



STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL

July 16, 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 Jennifer Cook, Member Ryan Donnelly (Remote), Member Andrew Harmon, Member Rob Kallin (Remote), Member Michelle McConaghy, Member Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre, and Acting DSE Representative Amy Clark

Staff: Jennifer Beaulieu (SILC Assistant)

Guests: Herb Carpenter (Applicant, Fellowship Housing), Chase Eagleson (Member of the Public, NH Council on Developmental Disability), Matthew Greenwood (Member of the Public), Brendan Madden (Member of the Public, Service Dogs NH), Bethany Hawkins (ASL Interpreter), and Reed Marmy-Cotton (ASL Interpreter)

Chair Randy Pierce called the SILC (Statewide Independent Living Council) meeting to order at 1:00pm.

*Quorum was reached.

Approval of Minutes from Full SILC Meeting

***First Vice-Chair Deborah Ritcey moved.**

Second: Second Vice-Chair Ryan Witterschein

Discussion: Applicant Herb Carpenter mentioned that on page 3 there is a typo concerning Randy Pierce's last name.

Chair Randy Pierce asked if the motion would accept subject to the correction of that typo.

***First Vice-Chair Deborah Ritcey moved.**

Second: Second Vice-Chair Ryan Witterschein

- **Roll Call: Member Jennifer Cook: Yes, Second Vice-Chair Ryan Witterschein: Yes, Member Michelle McConaghy: Yes, First Vice-Chair Deborah Ritcey: Yes, Secretary Sarah Sweeney: Yes, Member Ryan Donnelly: Yes, Member Rob Kallin: Yes, and Member Randy Pierce: Yes**

All in Favor: Yes **Abstention:** Members Andrew Harmon, Krystal Chase, Joshua Gehling (Not in attendance for motion); and Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre (Not in attendance for motion)

Motion Carried.

Clarifying a Few Procedural Issues

Randy Pierce informed the council of a few procedural issues that he would like to discuss. The first procedural issue was concern over the Chair's vote affecting everyone else's vote. The roll call order was changed so that the Chair will vote last. This way the Chair's vote won't influence or affect anyone else's vote. The second procedural issue is that he and Ryan Witterschein were waiting for reappointment. He

received his reappointment yesterday, but they are still waiting for Ryan Witterschein's reappointment. According to how the Governor's Office processes reappointments, Ryan Witterschein is in holdover status until he is reappointed or denied reappointment. The third procedural issue is that contractual members, such as Deborah Ritcey's position, need to be reappointed every three years. Deborah Ritcey mentioned to the council that she has submitted her online application to the Governor's office for processing. He noted that Deborah Ritcey's position is exempt from the usual two three-year term limit. This is due to GSIL being the only CIL in NH. The fourth procedural issue is that we were informed from ACL that ex-officio members need to be appointed and they are not exempt from the usual term limits. He noted that with the DSE position, Richard Sala asked him to delay the appointment until the Administrator for the SBVI's position is filled. The fourth procedural issue is regarding a typo on past minutes. He was informed by Jennifer Beaulieu that the title of all the minutes should be the "Statewide Independent Living Council" instead of "State Independent Living Council". Randy Pierce mentioned that Jennifer Beaulieu would like to retroactively correct all the past minutes with that typo. He asked for a motion to correct that typo.

***Second Vice-Chair Ryan Witterschein moved.**

Second: Member Andrew Harmon

- **Roll Call: Member Andrew Harmon:** Yes, **Member Jennifer Cook:** Yes, **Member Krystal Chase:** Yes, **Member Ryan Witterschein:** Yes, **Michelle McConaghy:** Yes, **Deborah Ritcey:** No, **Sarah Sweeney:** Yes, **Rob Kallin:** No, **Randy Pierce:** Yes

All in Favor: No **Abstention:** Members Ryan Donnelly, Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre, and Joshua Gehling (Not in attendance for motion)

Motion Carried.

The last procedural issue is that according to our policies and procedures, we are supposed to post all minutes to our website. The minutes from the Full SILC have been posted but not the minutes from the committees. Randy Pierce recommends starting with the next federal fiscal year, the minutes from the committees will be posted. After a year, Jennifer Beaulieu will archive the minutes instead of posting them retroactively. Randy Pierce noted that the minutes won't be posted unless they are approved at a committee or council meeting.

SILC Education

Deborah Ritcey gave a presentation about the services and programs that GSIL offers. She noted that GSIL is the only funded CIL in NH. GSIL was started in 1980 with only one program which was their Personal Care Attendant (PCA) program. Since then, GSIL has expanded from having 1 program to 17 programs for individuals living with a disability. One of the things that make them unique to other CILs in the country is that they are 100% consumer directed. Which means the consumers direct their care not GSIL. There are two categories of services they offer; one is what she calls in-home supports and the other is what she calls out-of-home supports. One of their in-home supports programs is their PCA program. PCAs help individuals living with a disability with activities of daily living such as bathing and activities of instrumental living such as meal prep. Another in-home support is their peer mentoring program and their peer support program. Peer mentoring is mentoring a peer to be a mentor to someone else. Another in-home support is their nursing home transition program. They haven't been able to transition a lot of individuals out of nursing homes due to the lack of housing. This program also helps individuals transition out of correctional institutions and homelessness.

