



STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL

March 25, 2026

2:30pm

Advocacy Committee Meeting

ZOOM

Members Attending: Acting Council Chair Ryan Witterschein, Committee Chair Andrew Harmon, Herb Carpenter, Ryan Donnelly, Joshua Gehling, and Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre

Staff: Jennifer Beaulieu (NH SILC Assistant)

Committee Chair Andrew Harmon called the meeting to order at 2:32pm.

Review of February 25th Meeting Minutes

Andrew Harmon mentioned that he would accept a motion to approve the minutes.

***Ryan Donnelly made that motion.**

Second: Andrew Harmon

Discussion: With Joshua Gehling arriving late, Andrew Harmon asked if he had any questions or concerns about the minutes. Joshua Gehling mentioned that he didn't have any and he would support a vote to approve the minutes.

All in Favor: Yes **Abstaining:** None

Motion Carried

Discussion of SPIL Objectives:

a. Goal 1

Andrew Harmon noted that with the Goal 1 objectives, he would entertain any thoughts on how to get started with those objectives. He knows there is a similar problem with our goal 1 objectives that we are having with our goal 5 objectives based on the meeting they had on Monday. He mentioned that the ADRCs (Aging and Disability Resource Center) might be the first agency to reach out to try to get a sense of the networks. He noted that he thinks that objective 1.1 is being partially done by our partners like GSIL and Future in Sight. He isn't sure what we should be using other than the survey information that the Part B vendors were already collecting. He asked if anyone had any good ideas on who else we should be reaching out to. Jennifer Beaulieu mentioned the idea of seeing what other information the Part B vendors may have regarding service gaps. She mentioned that the SCC (State Coordinating Council for Community Transportation) might be a good resource regarding transportation gaps. Andrew Harmon mentioned that the SCC in

collaboration with Impact Consulting, have worked on a needs assessment to identify service gaps. Right now, they are at the stage of analyzing all the information they gathered. He is hoping that information will be available by May because they are trying to get everything done in April.

Ryan Donnelly noted that UNH:IOD has a lot of statistical information and has really good annual reports. He doesn't know how well they kept up with it in recent years. Mo Baxley mentioned that she recently saw census data on where people lived in the state. She will find it and send it out to everyone. Jennifer Beaulieu noted that VR did a comprehensive needs assessment in 2022. Andrew Harmon asked if anyone had contacts at the IOD. Joshua Gehling mentioned that he knows someone. Andrew Harmon mentioned if he could ask that contact about where they stand with those statistics. Joshua Gehling mentioned that he would be happy to and asked if he could get an email with what Andrew Harmon is asking for.

Andrew Harmon mentioned that he thinks that putting out resources to the organizations that already do the work that objective 1.4 requires would be sufficient. He knows that GSIL is doing the most work on this objective and he knows there are other organizations that offer self-advocacy trainings as well. Jennifer Beaulieu mentioned that ABLE NH also has trainings.

Jennifer Beaulieu mentioned that she created an excel list that includes all the information gathered in regards to the objectives. Andrew Harmon mentioned that it would be great for her to share that document.

b. Objective 4.3 Frame for Outreach Presentation

Andrew Harmon thanked Jennifer Beaulieu for sending out the materials from the past presentations. He noted that in his mind, he thinks for the presentation we would be looking for three presenters. He is thinking of having GSIL, VR, and an ADRC or an area agency to be the presenters. He asked for everyone's thoughts on that idea. Joshua Gehling mentioned that it makes sense to have several agencies that would be able to give an overview. His only concern is that an ADRC hasn't presented to this committee. Discussion ensued. Joshua Gehling mentioned that something like VR, GSIL, and an area agency would cover a bunch of demographics. Everyone agreed with there being three presenters at the most. Ryan Donnelly noted that it might be a good idea to take another look at the presentations we had and identify what we want the speakers to focus on. We don't want duplication and there has been some overlap in the past presentations we had.

