Maine Statewide Independent Living Council

**Annual Training Minutes**

September 25, 2024, 9:00am – 3:00pm

Location: Zoom and Maine State Library, 242 State St Augusta, ME

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| **COUNCIL ATTENDANCE** | | | | | |
| **Member Name** | **Attendance** | **Voting Member?** | **Member Name** | **Attendance** | **Voting Member?** |
| **Darcy Gentle** | **P** | **Yes** | **Diane Frigon** | **P** | **No** |
| **Jessica Cyr** | **P** | **Yes** | **Lee Glynn** | **P** | **Yes** |
| **Samantha Fenderson** | **P** | **No** | **Andrew Smith** | **E** | **Yes** |
| **Tom Newman** | **P** | **Yes** | **Brendan Williams** | **P** | **Yes** |
| **Mary LeBlanc** | **P** | **Yes** | **Megan Marquis** | **P** | **Yes** |
| **Marita Leach** | **P** | **Yes** |  |  |  |

Attendance Key: P = Present, E = Excused, A = Absent without excuse.

**Public Attendees:** Julie Hovey, Crystal Burke, Ketra Crosson, Danielle Malcolm

**Staff Attendees:** Jenn Williams

**Zoom Recorder:** Jenn Williams **Minutes Recorder:** Jenn Williams **Minutes Status:** Vote Needed

**Welcome & Introductions**

**Discussion:** Meeting was called to order at 9:05am and introductions were made.

**Action:** N/A

**Responsible:** N/A

**Emergency Preparedness, MEMA, Bill Guindon**

**Presentation:** Bill Guindon is the master coordinator for Maine Emergency Management Agency. He helps coordinate emergency disaster shelters, resources, etc. Works with local organizations to determine gaps and does disaster evaluation. Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) offers free training and support for organizations that want to support disaster relief. They have two assigned staff liaisons from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management). Looking at starting a CERT (Community Emergency Response Team), which would offer well-being checks to those who are isolated. People with disabilities are encouraged to have an emergency contact in their area as well as out of their area, and a NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) weather radio. He also recommended the NOAA and FEMA applications to track disasters. He shared preparedness steps and that resources shown are available on the MEMA website. Bed-shaker fire alarms work well for people that are hard of hearing. The Red Cross and some local fire departments have these. Brendan asked for more information, Jenn will connect him with Bill. Estimates are the only 1% of Mainers have home or renter’s insurance. Warming and cooling centers are located around the state but they are typically not open overnight and are not required to be. Crystal asked about ongoing COVID-19 precautions. Bill explained that social distancing, masking and hygiene are still recommended in high transmission areas or for those who are immunocompromised. He also shared that shelters are adjusting beds to allow for more distancing. They post preparedness reminders on social media as storms approach. Jenn asked for his documents and resources to put on the SILC website. Julie Hovey has these and will send them to Jenn.

**Action:** 1. Connect Brendan with Bill 2. Get copies of preparedness resources

**Responsible:** 1. Jenn Williams 2. Julie Hovey

**Acceptance of Minutes- August**

**Discussion:** Megan made a motion to accept, Tom seconded

**Vote:** Yay

**Action:** Post on website

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams

**Financial Expenditure Report**

**Discussion:** Discussion around what is included in the Miscellaneous line item. Members requested expanding the description as miscellaneous funds are used.

**Action:** Update Miscellaneous description

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams

**SPIL 2025-2027**

**Discussion:** The State Plan is Approved! Jenn mentioned that the SPIL says there is a weekly meeting of the SILC, CIL, and DSE. Tom shared that this has not happened, and it seems to be carried over from previous SPILs. Members agreed that weekly meetings are not necessary so this could be a potential SPIL amendment.

**Action:** Tabled

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams

**Website Updates**

**Discussion:** Jenn shared that Roger Fuller is reducing his hourly rate to $25 per hour once the new site is operational because it is easier to manage. The Resource page of the website will be expanded. Members with resources they would like included should send the information to Jenn.

