



STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL

January 15, 2025

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

FULL SILC Meeting

IN-PERSON AND ZOOM

Members and Ex-Officios Attending: Chair Randy Pierce, First Vice-Chair Deborah Ritcey, Second Vice-Chair Ryan Witterschein, Secretary Sarah Sweeney (Remote), Immediate Past Chair Carrie Dudley, Member Krystal Chase, Member Ryan Donnelly (Remote), Member Andrew Harmon, Member Michelle McConaghy, Member Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre, and DSE Representative Scott Vittner

Staff: Jennifer Beaulieu (SILC Assistant)

Guests: Amy Clark (NH DOE's SBVI), Chase Eagleson (Member of the Public), Joshua Gehling (Member of the Public), Matthew Greenwood (Member of the Public), and Brendan Madden (Member of the Public)

Communication Access: Jola Lindstrom (ASL Interpreter) and Nicole Comtois (ASL Interpreter)

Chair Randy Pierce called the SILC (Statewide Independent Living Council) meeting to order 1:01pm.

*Quorum was reached.

Approval of Minutes of 11/20 Full SILC Meeting

*** First Vice-Chair Deborah Ritcey made an amended motion subject to the typo correction.**

Second: Andrew Harmon

Roll Call:

- 7 Ayes

Discussion: Andrew Harmon mentioned a typo.

All in Favor: Yes **Abstention:** First Vice-Chair Deborah Ritcey

Motion Carried.

Presentation of GSIL's Part B Vendor Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results

Deborah Ritcey at the request of Randy Pierce gave a presentation on GSIL's Consumer Satisfaction Survey results. The surveys continue to come back with feedback that the services provided are helping people live more independently and are consistent with what people are looking for. GSIL's Part B services are accessible transportation, access modification, and service coordination. None of the surveys came back with any negative feedback.

RSA 15-A Financial Disclosure Forms Due January 17

Randy Pierce moved on to the next agenda item which is on the required RSA 15-A Financial Disclosure Forms. Randy Pierce noted that all voting members should have received an outreach directly, but he had Jennifer Beaulieu forward the form out last week.

Ryan Witterschein mentioned that he thinks that the form should be included with the new member orientation materials. Ryan Witterschein will coordinate with the Membership Committee to include the form with the new member orientation materials. Jennifer Beaulieu mentioned that the forms need to be filed every year and within 14 days of receiving their appointment letter. She noted that should also be included in the new member orientation materials.

Andrew Harmon mentioned that there is a way to fill out the forms online through the Secretary of State's online system. He will send the link to the website where people can file their forms online to Jennifer Beaulieu. Deborah Ritcey mentioned that once you do it online for the first time, every year after you will get a reminder from the Secretary of State that it's due. Randy Pierce asked Jennifer Beaulieu to review the website to see who haven't filed their forms and to let him know so emails can be sent to those individuals.

PPR Update

Scott Vittner answered yes to Randy Pierce's question on if he received the Part B vendor survey results and financial data. Scott Vittner noted that they haven't input the data into the spreadsheet yet to see if all the data adds up. He hopes to do that in a week and will get in touch if anything needs to be corrected. Randy Pierce will schedule a follow-up with Scott Vittner to discuss the SILC's contributions to the PPR. Randy Pierce thanked everyone for getting their information in on time.

Committee Updates

Randy Pierce asked each committee to include in their committee report, progress on the SPIL objectives assigned to their committee.

Membership

Ryan Witterschein reported for the Membership Committee. He noted that they haven't met yet this month. The focus last month was on recruitment. He had Jennifer Beaulieu send out the mentorship survey to everyone to fill out. He asked that the survey be completed and sent back to Jennifer Beaulieu between now and next week. At the request of Randy Pierce, Jennifer Beaulieu will send the Mentorship Survey out again with a reminder to complete it and send it back within a week.

Ryan Witterschein noted that he has a new potential member who is interested in joining the SILC. He is a vision-impaired marine. He likely will be attending next week's Membership Committee meeting.

Governance

Deborah Ritcey reported out for the Governance Committee. She mentioned that Objective 2.3 under the transportation goal was assigned to an Ad hoc with Deborah Ritcey and Erin Hall. She noted that was changed to Deborah Ritcey and Krystal Chase. She mentioned that non-medical transportation is now covered under Medicare. She questions if there is a way for the MCOs to review their new contracts and look into providing non-medical transportation for individuals with disabilities. Randy Pierce appointed Krystal Chase to that objective.

