Maine Statewide Independent Living Council

**Minutes**

October 23, 2024, 10:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Zoom

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| **COUNCIL ATTENDANCE** |
| **Member Name** | **Attendance** | **Voting Member?** | **Member Name** | **Attendance** | **Voting Member?** |
| **Darcy Gentle** | **E** | **Yes** | **Diane Frigon** | **P** | **No** |
| **Jessica Cyr** | **P** | **Yes** | **Lee Glynn** | **E** | **Yes** |
| **Samantha Fenderson** | **E** | **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:** Branden Densmore, Joshua Weidemann, Bonny Finnemore, Holly Humphrey, Danielle Malcolm, Crystal Burke, Rachel Dyer

**Staff Attendees:** Jenn Williams

**Zoom Recorder:** Jenn Williams **Minutes Recorder:** Jenn Williams **Minutes Status:** Approved

**Welcome & Introductions**

**Discussion:** Meeting was called to order at 10:06am and introductions were made.

**Action:** N/A

**Responsible:** N/A

**Acceptance of Minutes- September**

**Discussion:** Minutes were sent the evening before the meeting, which did not allow enough time for members to review. Motion to table until December meeting done by Tom, Jessica seconded. Jessica also pointed out that Andrew was listed as presented which needed correction.

**Vote:** Yay vote to table the September minutes

**Action:** N/A

**Responsible:** N/A

**Financial Expenditure Report**

**Discussion:** The new fiscal year has started. Jenn shared the approved budget. Mary asked why the empowerment forum line item is blank. This was not in the budget for fiscal year 2025 but needs to be planned for fiscal year 2026.

**Action:** N/A

**Responsible:** N/A

**Activity Tables**

**Discussion:** Branden Densmore asked who should be recording their efforts in the activity tables. Jenn shared that it is for direct staff and appointed members, this data is used on the annual performance report. Please make sure activities are entered in the spreadsheet. If anyone is having trouble, please reach out to Jenn.

**Action:** Enter Activities

**Responsible:** Appointed Members

**State Rehabilitation Councils (SRCs)**

**Discussion:** Branden Densmore is the new administrator for both SRCs (Division of Vocational Rehab, and Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired). They work in partnership with the Designated State Agency regarding their programming and service performance. Brendan Williams did a presentation to the SRC-Division for Blind and Visually Impaired about the SILC to try and attract members. Branden Densmore would like to do a similar presentation to the SILC board.

**Action:** Schedule Branden Densmore for a presentation to the SILC

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams

**Appointments**

**Discussion:** Jenn shared that with all of the interest in the Council, disability representation could be filled in the next few months. Mary asked if new members need to be sworn in. Jenn has not heard that but will confirm with Boards & Commissions.

**Action:** Find out if swearing in is necessary.

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams

**Donating Stipends**

**Discussion:** An anonymous member asked if it would be possible to donate their meeting stipend to fund conference exhibit tables or the NCIL conference. Jessica offered to do the same.

**Action:** Determine if this is acceptable per ACL

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams

**Meeting Schedule**

**Discussion:** Jenn suggested switching the regular meeting to every other month to accommodate expanding the committees. Crystal shared the idea that we continue meeting monthly but with alternate months being only for committee updates. Mary raised the concern that with meeting every other month committee updates would not get distributed fast enough. Each committee should have minutes per SILC by-laws, those can be distributed between meetings.

**Action:** Determine possible schedules for both meeting options.

**Responsible:** Jenn Williams

**Committee Updates**

**Overall Discussion:** Mary likes the idea of the finance and state plan committees, she also thinks an empowerment forum committee would be helpful. Crystal mentioned having health/COVID precautions for any events we do. Brendan suggested offering events solely on Zoom or with hybrid options. Discussion around emergency preparedness and if it should be its own committee.

**Potential Committees:**

* **Finance Committee-** this would allow for checks and balances so that one person isn’t in charge of all the finances.