**Action:** Resource database expansion

**Responsible:** All Members

**Pre-Meeting**

**Discussion:** A concern was raised that this may be creating segregation. Brendan said he found it helpful. Lee said he also found it helpful and that it is open to everyone. Jenn also shared that the meeting is optional. Discussion continued into how we can be more inclusive during the general meeting such as explaining acronyms, giving bill names not just bill numbers, verbal descriptions during introductions, and sharing our pronouns. It was also recommended that accessibility instructions be included with meeting information such as how to turn on closed captions.

**Action:** Add inclusivity items and accessibility information to agendas going forward

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams

**Appointments**

**Discussion:** Boards and Commissions have gotten through their backlog, meaning appointments will not be taking as long going forward.

**Action:** N/A

**Responsible:** N/A

**AlphaOne Presentation**

**Discussion:** Ketra joined Alpha One in 1991. As a Center for Independent Living, they provide the following under the Independent Living Services umbrella: Personal assistance services, access design, driver evaluations, grants, agriculture, and the 5 Core Services- information & referral, visit and skills training, advocacy for individuals and systemic issues, transition services such as children with disabilities entering the adulthood, and peer services. Skills training can be “re-opened” when one goal has been achieved. They are working on hiring more support staff and spreading out caseloads so that staff will have time to travel further to provide services. The Homeward Bound program is now being run by the state. This is for people transitioning from nursing home level care to in home care. Driving evaluations can be done multiple times by the consumer. Evaluations can be done on low technology vehicle devices such as hand controls. They refer out for high technology evaluations. If consumers are concerned about a decision or assessment, they can request a supervisor review. Disability Rights Maine is in charge of monitoring the client assistance program in regards to grievances.

**Human Resources**

**Discussion:** Jenn would like to contract with a human resources consultant to have them review our existing policies and procedures for gaps, development of staff and the board chair, and to assist with the development of a fiscal policy. Tom shared that every administrative cost is taken out of consumers pockets and encouraged getting free resources. Jenn has met with staff from ACL and ILRU who both recommended getting HR assistance. Sam recommended reaching out to other SILCs for what they have and through past interactions Vermont seems to be similar, but thinks it’s a good idea to have a variety of quotes while we are working on things. Samantha and Diane also offered to look into questions as they relate to the Department of Labor. Discussed travel pay and meals because there is no internal policy. Sam recommended using the federal meal and incidental expense guidelines.

**Action:** Obtain policies and procedures from other SILCs, obtain HR consultant quotes

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams

**Conflicts of Interest**

**Discussion:**  Appointed members are required to complete a conflict of interest statement annually. Jenn will be sending forms to appointed members to complete and return.

**Action:** Send COI forms

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams

**Election of Officers**

**Discussion:**  Appointed members can be elected to officer positions after being appointed for one year. Officer positions are a two year term, and members can serve two consecutive terms. Brendan volunteered for Chair and Jessica volunteered for Vice Chairperson. Lee will be the Voting Member at Large. Brendan would like to meet with Jenn about the role. Jenn mentioned that term limits have not been followed, she will be looking into dates and reaching out to members.

**Vote:** Yay

**Action:** Meet with Brendan, Term limits

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams

**Bank Account**

**Discussion:** Cheryl is still a signer on the SILC bank account. Another council member needs to be added as a backup. Lee volunteered.

**Action:** Add Lee to bank account

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams and Lee Glynn

**Empowerment Forum**

**Discussion:** This is an event that is supposed to happen annually for people with disabilities. It is meant to be a collaboration between the SILC, State Rehabilitation Councils (SRCs), Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies, Consortia of Administrators of Native American Rehabilitation, Division of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Late Deafened. Jenn met with Branden Densmore from the SRCs and he is interested in bringing the event back in 2026.

**Action:** N/A

**Responsible:** N/A

**DOJ Lawsuit (Senator Joe Baldacci)**

**Discussion:** Sen/ Baldacci is a private practicing attorney and chairs the Health and Human services Committee. He has been aware of the issue for several years and has represented parents in a related case.The current DOJ case could lead to sanctions and/or judicial supervision of services. In 2021 Maine adopted a 125% minimum wage standard as a floor for direct care workers and has been slow to implement. However, he believes this would incentivize more DSPs, thereby opening access to services. A pilot project was implemented to allow parents to be designated direct care workers, however it has not gone beyond the pilot stage. Brendan asked: what does settling this look like? Increased funding for children’s services and increased wages for those working with children. Jenn asked: what can the SILC do? Sen. Baldacci suggested monitoring the upcoming legislative session in January to be involved in bills that impact this topic. He encouraged the Council to talk with/educate legislators and attend public hearings on legislation that impacts this issue.

