- Romel asked Andres Aguirre what could be done to make the process less arduous and difficult for Centers. Andres said he would need to look into the current process which should be a monitoring review rather than an audit.

- A long discussion followed. Romel summarized by stating that a function of the Executive Director is to assist all parties in resolving issues of this type.
Linda thought it would be useful if the CIL Directors could meet prior to the monitoring reviews. There was also discussion about technical assistance for Centers around billing for IL evals and skills training which Centers do in addition to the Part B contracts. It was agreed that Centers would send Debbie copies of their contracts and that Debbie will attend Trina’s monitoring review in May.

Andres Aguirre – DVR Director

- Andres Aguirre reported that the state budget was passed. DVR received a $250 thousand cut. This is enough to meet maintenance and is good news. Through various collaborations DVR may also be able to capture all of the federal dollars for the first time in years. Andres thanked Jim Morris for his hard work in communicating program needs to legislators.

- The VR State Plan is being revised. Public forums are scheduled in Lynnwood, Olympia, Vancouver and Spokane.

- Trina Forest asked about the status of the Basic Health Plan in the final budget. Andres said that the Basic Health Plan, Basic Education and Disability Lifeline were not cut.

Debbie Cook – DSB

- Debbie Cook reported that DSB’s budget cut was in the Business Enterprise Program and does not impact the VR program or Independent Living services. Some SSA reimbursement moneys are being given to the Older Blind program to help offset the loss of ARRA funding for this year. The difficulty is that lots of money comes in one quarter and it’s difficult for the program to spend. Debbie hopes DSB can find a way to more evenly fund the program rather than underfunding followed by overfunding.

Linda McClain – ACIL-WA

- Linda McClain said that ACIL-WA met with Debbie for half a day to discuss issues. They also determined that about 15 people from Washington will be going to NCIL in June. She hopes that a meeting can be scheduled while they’re there with Deb Cotter, who is the new RSA liaison.

- ACIL-WA is particularly concerned with the number of requests coming in for financial support and other services they cannot provide. This problem increases as funding sources for people’s basic needs are decreasing. Trina Forest commented that Centers used to have $5,000 discretionary Part B funds to meet people’s crisis needs.

- Linda said ACIL-WA also discussed the Roads to Community Living contracts with Debbie Cook. SILC has assisted them to negotiate these in the past and this may be needed again since there is concern that the contracts are inconsistent, unclear and do not cover the range of IL services needed.

- Youth representatives from the Alliance and CFI attended the Youth Conference in Houston. ACIL-WA would like to schedule regular conference call meetings of the staff who serve youth to share ideas and promote consistency throughout the state.
Role and Scope of Future Reporting:
- Debbie Cook and Romel Mackelprang emphasized that reporting in the future should be in the context of the SPIL. Debbie said that further guidance would be provided as we work through the process of identifying relevant issues for the SPIL that should be updated as part of the reports.

Public Comment:
- Eric Raff, Director of the DSHS Office for Deaf and hard of Hearing (ODHH) joined the meeting during the lunch break. Debbie Cook introduced him as a wonderful advocate of people with disabilities.

- Eric explained that a meeting was scheduled with the CIL Directors and Directors of the Regional Centers for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in May to start a conversation about collaboration and service delivery. Romel Mackelprang invited Eric to participate in the meeting for as long as he could stay.

- Mark Leeper introduced himself. He is the Director of Disability Action Center NW (DACNW) in Moscow, Idaho which covers Whitman, Asotin and Garfield Counties in Washington. He commented that it has become challenging to get people involved. He thought that, first and foremost, it was important to remember as we recruit new members that SILCs were formed by people with disabilities across the country to get an official voice because too many things were happening without us. So the SILC was established as an equally powerful unit to the VR agencies in planning IL services. Unfortunately the SILC was established without funding and with confusion about the role. Mark stated that he thought the role was simple: the development of a State Plan for Independent Living that helps monitor expenditures and how IL services fit together with emphasis on what is now Part B IL services. He encouraged the SILC to remember that we’re about people. We need people with skills and interest but mostly people who want to get out and represent themselves as equally participating members of the community who demand respect, visibility and participation from agencies that provide services. Mark noted that he has seen real progress in Washington for collaboration between the SILC and the agencies. Mark also noted that DACNW is not listed on the SPIL because he thought that only Centers receiving Part B funds should be listed. However, he observed that many activities on the SPIL were designated as being accomplished by Centers through the Part C funds. Mark feels this is inappropriate and may be a way of narrowing the scope of the SPIL.

- Trina Forest asked for clarification about whether or not the SILC should only monitor Part B expenditures?

- Mark said that, according to the regulations, the SILC monitors the SPIL. So if something is in the State Plan, such as accepting Part B funding for transition, the SILC has to monitor it. There is also a lot of pressure from RSA to the state agencies about reviewing their expenditure of Part B funding. The regulations talk about the network of Centers and determining and prioritizing where those Centers will be. Mark thinks that there is no indication that the SILC should be monitoring what the CILs do with Part C funds. But if the CILs accept grants or contracts, those will be monitored by someone. So how can we...
push the envelope, limit bureaucracy and make things happen while still responding to RSA and other funders.