She mentioned that Objective 3.1 was originally assigned to the Governance Committee but thought it belonged to the Membership Committee to implement and create a survey relevant to training. After receiving the Mentorship Survey, she reached out to Ryan Witterschein because

she thinks the Mentorship Survey and the survey as required by this objective are different. She and Ryan Witterschein both agree that the Membership Committee should work on that objective, but the Governance Committee would be delighted to assist in the work of that objective. She noted that Ryan Witterschein wanted to finish up with the Mentorship Survey before working on a new survey. Regarding Objective 3.3, last week the Governance Committee finalized the matrix. The matrix is a check box list where you check the boxes that match your expertise. What she is doing now is developing the actual key description of what each of the skillsets mean. She'll have the Governance Committee review the descriptions before it goes before the Executive Committee at its February meeting. She mentioned that those are the only objectives assigned to the Governance Committee, but noted the Governance Committee would be happy to take on some of the objectives that were assigned to the Executive Committee. The objectives assigned to the Executive Committee will be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Advocacy

Andrew Harmon reported out for the Advocacy Committee. Andrew Harmon reported that the committee met in early December. He noted that they are a bit behind because they are waiting on some information. The biggest thing they are focusing on is trying to find an in-depth list of the various disability-related organizations in our state. This is needed to work on Objective 1.1 and 1.2. Deborah Ritcey mentioned 211, because she knows the staff have a standard guide that they use. Krystal Chase mentioned NHCarePath as a resource.

Jennifer Beaulieu mentioned that the Advocacy Committee were also looking into finding out the definition for a benefits specialist and working with GSIL on that. This is regarding Objective 4.3. Deborah Ritcey will connect Andrew Harmon with Jonathan Belmont at GSIL. Carrie Dudley mentioned that she learned that VR is offering benefit counseling sessions and wonders if getting the word out about the sessions would assist on the work of that objective. Scott Vittner noted that would be fine if they include a caveat that you have to at least be in referral status at VR to attend a session. Michelle McConaughy noted the need to include a place to enter needed accommodations in the registration form for the sessions. Amy Clark and Scott Vittner will look into that.

Regarding Objective 5.1, the committee is waiting to get contact information for who to speak with about establishing a statewide information and resource system for accessible housing options. Randy Pierce mentioned that he made outreaches to the NH Housing Finance Authority because he has a contact there. The organization wants to look at their housing options. Their board of directors are going to meet with us, they just haven't picked a date yet.

Executive Committee

Deborah Ritcey went over the objectives that were assigned to the Executive Committee. Regarding Objective 2.2, Deborah Ritcey noted that she is already an appointed member and officer of the State Coordinating Council for Community Transportation, so that objective may already be completed. Deborah Ritcey mentioned that Objective 4.1 was assigned to an Ad hoc Committee and Amy Clark. Discussion ensued. Randy Pierce noted that at the next Executive Committee meeting, they will finalize the Ad hoc committees. He noted that Amy Clark volunteered and was appointed to work on that objective. That doesn't mean that other individuals might be assigned to assist on that objective after the next Executive Committee meeting. Carrie Dudley noted that she and Amy Clark were originally going to work together on Objective 4.1. Deborah Ritcey mentioned that Objective 5.4 isn't assigned to a specific person or committee, so she considers it the responsibility of the Executive Committee.

Other Business

During the discussion on SPIL progress, Deborah Ritcey mentioned that she is on the recruitment board for the SCC and if anyone is looking for another governor appointed position to let her know. Andrew Harmon mentioned that he would love to but doesn't think he fits into any of the statute's membership requirements. Deborah Ritcey mentioned that she would look into that.

Randy Pierce mentioned that it is his and Jennifer Beaulieu's goal to get the minutes from this meeting out within a week to two weeks. He noted that it is given in advance to encourage everyone to review it to see if there are any action items they need to take, including action items that are time sensitive.

Deborah Ritcey mentioned that it would be a good idea for the council to hear about all the services and programs VR offers. Randy Pierce noted that he plans to include trainings in the meeting schedule. He noted that he has a request for GCD to give a presentation. Deborah Ritcey noted including presentations from the Part B vendors. Discussion ensued. Randy Pierce asked that if anyone has any thoughts or ideas for future trainings to let him know. They will get a list together and will include it on an Executive Committee's agenda.

Andrew Harmon with clarification from Randy Pierce notified the council about an upcoming bill that would make HB 1264's requirement for accessible voting permanent. This includes the accessible voting machines. HB 1264 made it a requirement in state law for municipalities to offer accessible voting options. There is a federal law that already requires that, and HB 1264 made it a state law which allows the state to take action for any non-compliance. The problem is that HB 1264 included a pilot program for the Secretary of State supplying equipment to the municipalities. That program expires June 30, 2025, so the funding to support HB 1264 needs to be addressed and that is the intent of the new HB 67.

Randy Pierce mentioned that anybody can use the accessible voting machine. He recommends that everybody use the accessible voting machine when they can. This will show municipalities that the machine is being used. There are some municipals that don't bother setting up the machine because they don't see enough people using it to justify setting it up. That is a problem because the machine won't be available to individuals who have difficulties using the paper ballots to vote.

Randy Pierce mentioned that the Coalition of Blind and Visually-Impaired Voters in collaboration with the Disability Rights Center sent out a list of reviews which they are currently reviewing. He wrote a letter on Monday to the Secretary of State to ask about the status of the reviews and to get their thoughts.

Adjournment

***Second Vice-Chair Ryan Witterschein made a motion to adjourn.**

Second: Andrew Harmon

Roll Call:

- 10 Ayes

Discussion: None

All in Favor: Yes **Abstention:** None

Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:55pm

Minutes Recorded by Jennifer Beaulieu