**Committee Updates**

Discussion: Ideas to add committees such as strategic planning, SPIL, and emergency preparedness. Adjusting regular meeting schedule may be necessary to accommodate committee meetings.

* **Membership Committee (Jessica):** Members are Jessica, Lee, and Diane. They received the Acquired Brain Injury Advisory Council member manual but have not reviewed it. Next meeting will be October 1st at 11:00am.

**Action:** Send meeting link

**Responsible:** Lee Glynn

* **Moving Maine Network (Jessica):** Transportation Forum happening in October in Bangor. Department of Education in New Hampshire purchased an accessible van to teach teenagers how to drive before they transition to adulthood.

**Action:** Send news article about van

**Responsible:** Jessica Cyr

* **Acquired Brain Injury Advisory Council (Lee):** The Maine brain injury conference is on September 30th. Just finished their annual listening forums for their annual report. Lee will share the annual report when it is finalized.
* **MORE Committee- Maine Outdoor Recreation Education:** Diane shared that working with people in the development state of parks and other recreation is the best way to combat potential issues with accessibility.This committee is in statute. Pine Tree Society would be interested in collaborating on outdoor recreation. Darcy volunteered to join this committee.

**Announcements**

* **Upcoming Meetings:** October 23rd, December 4th
* **Activity Tables:** Reminder to all appointed members to enter their activities for the last year no later than 10/15/2024.

**Public Comment & Other Topics**

**Pronouns and LGBTQ Training:** Potential members who attended previous meetings were repeatedly misgendered, and will not join the Council until members receive pronoun and sensitivity training. OutMaine can do a training for the Council for $150. Concerns were raised around the cost. Discussed looking for possible free training through the State or other organizations.

**Action:** Ask State if they would do a DEIA training for the SILC

**Responsibility:** Samantha Fenderson

**Disability Rights Maine:** Megan shared that she not only handles the Client Assistance Program at DRM but also manages rep payees with the Protection and Advocacy Program for Beneficiaries of Rep Payees.DRM is working on a COVID information campaign because there is some misinformation in the disability community. They will also be offering assistance coordinating appointments if people with disabilities are experiencing barriers. People that need this service should contact Riley Albair, [ralbair@drme.org](mailto:ralbair@drme.org).

**Action:** Send contact information

**Responsibility:** Jenn Williams

**Council Communication:** Marita brought up the idea of using Slack or Teams to ease the number of emails. This would also allow us to use channels for specific topics or committees. Slack may not be accessible to all members due to security.

**Action:** Compare accessibility of Slack and Teams

**Responsibility:** Jenn Williams

**Action:** Determine best option based on what State and Alpha One employees can download

**Responsibility:** Tom Newman and Samantha Fenderson

**NCIL Conference:** Discussion around sending members to the National Council on Independent Living in 2025. Tom raised concerns that this would take funds away from people with disabilities. Megan brought up the idea of applying for grants. Alpha One plans to bring multiple employees to the conference in 2025. Members asked that those sponsored by Alpha One offer a listening session to the SILC after the conference.

**Action:** N/A

**Responsibility:** N/A

**Stipends:** Appointed members living with a disability can receive a stipend and mileage for attending meetings.

**Action:** Send reimbursement form to members with a disability

**Responsibility:** Jenn Williams

**Values:** Values can help guide organization decisions and future outreach such as social media and email newsletters.Jenn provided a list of possible organizational values, members are encouraged to pick three. Chosen at the meeting Collaboration, Inclusion, Resourcefulness, Independence, Leadership, Respect, Compassion, Making a Difference/Impact, Equity, Hope, Dignity, and Commitment.

**Action:** Email list above to members to pick their top three

**Responsibility:** Jenn Williams

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 3:06pm.