



# STATE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL

**March 20, 2024**

**1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

**FULL SILC Meeting**

**IN-PERSON AND ZOOM**

**Members and Ex-Officios Attending:** Chair Carrie Dudley, Second Vice-Chair Randy Pierce, Secretary Sarah Sweeney (Remote), Member Ryan Donnelly, Member Erin Hall, Member Deborah Ritcey (Remote), and Member Ryan Witterschein

**Staff:** Jennifer Beaulieu (SILC Assistant), Amy Clark (Older Blind Program Representative), and Scott Vittner (DSE Representative)

**Guests:** Matthew Greenwood (Member of the Public, Remote), Andrew Harmon (Member of the Public), and Richard Sala (VR Director)

The SILC (Statewide Independent Living Council) meeting was called to order at 1:10 PM by Chair Carrie Dudley.

Deborah Ritcey reported that she is present via ZOOM in her office and is currently alone. Sarah Sweeney noted that she is remote on ZOOM and she is there by herself.

Richard Sala introduced himself as the new Director of Vocational Rehabilitation. He started on January 20<sup>th</sup>. He spent 21 years in the Marine Corps, served as council to the Commissioner of the Department of Education, sat on the State Board of Education, and worked at a graduate law school teaching constitution law and national security law. He looks forward to working with everyone.

\*Quorum was reached.

## **Approval of Minutes of 1/17 Full SILC Meetings**

**\*Member Deborah Ritcey made a motion to approve the minutes as amended.**

**Second: Member Ryan Donnelly**

## **Roll Call:**

- **Chair Carrie Dudley: Yes**
- **Second Vice-Chair Randy Pierce: Yes**

- **Secretary Sarah Sweeney: Yes**
- **Member Erin Hall: Yes**
- **Member Ryan Donnelly: Yes**
- **Member Deborah Ritcey: Yes**

**Discussion:** **There is a typo on the first roll call where Carrie Dudley is labeled as First Vice-Chair instead of Chair.**  
**All in Favor: Yes** **Abstention: None**  
**Motion Carried.**

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**Question-and-Answer Session and Vote on Applicant Andrew Harmon**

Carrie Dudley started the question-and-answer session by asking Andrew Harmon to give a brief history of who he is and why he is here. Andrew Harmon noted that he was previously on the SILC from 2014 to 2018 and got involved with the SILC because he was trying to become more involved with the disability community. He had to step down due to term limits. For volunteer work, he is a member of the National Federation of Blind in New Hampshire. He currently works as an accessibility tester with Fable which tests the accessibility of their clients’ websites. He wants to be a member because he thinks the council does important work and he wants to help.

Deborah Ritcey asked about what he would bring to help the council be compliant and complete the SPIL. Andrew Harmon responded that he wants to focus his efforts on the tasks that the SILC feels is important to the completion of the SPIL.

Carrie Dudley asked about his legislative efforts and his perspective on the SILC. Andrew Harmon responded that he is working with a group called the New Hampshire Coalition of Blind and Visually Impaired Voters. The group is currently pushing for the use and funding of accessible voting devices for local elections. The devices are currently available for state and federal elections but not local elections. There is currently legislation that would provide funding and use of the devices for local elections. His perspective of the SILC is that he understands that the SILC is more trying to advise the governor and doing what they can for the disability community.

Jennifer Beaulieu asked what bills he is currently tracking. Andrew Harmon noted that one bill he is following removes the ability to vote by affidavit. Another bill he is watching is regarding medical aid in dying.

**\*Member Deborah Ritcey made a motion to put Andrew’s nomination to the governor’s office for an appointment on the SILC committee.**

**Second: Member Erin Hall**

**Roll Call:**

- **Chair Carrie Dudley: Yes**
- **Second Vice-Chair Randy Pierce: Yes**
- **Secretary Sarah Sweeney: Yes**
- **Member Erin Hall: Yes**

- **Member Ryan Donnelly: Yes**
- **Member Deborah Ritcey: Yes**
- **Member Jennifer Cook: Yes**

**Discussion:** None  
**All in Favor: Yes**                      **Abstention: None**  
**Motion Carried.**

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**Discussion on First Vice-Chair Position**

Carrie Dudley noted that we still don't have a First Vice-Chair, and no one has stepped up. Deborah Ritcey recommended that the discussion be tabled to April's meeting because she would like to have a conversation with Randy Pierce regarding his intent for his future position. Randy Pierce made a point that he sent out an email to everyone asking them to either let him know that they are interested in the position, or they are not interested in the position. He got only one response. He thinks that it is an engagement issue and stressed the importance of responding when asked to. He agreed with Deborah Ritcey's idea about tabling the discussion for the next meeting.

There were questions on when the officer elections will happen. Discussion ensued. The two choices are September and June. Deborah Ritcey noted that we need a slate of officers before the meeting in June.