She moved onto the next category of programs which she considers as out-of-home supports. The biggest program out of those is their access modification program which builds modifications inside and outside the home. These could be ramps, chair lifts, bathroom rails, etc. The next out-of-home support is their spinal cord injury association. The program offers peer-mentoring and peer support services. She

mentioned their advocacy program which includes systematic advocacy and self-advocacy. They train individuals in the legislative process such as how to testify on a bill or how to write a letter to their representative. GSIL also keeps track of the legislative process, testifies on bills, supports or opposes bills, and works with other organizations with their advocacy efforts. GSIL has an education program where High School students can earn up to 5 credits in 14 weeks and get a job. For 14 weeks, these students leave their school system program and attend GSIL's school program. The students are taught all the things that they need to graduate. Additionally, they get a job and learn skills involved in searching for and having a job. The next two programs are standalone programs, but they go together. One is their benefit counseling through SSA's (Social Security Administration) WIPA (Work Incentives and Planning Assistance) program. This program helps individuals understand the comprehensive benefits they receive and how work may have an impact on those benefits. The other program is their Ticket to Work program which is about helping people get back to work which often includes benefits counseling.

The last program which is considered an out-of-home support is their REM (Refurbished Equipment Marketplace) program. This is where they take donated medical equipment, refurbish it and sell it at below market value. They have a website that shows all the equipment they have available. Deborah Ritcey was asked questions about GSIL's REM program. The questions were about the number of clients who receive services, who refurbishes the equipment, and the types of equipment that are donated. Deborah Ritcey noted that they have 2 full-time staff, and the volume of equipment depends on the cycle of life. They often get equipment when someone dies or transitions to a nursing home. They do receive accessible sports equipment, hearing aids, and low-vision equipment. They don't keep equipment that is customized to an individual. She mentioned how a lot of school systems ask them if they have low-vision equipment.

56K Update

Randy Pierce moved on to talk about the \$56,000. The amount was due to past vendors not spending all their Part B funds. He noted it was one group of funding, not two groups of funding as we previously thought. Richard Sala decided to put the funding through a single entity which was GSIL. Deborah Ritcey tried to subcontract that funding out, so all the Part B vendors got a piece of the funding, but wasn't allowed to. He mentioned how we found this group of unspent funding due to better accounting principles. He expects that this error won't happen again because they are going to monitor the funding and report to us regularly. Deborah Ritcey updated the council on the 56K. Richard Sala will allow GSIL to disperse the 56K funding at their own volition if they follow the guidelines appropriately and Deborah Ritcey intends to do so. Randy Pierce asked what is the process in which she can notify the other Part B vendors. Deborah Ritcey noted that once she has the contract from Jillian Cotrona for her to sign, Jillian Cotrona will give her the amounts of each contract. Once she does that, Deborah Ritcey will create a one-page subcontract with all the other vendors. There were questions on how members can see how the Part B funding is being spent. Deborah Ritcey noted that the information is in the PPR (Program Performance Report). Jennifer Beaulieu will send out the PPR to the SILC.

Andrew Harmon asked that moving forward at least once a calendar year, we have dedicated time to hear about the financials we are overseeing. Randy Pierce noted that we will get that information quarterly, it's a commitment we have loosely with Richard Sala. Amy Clark noted that it's their goal to have the financial information for September's Full SILC meeting.

Q&A and Vote on Applicant Herb Carpenter

Ryan Witterschein presented Herb Carpenter as an applicant. Herb Carpenter introduced himself as the Executive Director of Fellowship Housing. Fellowship Housing has 8 houses and serves 65 individuals. Fellowship Housing provides housing to individuals with mental health disabilities who receive services from Riverbend (the local community mental health center). Herb Carpenter was asked the following questions: (1) What he sees as a most critical need for people with disabilities in the state; (2) What kind

of information can be used to meet that critical need; (3) What he knows about the NH SILC; (4) What committee he would like to participate in; (5) What types of housing does Fellowship Housing provide; (6) What efforts are being made for collaboration between the Mental Health system and the Developmental Disability system; (7) If he supervises the staff at Fellowship Housing; and (8) What is his commitment to the NH SILC. Herb Carpenter mentions that what he's read and knows about housing, he believes housing is a critical need. A critical need that both people with disabilities and without disabilities face. He noted that while the SILC isn't really in the housing business, but he thinks assistance in interpreting specific federal regulations and making connections with other housing agencies could help meet that critical need. He mentioned that he knew nothing about the NH SILC till Randy Pierce reached out to him. He reviewed the bylaws and the SPIL. Regarding his committee interests, his first thought was the Advocacy Committee, but the Governance Committee is something he would be able to assist with. Fellowship Housing includes individual units in an apartment complex and a licensed community residence with 24/7 staff support. Fellowship Housing works with Riverbend to meet the needs of the tenant. Every month when they do monthly inspections, they make notes of any difficulties the tenant is experiencing. This is shared with Riverbend. Herb Carpenter noted that as long as people receive services from Riverbend, they can get housing from Fellowship Housing. They have a few individuals who are served by the local area agency (part of the developmental disability system) and Riverbend. Herb Carpenter noted that they have 6 on-site staff that provide direct support assistance in their 24/7 facility, but he is not their direct supervisor. Their Program Director supervises those staff members. Herb Carpenter noted that his commitment to the work of the council is that he came back from Maine during his vacation just to be here. Herb Carpenter was asked to leave the room for the vote.