- Eric Raff asked for clarification regarding whether the SILC contracts with CILs. Romel said it does not.

**Future Meetings & Logistics**

- Debbie Cook requested that people check with Kim Canaan during the next break for their travel reimbursement forms. We need transportation receipts of any kind but no food receipts. Members will receive per diem for covered meals and transportation from their residence.

- Trina Forest asked if food could be provided during future meetings. Debbie said this was fine within budget constraints and state rules for purchasing refreshments. She noted that it was difficult this time because we met at the School for the Deaf and it was hard to bring in food. She said effort would be made to have future meetings at hotels where food and other logistics are easier.

- Debbie suggested that the next few meetings be held near Centers to encourage better public turnout. All agreed. The next meeting will be in Bellingham on July 12-13 and will be followed by the Open House for CFI North Sound. Members are encouraged to attend the Open House and can stay Friday night.

- The October meeting planned for Pullman must be changed because it conflicts with an Idaho football game and there are no hotels within the state rates and our budget. After some discussion it was determined that Debbie would look into having the October meeting in Seattle or Bellevue near the Alliance locations. It was also agreed that we would try having the Public Forum from 4:00 to 6:00.

- Discussion followed regarding the January 2013 meeting. It was agreed that we would meet in Olympia as in past years but that it might not be tied to the Legislative reception since this had not been a successful event for the SILC.

- Jim Morris said that this sentiment was shared by many groups. He then talked about a loose coalition that had formed to work on legislative initiatives so there would be an additional presence in Olympia. Eric and Debbie said they’d like to join this initiative.

- Romel Mackelprang talked about using our position papers to bring others into focus on important cross-disability issues.

- Linda McClain discussed the usefulness of public forums prior to the elections and said CORD would be hosting a forum in Spokane with other organizations.

- Debbie brought the discussion back to the meetings schedule. Discussion followed and it was decided that the April 2013 meeting should be in Ellensburg and the July 2013 meeting will be in Spokane.
**Member Recruitment:**

- There was a lengthy discussion of desirable characteristics for new members. Items for consideration included: geography, age, range of disability, cultural diversity, advocacy experience, demonstrated ability (based on experience) to work on SILC initiatives and produce outcomes, commitment to the values and mission of IL philosophy, knowledgeable and experienced regarding the legislative process.

- These were then organized into: demographics around age range including young and elderly, rural/urban, cultural diversity of race and ethnicity, economic status including experience with poverty, veterans, gender; knowledge of Independent Living, the legislative process, policy development; attitudes and values that promote independence and inclusion; demonstrated skills for leadership, completing tasks and achieving outcomes.

- There was a lot of discussion about how to locate potential members with combinations of these characteristics. Debbie Cook said that additionally potential members must represent more than themselves and be connected to some aspect of the disability community to communicate and rally.

- Linda McClain asked how many applications have been submitted. Debbie and Romel Mackelprang did not know but would find out.

- Lucille Walls said that in Ohio applicants were asked if they would be willing to have their names submitted for other councils. Debbie and Romel said they would follow up with GCDE to see if there were good candidates who were not selected.

- Debbie said she would contact some organizations and would then create a recruitment flyer.

**NCIL Conference:**

- Dates for NCIL are June 11-14 with some preliminary activities on the 10th. Romel Mackelprang asked about out-of-state approval for travel to NCIL for SILC. Debbie Cook said that travel to NCIL was included in the DVR/UW contract.

- Trina Forest said that in the past the CILs and SILC had jointly hosted a reception at NCIL for Washington State conference attendees and key individuals who could impact Washington State. Linda McClain also said that CILs had supported the SILC Director and Chair to attend conferences in the past. Romel said that DVR had supported the ED and Chair to attend when funding was available. Romel said that the March to the Capitol and the Hill visits were the highlight of NCIL.

- Debbie said she was available to attend NCIL but was hesitant to use resources if she would only be the Interim Director through September.

- Romel said that he thought Debbie should attend NCIL because she would be in the Interim position well past September given how state processes go. He also thought the SILC needs a strong transition plan to the new Director and that Debbie would gain
important knowledge by attending NCIL. Trina pointed out that Debbie was not going off the Council and that anyone not going off in September should be considered in order to strengthen knowledge of Independent Living. Others agreed. Andres Aguirre thought it would be a good opportunity for recruitment.

- Debbie asked if it was urgent for the SILC to subsidize Center staff to attend NCIL. Romel thought the priority should be to send SILC members if extra funding was available. Romel was not sure if he could attend. There was also discussion about asking Jana Finkbonner since she will continue to be on the council and Debbie agreed to do this. Linda asked if Jim Morris could be sponsored as a prospective SILC member. Everyone agreed that sponsorship must be limited to current SILC members especially since there is so little funding.

- Linda offered to set up legislative appointments as she did last year. Everyone agreed this was great.

Romel Mackelprang asked if there was any more business. Everyone agreed there was not. Gilbert Garza moved that the meeting be adjourned; motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 2:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Debbie Cook, SILC Interim Executive Director, July 11, 2012.