Andrew Harmon asked if the presentation will be virtual or in-person. Ryan Donnelly mentioned the idea of having the presentation during a Full SILC meeting. His one

concern is he doesn't know if the presenters would want to be there physically or remotely. Andrew Harmon noted that his only concern with that idea is that we would need to extend the Full SILC meeting. There were questions on how long the meeting space was reserved for. Jennifer Beaulieu noted that meeting space is reserved till 4:00pm. Ryan Witterschein mentioned the idea of breaking the presentation into two sessions during two Full SILC meetings. It could be the educational component for two Full SILC meetings. Discussion ensued on how much time can be given for the presentations. Ryan Witterschein mentioned the idea of 45 minutes over two Full SILC meetings. Discussion ensued on when the presentations should occur. Everyone agreed with having them in the Fall. It would be the educational component for September's and November's Full SILC meetings. Herb Carpenter asked if the tracking sheet can be updated with the decisions that we made today. It could be in the outcome areas. Everyone agreed with that idea. Jennifer Beaulieu will update the tracking sheet.

c. Update on Ad-hoc Committee

Andrew Harmon noted that they recently had an ad hoc committee meeting. This ad hoc committee's purpose is to work on the goal 5 objectives. He noted that he is going to be chairing that committee. He mentioned how Ryan Witterschein gave the committee a great starting guideline to work on. They have been working on the guideline, and they will be making a more solid plan of what's going to work for everyone next Monday. There were questions on whether Andrew Harmon would need to use the NH SILC's ZOOM account for the meetings. Andrew Harmon mentioned that he would keep using his personal ZOOM for the meetings. He will share the recordings with Jennifer Beaulieu. He noted that the first meeting wasn't recorded. Jennifer Beaulieu asked if minutes would need to be created from those recordings and meetings. Discussion ensued. Ryan Witterschein mentioned that he would.

Discussion of Immediate Past and Upcoming Local Municipal Elections regarding Accessible Voting

Andrew Harmon mentioned that municipal elections have begun. Many elections occurred in March, with a few occurring in April. The cities will be having their elections in October and November. He mentioned that he would love for us to have a discussion at some point regarding experiences with the OmniBallot device. He noted how a few of the advocacy committee members are part of the Coalition for Blind and Vision Impaired Voters. He mentioned for those who are not part of the coalition, to keep an eye out for any stories regarding the devices because the coalition would love to hear them. Jennifer Beaulieu asked if anybody could use the devices. Andrew Harmon mentioned that this was one of the issues the coalition is investigating. Many people think it's only for people with a print disability, but anyone can use them.

Legislative Updates

Andrew Harmon asked Mo Baxley and Ryan Donnelly what they want to mention regarding legislative updates. He knows crossover is this week. Mo Baxley noted that it was a hellacious week last week, 80 bills were left on the table. Discussion ensued on how the calendar was stacked so tight that the legislature couldn't get through it all within two days, resulting in 80 bills being killed without debate. There was confusion over the difference between the consent calendar and the regular calendar. The consent calendar is basically all the stuff that is non-controversial and theoretically everybody would vote for. It's all put into one pile and voted on all together. The regular calendar includes bills that might be controversial or needs to be debated.

Other Business

Andrew Harmon noted that there is another group that has a meeting time that overlaps with our meeting schedule. The group is going to be taking up some work from the SCC. He asked if the committee could meet from 2:00pm to 3:00pm instead of 2:30pm to 3:30pm. Discussion ensued. All the members in attendance were okay with this change.

Herb Carpenter noted that NIF-North (North American Family Institute) which runs the housing program at the Philbrook building, has made the decision to move to Newport. The state budget that was passed last year required the selling of the Philbrook building. There was a bill to prevent that building from being sold off but NIF-North decided to move anyways.

Andrew Harmon mentioned that nationally, there are two bills that are being discussed. These bills are known as the SAVE Act or the SAVE America Act. These two bills would require people to show documented evidence of citizenship to vote in every election. Mo Baxley mentioned that it also curtails mail-in ballots. Andrew Harmon mentioned that depending on which bill passes, either there will be no more mail-in ballots or mail-in ballots would be heavily restricted. It was also mentioned that the bill would require each state to turn over their voter information to the federal government and to purge their voter rolls annually. Discussion ensued over the difficulties of getting the required proof of citizenship and the cost of such proof of citizenship.

Adjournment

***Andrew Harmon moved to adjourn.**

Second: Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre

Discussion: None

All in Favor: Yes **Abstaining:** None

Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned at 3:17pm.

Minutes Recorded by Jennifer Beaulieu.