**Vote:** Yay

* **State Plan (SPIL)/Strategic Planning Committee-** this group would be the most familiar with the SPIL, ensure that we are working towards our goals, and be charged with developing the next SPIL. Crystal and Mary would like to be on this committee.

**Vote:** Yay

* **Empowerment Forum Committee-** this group would work in collaboration with other state councils to bring back the Empowerment Forum for 2026. Also discussed the possibility of the MORE committee being included. Mary would like to Chair this committee, Crystal would like to be on the committee.

**Vote:** Yay

* **Emergency Preparedness Committee-** where this is a SPIL goal, this could be its own committee or be included in the SPIL committee. Crystal pointed out that there are a lot of other organizations and departments that work on this. If the goal is to work collaboratively with them, then maybe it should be its own committee.

**Vote:** TABLED

* **Transportation Committee-** where this is a SPIL goal, this could be its own committee or be included in the SPIL committee. Crystal pointed out that there are a lot of other organizations and departments that work on this. If the goal is to work collaboratively with them, then maybe it should be its own committee.

**Vote:** TABLED

**Existing Committees:**

* **Membership Committee (Jessica):** The committee has had a few meetings. They are working Jenn and Boards & Commissions to make sure the roster is accurate and up to date.
* **MORE Committee- Maine Outdoor Recreation Education:** Diane pointed out that the MORE committee also needs to be revived. There was discussion that this could be intertwined with the Empowerment Forum committee. Any members who are interested in joining should reach out to Diane.

**Collaborations:**

* **Acquired Brain Injury Advisory Council (Lee):** No updates
* **Moving Maine Network (Jessica):** There will be a transportation forum in Bangor on October 29. MMN would also be a good partnership for the Empowerment Forum.

**Action:** Send news article about van

**Responsible:** Jessica Cyr

**Announcements**

* **Upcoming Meetings:** October 23rd, December 4th

**Public Comment & Other Topics**

**Accessibility:** Diane pointed out that when a vote is needed options should be given to raise a physical hand, virtual hand, or give a verbal vote.

**Action:** Implement in future meetings

**Responsibility:** Brendan Williams

**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.

**Action:** Send contact information

**Responsibility:** Jenn Williams

**Funding:** Joshua asked how the funding works for the SILC. Jenn shared that funding comes from Title 7 Part B of the Rehabilitation Act, and that the SILC can take 30% of those funds but the SILC is currently using 11%. Tom disagreed and stated that the SILC funding is up to the DSE (Designated State Entity), and the SILC should rely more heavily on the volunteer efforts of the SILC members. Megan raised the concern that “volunteer labor from council members disproportionately affected, socioeconomically, is not the most sustainable pathway”. Mary asked who oversees CILs (centers for independent living) and SILCs, which is the Administration on Community Living.

**Action:** N/A

**Responsibility:** N/A

**Conflict of Interest & Term Limits:** Megan raised another concern that it may be a conflict of interest for Alpha One to comment on how SILC funds are spent. Mary raised the question of term limits and how that can prevent a conflict of interest. Jenn shared that the SILC has term limits of two consecutive two-year terms. Jenn thinks the CIL seat can be anyone from Alpha One. Tom clarified that there must be a CIL executive director appointed, even with one CIL.

**Action:** Contact ACL for clarification on term limits and conflicts of interest.

**Responsibility:** Jenn Williams

**Alpha One Services:** Joshua asked what waivers Alpha One services and if they have any current waitlists. Tom explained that they serve Section 19, Section 12, Section 96, Section 20, Section 63, and are working on a pilot program with the Office of Behavioral Health self-direction under Section 17. Waitlists do exist for Sections 63 and 96. Danielle Malcolm stated that Section 96 currently has a six month waitlist.

**Independent Living Services:** Joshua shared a concern that Alpha One is the only center for independent living in Maine.

**Long COVID:** Crystal shared that long covid has officially been classified as a disability but many of those with it are struggling to get access to services. Tom or another representative from Alpha One are invited to join long COVID meetings to learn more about where people are struggling.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 12:22pm