

**Wyoming Independent Living  
Board Meeting  
1/27/17**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting began at 1:09 pm

Board members attending in-person: Garrett Roark, Sharla Ulrich, Vicki Swenson; Joe Schaffner; via phone: Rose Rennell, Doug Cermak; staff members attending in-person: Amy Burns, Dermot Thiel, Brenda Thomson, Laurel Henry, Amber Alexander, Damion Burback; via phone: Rick Geringer, Cindy Livingston, Robin Miller, Kelly Thornbury.

**AGENDA:**

No comments / changes

**MINUTES:**

**Rose made a motion to approve the November 18 minutes; Sharla seconded; motion passed.**

**REPORTS:**

**Financial Report**

Amy Burns gave the financial report. Fee for service programs, as always, are current on expenses, but one month behind on revenues. Once December's billing of approximately \$30,000 for Community Choices Waiver and \$17,000 for Project Out case management is completed, FFS programs as a whole will be in the black.

Project Out: We are happy to report that the PO program is turning a profit in the first quarter for the first time, resulting from being fully staffed with the right individuals, solid referrals and successful transitions in the first 3 months of the fiscal year. Aside from the lead position being partially budgeted from IL funds, this program has not been subsidized with any grant funding so far this year.

The Job Coaching / Work Experience Program through DVR still shows a deficit of expenses vs. funds received. We are in the process of closing out that contract. The last payroll for hours worked through November 30 was run December 15<sup>th</sup>. We currently have approximately \$28,000 in outstanding funds and are working on final billing. As of January 1 we are only running payroll for direct WIL staff.

Grants: we are in pretty good shape, with most grants slightly underspent. This is normal for the first quarter, as some expenses come in quarterly installments, and several large expenses occur later in the year. Travel costs are usually lower in the first few months of the year, and are expected to rise with better weather, and two in-services scheduled for the later in the year.

Most of the grants are showing us slightly ahead on salaries for the year, partially due to vacation payout for exiting employees. We are looking into the balances of these accounts before completing annual reviews. As discussed at earlier meetings, we have planned for salary increases tied to a

combination of longevity and merit this year, so will ensure the expected funds will be available before making those changes.

Part B is underspent in case dollars so far this year. There are some amounts budgeted but not yet spent that are not yet reflected in the reports. This is one area admin staff is targeting this year: to provide timely feedback to specialists regarding their case service budgets, so we neither run out of funds, nor have a big spenddown at the end of the fiscal year.

The Transportation program is right on target – it's a well-oiled machine at this point, and has become one of our easier programs to budget.

**Rose made a motion to accept the financial report; Sharla seconded; motion passed.**

### **Director's Report**

Amy noted that she is currently in the process of writing WIL's quarterly report to the SILC, and gave an overview of services by program:

Community Choices Case Management – For the first quarter of the year, the Medicaid waiver program has served 153 consumers, with 23 new consumers enrolled. The statewide transition to conflict-free case management is not coming to a close – because WIL is conflict free, only offering case management and not direct services, we were able to pick up many new consumers from agencies that were in conflict. We expect our growth to slow now that most of the shifting between agencies is completed. The part time position in Laramie was increased to full time to handle the increased workload. We are looking at potentially increasing the part time position in Casper to ¾ time as well to absorb the growth that has happened in that program.

Project Out –This program has served 59 consumers in the first quarter, with 22 of them new consumers. The percentage of new consumers shows that we are moving people through the transition process in a timely manner. PO consumers should be open for no longer than 12 months, but our turnaround is running around 6 months.

Transportation Check Program – We have 552 consumers served in the first quarter with 33 new cases opened. We are officially running a waitlist in all sectors. TCP specialists have been keeping a close eye on active riders. If the service is not being used, they are working on closing cases to free up the budget to add new riders. This can be tricky, as consumers may not want to feel they're losing access to our services, even if they're not using them. In other cases, we need to work with them to help overcome barriers so they can start using it again. Staff are actively following up with and providing I&R services for those on the waitlist.

The Visually Impaired Program has served 118 consumers and opened 38 new cases. We continue to strengthen our emphasis on IL skills training, and are now beginning the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the IL skills class.

Each VIP specialist will offer a skills training workshop in their local area in the coming year, and we're working on official program materials to help them follow through with that goal.

The Independent Living program has served 304 individuals, with 74 new cases opened. IL is usually the largest program for new consumers, as the services has traditionally been more short-term, rather than long term goals. There is no rule regarding how quickly cases are closed out, but cases involving durable medical equipment or home modifications are usually completed fairly quickly.

Youth Transitions has served 19 youth with 8 new consumers so far this fiscal year. Our emphasis in this program has been on partnering with DVR to provide pre-employment transition services, with DVR paying us either on a group or individual fee-for-service basis. We hit a stumbling block with our Douglas/Glenrock workshops due to the local coordinator passing away. They are still interested in our workshop, but have needed some time to regroup. We plan to approach them again later this semester. We're just about to kick off another Transition Academy workshop in Laramie, with 5 youth slated to participate.