***Second Vice-Chair Ryan Witterschein made a motion to approve him to the board**

Second: Member Andrew Harmon

Discussion: **Second Vice-Chair** Ryan Witterschein mentioned that this will put us at full capacity on the council but that doesn't mean we will stop recruiting because meetings are open to the public.

- **Roll Call:** **Member Andrew Harmon:** Yes, **Member Jennifer Cook:** Yes, **Member Krystal Chase:** Yes, **Second Vice-Chair Ryan Witterschein:** Yes, **Member Michelle McConaghy:** Yes, **First Vice-Chair Deborah Ritcey:** Yes, **Secretary Sarah Sweeney:** Yes, **Member Ryan Donnelly:** Yes, **Member Rob Kallin:** Yes, and **Chair Randy Pierce:** Yes

All in Favor: Yes **Abstention:** Members Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre and Joshua Gehling (Not in attendance for motion)

Motion Carried.

Ryan Witterschein will work with Herb Carpenter on filling out the online form that is required for Governor appointments.

Committee Updates

Membership

Ryan Witterschein reported out for the Membership Committee. When Herb Carpenter is appointed by the Governor, the council will be at full capacity. The committee is currently working on creating a SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) for reappointments and it should be ready to present at September's Full SILC meeting. Ryan Witterschein mentioned that even though we are at full capacity, we can still have individuals who we are interested in recruiting, attend meetings as members of the public. Deborah Ritcey noted that the max number in the bylaws can be changed.

Governance

Deborah Ritcey reported out for the Governance Committee. The slate of officers was shared to prepare for the election at September's Full SILC Meeting. The committee asked the current officers if they want to serve for another term, and they all said yes. She noted that they received other nominations and self-nominations. She lastly noted that if anyone is interested in an officer position, to let her know.

Advocacy

Andrew Harmon reported out for the Advocacy Committee. He noted that the committee has recently been focused on the SPIL's Goal 4 objectives specifically on benefits counseling. The committee recently had Stephanie Choi from GSIL present about benefits counseling. He mentioned that they are a bit behind on their Goal 1 and Goal 5 objectives. Randy Pierce noted that regarding the housing objectives and the SILC, the NH Housing Finance Authority has new leadership. He recently had a meeting with them. They currently have a nine year wait for housing and couldn't provide information on what housing they have that is accessible. They did offer to come and meet with the council if we are interested.

SPIL Status Report by the Committees

The council went through the SPIL objectives; the goal is to figure out what objectives are in warning. Discussion ensued. The only objective that is in warning is Objective 5.1 which is about establishing a statewide information and resource system for accessible housing in support of independent living options. Andrew Harmon noted that objective is a bit tricky because he doesn't know if we are supposed to be compiling the information that is already available or if there are actual gaps in that information. Randy Pierce noted that he has some thoughts on that. He mentioned that when he appoints someone to a committee he usually waits until they are governor-appointed, but people can start participating in a committee even if they are not appointed by the Governor. He noted how we now have someone with housing experience who has expressed interest in the Advocacy Committee or the Governance Committee. Randy Pierce officially appointed Herb Carpenter to the Advocacy Committee. Randy Pierce mentioned the idea of designating some of the Advocacy Committee's assigned objectives to specific members of the Advocacy Committee.

Other Business

Deborah Ritcey noted that she would love for the state of NH to be the premier employer of people with disabilities.

Andrew Harmon mentioned Jen Buteau, who is involved in the Alliance for Healthy Aging, as an idea for a presentation.

Jennifer Beaulieu asked about the response to the question about having logos on the NH SILC's website. Randy Pierce noted that he doesn't think the Executive Committee has a proposal to submit to the Full SILC about logos on our website. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

Adjournment

***Second Vice-Chair Ryan Witterschein motioned to adjourn.**

Second: First Vice-Chair Deborah Ritcey

Discussion: None

- **Roll Call: Member Andrew Harmon: Yes, Member Krystal Chase: Yes, Second Vice-Chair Ryan Witterschein: Yes, Member Michelle McConaghy: Yes, First Vice-Chair Deborah Ritcey: Yes, Member Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre: Yes, Secretary Sarah Sweeney: Yes, Member Rob Kallin: Yes, and Chair Randy Pierce: No**

All in Favor: No **Abstention:** Members Joshua Gehling and Ryan Donnelly (Not in attendance for motion)

Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.

Meeting recorded by Jennifer Beaulieu