# Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council Minutes

**March 20,2025, 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**

The Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council met in person at State Services for the Blind, 2200 University Ave West, Suite 240, Conference Room C, St Paul MN and by Zoom. Vice-Chairman KiloMarie Grande called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m. Meeting expectations were reviewed. Introductions were made.

**Members Present:** Bethany Schwerr, Deborah Gleason, Frances Lake, Jacob Knaffla, Jennifer Clement, Joe Dailey, Kelly Lemke, KiloMarie Grande, Linda Lingen, Monique Doward, Morris Thompson, Robyn Block, Stephen Larson

**Member Absent**: none **Member Excused:** Jacob Shuller

**Ex Officio Members Present**: Amy McClellan, Anne Paulson, Michelle Severson **Ex Officio Members Absent**: None

**Guests:** Rand Stenhjem, Jackie Lane, Melissa Dougherty, SWCIL Executive Director

**Staff:** Jo Erbes

**Approve Meeting Agenda** – A motion was made by Stephen Larson to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Joe Dailey seconded the motion. The motion was carried by voice vote.

**Approve January 9, 2025 Meeting Minutes** – A motion was made by Joe Dailey to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2025 council meeting. Jake Knaffla seconded the motion. The motion was approved by voice vote.

**DEED/VRS Update and Update on contract with Hierophant** = Anne Paulson reported that layoff notices will begin in April. There is nothing new to report on with the grant for Hierophant.

**State Services for the Blind (SSB) Update:** Amy McClellan reported that SSB is still on track with the DEI grant and that staff was hired to implement the grant.

**Minnesota Council on Disability (MCD) Update:** Michele Severson noted that Trevor Turner, MCD Public Policy Director, resigned. The Legislative forum was a success. There was a lot of positive feedback. MCD will be meeting with Attorney General Ellison to talk about section 504, civil rights law for people with disabilities.

MCD will be a vendor at the Minnesota Social Services (MSS) conference.

**State Rehabilitation Council – General (SRC – G) Update** - Deborah Gleason noted there has been a reduction in funding. She shared an article on possible changes in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-announces-actions-combat-cost-living-crisis-including-rescinding-11?fbclid=IwY2xjawJJBz1leHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHZksFpMpulouwgTqYSqpPairlAZNX9chhl4QeOgZtRN02s9yOP1dTWDlBw_aem_CFFYopOiKpPLgRIHkEOpiQ>

**State Rehabilitation Council – Blind (SRC – B) Update** – Kelly Lemke has not been appointed yet.

**MN System To Achieve Results (STAR Program) Update** – There is no representation from MNSILC to the STAR Council.

**SILC Congress Report –** Stephen Larson was impressed by the number of people with disabilities in attendance. He participated in sessions on bias, the difference between lobbying and education of legislators. Jo Erbes attended a session on open meeting laws. Participants were reminded that due to open meeting laws there cannot be emails between meetings. She attended a session on youth recruitment, a session on AI, the Office of Independent Living Program (OILP) monitoring and review process, and a panel presentation with NCIL, APRIL and NACIL on advocacy.

The was a discussion and explanation about a 723 state.

**Rev UP MN/Arc MN** – Gene Martinez, Public Policy Director at the Arc MN, provided background information about Rev Up MN, the Arc MN Capitol Connectors teams, and the legislative session. He talked about legislation the Arc is working on such as reduced premiums for MAEPD, accessible playgrounds, phasing out 14C waivers in support of competitive wages for people with disabilities and supported decision making. There are 30 organizations that are a part of Rev Up MN, They provide voter education and candidate forums. Arc MN Capitol Connector is in each legislative district and open to the public. To sign up visit this website: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfmIvoXsWwzpE5_N2p1YfHKhfuMRqa4ugyWH99gg3zeCfzl3w/viewform>

**Public Comment** – Robyn Block shared information about the MN Christian Deer Hunters Expo where she shared information about the accessible hunts at Access North and Options.

Partners in Policy Making is accepting applications for the next 8-month program. To register visit: <https://mn.gov/mnddc/partnersinpolicymaking/class43/faq.html>

Bethany Schwerr shared information about reviewing Request for Proposals for grant through the Department of Human Services. Information is available at: <https://forms.office.com/g/v4TecK6zpG>

**Leader Dogs for the Blind –** Alyssa Otis presented information about the free Leader Dog Program for the blind. She promoted the pod cast “taking the lead” and the documentary “Pick of the Liter”. More information is available at <https://www.leaderdog.org/>

**PPR Review/Approval –** Jo Erbes reviewed the Program Performance Review (PPR) with the council. Joe Dailey made a motion to approve the PPR with a few corrections related to council member’s information. Jacob Knaffla seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote with one abstention.

Due to time constraints, there were no committee reports and the Response Plan for Misinformation was not reviewed.

**Next Meeting –** May 8th There was discussion about visiting Access North and being able to visit their new carpentry shop. Linda Lingen made the motion to adjourn. Joe Dailey seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Presented by Linda Lingen, Secretary

Recorded by Jo Erbes, MNSILC Coordinator

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