Overall, services are going well so far this fiscal year. We are slightly under our goals for a few programs, but this time of year is often slower due to weather and holidays. We expect an increase in referrals as the weather gets warmer.

Robin added that she and Cindy have been using CSBG funds in the Sheridan area to purchase transportation tickets for people who are on the TCP wait list.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

Amy thanked the board for voting via email regarding the need to add additional signers to WIL's bank accounts. This was due to a combination of the bookkeeper position vacancy and illness on the part of a board member. Adding the program director as an authorized signer, as well as one additional board member will allow WIL to stay in compliance regarding separation of duties when the Business Director has to cover bookkeeping responsibilities.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### Strategic Planning Update

Amy stated that we still need to follow up with Paula regarding the final copy of our strategic plan. We are already using it as a living document and in staff goal setting, but have yet to receive the final official copy.

We completed the initial goal-setting process with specialists and are nearing the time to begin official evaluations. We expect to complete these toward the end of March / beginning of April for completion by the end of the second quarter.

Job Coach/Work Experience contract with DVR

As reported during the financial report, there are still some outstanding funds to be received from DVR following the final payroll in December, but otherwise we've officially finished our obligations under this contract.

#### Board Governance Policy Manual and By-Laws

Rose and Amy presented the updated By-Laws which had been provided to board members via email, and reviewed the changes:

Article 2 was updated with the new mission statement already adopted by the board

Article 3: was pared down to "Members and Officers; changes clarified what we've already done: Term are for 3 years with no term limits. An element of intentionality was added by asking that when a board member's term expires they need to submit a request to the President to continue. It can be a fairly informal request, but does have to be done intentionally. This kind of business was focused into the annual meeting so elections / appointments do not become scattered throughout the year. The Executive Director was clarified as an ex-officio, nonvoting member.

Article 4: Officers – definition of duties is minimal here, and can be defined further in Board Governance Policy Manual, such as whether a WIL staff member is appointed to complete board minutes. Language was cleaned up what's actually happening, clarifying that elections happen in the even years, and how voting occurs, with provision for ballot votes if that ever is necessary.

Article 5: Meetings – we specified 5 meetings per fiscal year – the board usually meets every other month, so there is some flexibility built in. Business for specific meetings can be defined in the Board policy manual. The annual meeting occurs in the last quarter of the fiscal year. Details were added for what constitutes regular and special meetings, as well as what can be discussed in executive session.

It's clarified that if a member disagrees with a board decision, they have the duty to inform the others that their actions are in opposition to the board's decision – as discussed in strategic planning, the board acts as a group, and no one individual can represent the entire board.

Minutes – we stipulated that unofficial minutes be made available within 10 days at WIL's designated office and website. Initial posting is unofficial, then following approval at the next meeting the minutes become official.

***Vicki asked that the wording be changed from Secretary to "scribe" or "recorder,"*** to reflect that it is a designated WIL staff member who takes minutes at regular meetings, rather than the Board Secretary.

Executive session – this information was pulled from several other boards, since WIL's documents were nonspecific. We specified that all members must be notified, and efforts to contact those who could not attend should be noted in the summary. Issues to be discussed include legal, strategic, crisis, personnel, executive director, succession, and board practice. The purpose of this is to provide a context for conversations that may need to start in confidence. Transparency is very important to the board and the organization, so all decisions requiring formal action must still be done in regular session and be publically on-record. During Executive Session, a written summary will be recorded by the Secretary, marked confidential, and kept separate from official minutes.

***Garrett asked that these summaries be kept in locked filing “at the corporation’s registered office”, rather than by the President as originally indicated.***

Article 6: Committees - no changes

Article 7: Fiscal Management - no major changes

7.4 clarifies that warrants bear 2 signatures: the first signature must be from either the Executive Director or a Board member; the secondary signature may be a designated WIL staff member. No check may be signed by only the 2 designated staff members

Article 8: Disposition of Assets – no changes

Article 9: By-Laws – indicates that they be reviewed every 2 years following the annual meeting at which officers are elected.

Article 10: Amendments - process has been streamlined.

***Vicki made a motion that the by-laws be adopted with changes as noted; Joe seconded; motion passed.***

## Employee Policy Manual

Rose introduced the Education Assistance Policy, created in response to discussions at the previous board meeting. The policy allows for WIL to provide educational assistance via Workforce Development Grants available through the Department of Workforce Services, as WIL does not have the resources to pay for it directly.

Regular full or part time employees in good standing are eligible, must be employed a minimum of 1 year, with no disciplinary actions in the last year. Coursework must apply to what they’re doing, or advance their skills in a way that is of benefit to WIL. Funds received can assist with tuition, books and course fees, and does not include travel, supplies, hotels, etc.