It was noted that a leadership role should not be determined by somebody's position, authority, or knowledge because everyone on the council is here for the same goal and would want the leadership to be successful. There is also a group of people on the council that would support anybody who wants to step up to a leadership position even if they don't know what they need to do.

**Meeting Location Discussion**

Carrie Dudley moved on to discuss the location for Full SILC meetings. Jennifer Beaulieu noted the cons of the current location which is the Walker Building. The cons are the location is not very secure and she has to use the education's ZOOM to use the equipment at the location. If someone asks for the recording from the meeting, she would not be able to give the recording to them because of email attachment restrictions. Discussion ensued. It was noted that the problem with the GSIL location is that remote attendees are unable to hear the in-person attendees. Carrie Dudley will work with Amy Clark and Scott Vittner to limit the effects of the cons of the Walker Building location.

**Committee Updates**

**Membership**

Carrie Dudley reported out for the Membership Committee. She noted that Ryan Witterschein is the new Chair of the Membership Committee, but she is willing to chair a committee meeting if he is unable to attend. She noted that the Membership Committee is currently working on two things. The first thing they are working on is how to reach out to people using social media. She noted that our social media currently doesn't have a lot of interaction. She noted the idea of everyone sharing news that they think is significant to Jennifer Beaulieu who manages the social

media accounts. The second thing they discussed was staggering membership so experienced members don't term off at the same time new members start.

### **Advocacy**

Randy Pierce reported out for the Advocacy Committee. The committee created a guide sheet to assist its' members with their outreach calls. He noted that the committee is using the resources on the website as the source of their first outreach. The committee divvy up the organizations by who already had connections with the organization. He mentioned that he will be creating a table where information from the calls will be placed. He hopes to submit the table in advance with the materials for the next meeting. He will submit the table once the committee is okay with the format for the next Full SILC meeting. They probably called about 12 organizations. He noted that the calls for outreach could be used to support membership. He will follow up with Ryan Witterschein. He reported that they are currently working on developing the advocacy plan. When the committee is done with the plan, they will put it forth for review.

### **Governance**

Deborah Ritcey reported out for the Governance Committee. She reported that the committee has swayed its objectives to focus on the SPIL development process. When they last met, people volunteered to work on specific parts of the SPIL goals. She hopes to send out a tracking grid with all the goals they plan to put in the SPIL. She will send the document to everyone on the council so people who weren't part of the last Governance Committee meeting will have the chance to offer their assistance in the development of the SPIL.

Deborah Ritcey noted that Jennifer Beaulieu recently sent out an email asking for members to attend the public input sessions. She noted that at the last Governance Committee meeting she asked Jennifer Beaulieu to do some research to see if the public input sessions must be in-person or if it could be virtual. Jennifer Beaulieu responded there isn't really a requirement federal wise but stressed the need to check state laws regarding public input sessions. There were questions on if we should seek legal counsel on the subject. Discussion ensued. Erin Hall noted that historically, the NH SILC has both in-person sessions and remote sessions. She also noted that we just have to make it accessible. There were questions on where the in-person session should be. Erin Hall noted in the past it is usually done in the Concord area.

Deborah Ritcey reported that the other thing they wanted to talk about was creating a policy for RSA 91-A. Right now, the committee is working on the SPIL but will work on creating a policy after the SPIL development process. She noted that we can still follow the amended RSA 91-A.

Amy Clark asked if there will be a note included in the 2024-2027 SPIL regarding the Part B consumer satisfaction surveys. Deborah Ritcey noted that the Part B consumer satisfaction surveys should just be standard operating procedure. Deborah Ritcey noted that after the development of the 2024-2027 SPIL, the Governance Committee will work on the surveys to make sure that we are getting the appropriate data. The surveys will also consider how the agencies collect data differently and the different services the agencies provide. Randy Pierce noted the need to know about the surveys in advance.

### **Other Business**

There were questions on if Scott Vittner will be taking over the position as DSE Representative now that he is the Administrator for the Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired. It was noted that Amy Clark is still officially the DSE because she signed last year's PPR report. Amy Clark noted that they will announce at some point when Scott Vittner will be officially taking that role over for the council so that everyone will know. She may still sit on the SILC as the Older Blind Program Manager. Deborah Ritcey asked that the council is made aware before the SPIL submission deadline because SPIL requires the signature of the DSE Representative.

Sarah Sweeney noted that there are still questions on if the council's acronym should be "NH SILC" or "SILC NH". Discussion ensued. Carrie Dudley responded that changing an acronym is more of a marketing thing. She thinks that the Membership Committee and Advocacy Committee should discuss what would be best for the council.

**Adjournment**

**\*Chair Carrie made a motion to adjourn.**

<b>Second:</b>	<b>Member Erin Hall</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>All in Favor: Yes</b>	<b>Abstention: None</b>
<b>Motion Carried.</b>	

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Meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.

Minutes Recorded by Jennifer Beaulieu