

**Disabilities Network of Eastern CT**  
**19 Ohio Ave.**  
**Norwich, CT 06360**  
**February 14, 2023**  
**5:30 PM - 7:00PM**  
**Virtual meeting via Zoom**

**Minutes**

**On screen:**

K. Pellerin, President  
S. Baecker, Vice President  
E Petrik, Board Member  
S. Heddle, Executive Director – DNEC  
G. DeFrank, Accountant  
R. Toper, Guest

**I. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:35PM by K. Pellerin.

**II. Public Comment:**

There were no public comments.

**III. Approval of minutes:**

On a motion made by E. Petrik, seconded by S. Baecker, the minutes of January 12, 2023 were approved as written.

**IV. Executive Directors Report:**

**Highlights:**

1. Website is up and running, only after it initially crashed, which was quickly remedied. The section for Board use was discussed. It was agreed that such items as the agenda, calendar for the year, expectation sheet and minutes could be posted. Not only would Board activities be made apparent, there would be information regarding board membership.
2. There will be a site review in the Fall of 2023. This will be accomplished virtually.
3. S. Heddle and K. Smith will be providing free tax preparation - VITA, through CT. Association of Human Services, for consumers needing assistance. This is Kim's second year; Sharon has been providing this service since 2016.
4. S. Heddle is involved in an emergency preparedness group helping consumers deal with emergencies/ natural disasters.
5. One of the newest members of the staff has requested time to explore grants that will benefit consumers.

See attached report

**V. President's Report:**

Just a brief report on the success of the new website. The site is beautifully designed and contemporary. Not only is it vibrant, but user friendly.

**VI. Old Business:**

1. **Bylaws:** K. Pellerin will adjust the index to match the items posted. It was suggested by

S. Baecker that the vote to accept the bylaws be held off until each member can reread the final draft. S. Heddle will have the current draft retyped and proofread by G. Findley. Once completed, the re-typed bylaws will be sent out to each board member to review for any areas needing further discussion. A tentative date to vote on the bylaws will be the April meeting.

**2. Fundraising: Brief discussion regarding:**

- A comedy night – with raffles
- Paint Class fundraiser
  - Info had been sent to board members prior to meeting.
- K. Pellerin reported on exploring the hiring of an interactive actor to portray a one person show as a fundraiser. The Lebanon Historical Society did the Dickens Christmas Carol, in a one- person, interactive performance. K. Pellerin talked with the Director of the LHS about the success of that fundraiser. In the end, it would not be a feasible endeavor for DNEC, as the costs would be prohibitive.

**VII: New Business:**

Due to time constraints, new business will be placed on the March agenda

**VIII: Other Business:**

**Greg DeFrank, Accountant – presenting the 2021-2011 federal 990 and Auditor findings.**

Board members had been sent the Audited Financial Statements and the Federal 990 to read prior to the meeting. G. DeFrank provided an overview of the multipage statement. There were no questions. The findings from the auditor was also reviewed; the audit results found no significant deficiencies with DNEC's internal controls.

A motion was made by S. Baeker to accept the 990 as prepared and presented to the board of directors, seconded by E Petrik. There was no discussion and the motion was approved.

A motion was made by E. Petrik to accept the findings of the auditor as presented, seconded by S. Baecker. There was no discussion and the motion was approved.

**IX: The next meeting will be March 14, 2023**

**Highlights:**

1. Fundraising – appeal letter and other suggestions/ planning
2. Annual meeting
3. Recruitment

**Future agenda items:**

At the May meeting, G. DeFrank will discuss the financial status of DNEC to date, G. DeFrank will also discuss possible investing measures; Board member, E. Petrik will provide information about CD's.

**X: Adjournment**

The February meeting was adjourned at 7PM

**Katherine Pellerin – Secretary** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Executive Director Report 2/14/2023 Sharon J Heddle**

Our new website is up and running. There were a few glitches, but all has been resolved. We do have the ability to do a variety of analytics, I will investigate this over the next few weeks.

There is a page on the website for board information. We currently have information about joining our board. Our current process would be the person interested sends me an email and I forward the information on to Kathy who will make contact. I have included our board meetings on the website calendar. If you would like the agenda and minutes posted to our website, I can do that going forward.

The CILS have begun working with ADS to prepare for the upcoming site review – possibly in the autumn.

VITA taxes began this week, Kim Smith and I are doing them. This is a very important program for our community.

One of our state contracts is for Digital Divide Coordination. We work with consumers who may need tablets, laptops, cell phones, internet, etc. We have monthly meetings with all agencies under this contract.

I am participating in the Individualized Supports Subgroup. This is a 5-year grant BRS received with the goal being the elimination of sheltered workshops and replacing those types of jobs with competitive employment. The name of the program is CTPIE – CT Pathway to Integrate Employment.

I was asked to be on the SILC Evaluation Committee to participate in the annual review of the SILC Executive Director.

I have been working on other SILC subcommittees. Data Tech Committee – we are currently working with our database contractor (Adage) on discrepancies in our reports. SPIL Committee – currently working on ways to get real, meaningful public comment to find out more about the needs and wants from the disabled community to work on the goals for the SPIL – State Plan for Independent Living. Emergency Preparedness Committee – currently working on the training of all staff in basic emergency prep and enhancing community partnerships to help confidently refer based on consumer needs and type of emergency.

We had a new staff member begin last month; she is working out just fine. One of our staff members, Beth Varas, and I have a meeting scheduled to discuss working on grants. She said this is an interest of hers that she would like to talk about. She also has some ideas for fundraising she would like to talk about.