The policy outlines the process to apply for the grant, which must be signed for by the organization. Grant compliance will be overseen by the Business Director; pre-approval from the Program Director is required for any work time that will be devoted to the educational program.

As WIL is applied to “own” the grant in order for the student to receive the funding, the staff member must sign an agreement for continued employment with WIL for a duration based on the amount of assistance received (1 month of full time employment for every \$200 received). Vicki commented that she is unsure of this provision since WIL is not providing actual cash funds to the recipient. Rose clarified that the funding is secured as a grant through WIL, and WIL remits the funds to the school as appropriate. The student is not eligible for the funds without WIL acting as a sponsoring organization. The grant has provisions for repayment of the funds if the student fails to complete the program.

Rose asked whether the board wished to impose a limit for how many times a student could apply, or how much funding they could receive through this program. After discussion it was agreed to remove the second bullet under #6, such that WIL imposes no limit on how much funding can be received – it would be up to the Department of Workforce Services and funding availability how often / how much a student could receive.

It was also clarified that the Business Director, rather than the bookkeeper would oversee grant

applications and compliance, that references to the “bookkeeper office” would be changed to the business office.

**Joe made a motion to accept the Education Assistance Policy with modifications as noted; Sharla seconded; motion passed.**

#### Paid Leave Policy

Amy noted that the Admin team does not have an update to this policy at this point, and would like to table discussion until the next board meeting, owing to the need to have additional staff input. With personnel changes in December, we have not yet had the chance to get sufficient staff input on the proposed changes.

#### Audit

As of today, we have a draft of WIL’s form 990 and Financial Statements. We do expect a couple more revisions. Grooms & Harkins will file an extension for us, and all final documents will be ready to present at the March board meeting.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### IL/YT Coordinator Position

The board was provided with the new position description included in board packets. With recent changes in personnel, admin staff had a chance to regroup and re-envision where we are going with the YT and IL programs. Although YT was originally created as a standalone position, youth transition is part of our mandated core services. We believe it makes sense to integrate youth services into our entire IL program. The new position will work directly with YT programs, particularly development of the curriculum for the workshops, but will also coordinate with all IL specialists so they have support, training, curriculum, etc. to make youth transition services a permanent fixture throughout the IL program. The new coordinator position will be a parallel position with Laurel Henry, who acts as Lead VIP specialist as well as the agency Training Coordinator. The IL/YT Coordinator will act as Lead IL specialist, and Transition Coordinator. This position will help conceptualize how the IL philosophy is integrated into all programs throughout the agency, even those who have very specific programmatic requirements – how much are they involved with general IL services? How / when does the referral process work? This individual will do a lot of networking and collaborating between the programs to integrate IL into all that WIL is doing.

The position closing date was yesterday, and we’re happy to announce that Amber Alexander has accepted the position. As Amber is currently the lead Project Out specialist, we do expect a transition period. Her immediate focus will remain with Project Out until we can hire for that position.

Amy explained that similar work is begin done in regard to the Bookkeeping position – in the past it was more of a financial management position. We have removed some of that responsibility to provide additional fiscal oversight via the Business Director position. This allows us to hire for more of a true bookkeeper, with less expectation of authority / autonomy, and responsibilities more in

line with what we are able to pay.

Vicki applauded admin staff for taking the time to think out of the box and reimagine these positions.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

One thank-you request was received from Rebecca Roberts in the Community Choices Case Management program.:

*“After learning that the consumers on the Medicaid Waiver Participant Directed Care option were required to have each of their caregivers certified in CPR/1st Aid before December 31, Jodi Guerin at the Laramie Recreation Center set up a special CPR/First Aid class for them and reduced the rate from \$80 to \$50. She had it all set up in 2 days. This Medicaid requirement really hit consumers hard, classes generally cost \$80 to \$100 and each consumer has to have at least 2 caregivers. There weren’t enough classes in the community to meet the deadline, and services will be suspended if they aren’t certified. This makes a huge difference.”*

Amy noted that this has been a huge issue throughout our service area. Case Managers really worked to create opportunities like the one provided through this partnership. Vicki wrote the thank-you note following the meeting.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

## **NEXT BOARD MEETING**

The schedule of 2017 meetings was set as follows:

- **March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1 pm**
- **May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1 pm**
- **July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1 pm**
- **September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1 pm**
- **November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1 pm**
- **January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 1 pm**

All meetings are slated to be held at the Casper office.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board went into executive session at 3:05 pm.

The Board closed executive session at 4:12 pm and resumed the regular meeting.

**Doug made a motion to reallocate funding from case service dollars to provide additional office space for public meetings according to the proposal provided by the Executive Director and discussed in Executive Session; Vicki seconded; motion passed.**

**Rose made a motion to enter into a lease with Preferred Management for additional office space in Cheyenne; Vicki seconded; motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.