



## Telecommunications Relay Service Council of Maine

*John Post, Chair  
Benjamin Frech, Executive Director  
160 Capitol Street, Suite 4 Augusta ME 04330*



### Quarterly Meeting Minutes

*September 5, 2025  
10:00 AM EST -12:00 PM EST  
Governor Baxter School for the Deaf (Cafeteria)  
1 Mackworth Island  
Falmouth, ME 04105*

Call to Order

Welcome & Introductions

Present: John Post, Chair (Maine Association for the Deaf); Riley Albair (Disability Rights Maine); Michael Johnson (Maine Public Utilities Commission); Terry Morrell (Director of the Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Late Deafened); Megan Garrity (Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing); Sylvia Most (Maine Office of the Public Advocate); Jessica Perez (Maine Connectivity Authority); Simon Thorne (Consolidated Communications); Eric Conrad (Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened).

Also in attendance: Lisa Penney (Disability Rights Maine); (Allison LaBrie (Hamilton Relay); Andrew Brenneman (T-Mobile); Mary Beth Mothersell (T-Mobile).

Review of the Minutes of the Council Meeting – June 6, 2025

***Motion to accept the minutes by Michael Johnson, seconded by Eric Conrad. Unanimous.***

*Megan requested closed captioning be turned on for those in the room. Folks online were also having trouble hearing the in-person speakers.*

Report from the Executive Director

*Ben described Council activity since the June meeting, including submission of the Council budget request to the PUC, extensive work on the Council website, the Outreach RFP, preparation for this meeting, as well as some other tasks that had been on the back burner.*

- Overview of Fall 2025 Activity

*Ben described next steps for the website (future updates, uploading of old reports/meeting documents, accessibility measures, etc.)*

*Overview of remainder of fall task list, including timeline for upcoming reports, NASRA & TEDPA business meetings, John attending START conference*

*Michael acknowledged Ben's work for the Council since coming on board. Ben thanked the members of the Council for their cooperation and assistance getting Ben up to speed and help with information such as Ben's information requests regarding the upcoming Government Evaluation Report.*

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*Terry seconded Michael's comments and asked who was serving on the RFP Evaluation Team. Ben answered Simon, Jessica, & Eric.*

### Reports from Officers

- Report from John Post, Council Chair

*John discussed having files that need to be sorted for archiving purposes. John echoed praise for Ben while discussing the challenges that faced the Council prior to his hire. John will be attending T-Mobile's START conference in Atlanta in October and explained the purpose and the overview of the conference for the Council.*

*\*Brief technical difficulties\**

### Other Reports:

- Maine Public Utilities Commission (Michael Johnson)

*Michael highlighted the activity and investment in the broadband space and the importance of the analog transition and its effects on the Council's work.*

- Maine Connectivity Authority (Jessica Perez)

*Jessica reiterated the amount of activity in the broadband space. Jessica also highlighted:*

- o *\$272M in BEAD funding;*
- o *Tech Help for Me Program, which is an "online directory for resources in Maine to help people use technology. The resource is designed to be accessible to various different populations, so for example, it doesn't use a lot of jargon, but it also has a way to search if there are resources available in ASL, and other accessibility elements like it can be used with a screen reader..."*
- o *Maine Tech Share, which is a "statewide campaign to get businesses to recycle their unused, retired technology, computers that no longer serve their business purposes, for example, to then be refurbished for people in Maine who need a device to go to school, to find a job for telehealth, etc."*
- o *Digital Opportunity Workshop on 10/7 at UMaine Augusta (open to the public)*
- o *SeniorsPlus, which is an organization in Lewiston with an MCA funded building on-site that provide services to individuals with disabilities and "connects not just the infrastructure of bringing internet to someone's home, but also resources that help people learn to be able to use the internet and learn how to use a computer"*

*John and Terry had follow up questions, Jessica will send around information after the meeting.*

- Office of the Public Advocate (Sylvia Most)

*The OPA is "going out around the state and trying to bring information about electricity resources for people who are struggling with their electricity bills, and that can be*

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*everything from low income to middle income people. There's a lot available and a lot of confusion around solar, for example so I wanted to find out more about how we might potentially share information at these sorts of events that are going on around the state that are bringing people in."*

*Terry offered to share information with Maine Assoc for the Deaf. He also mentioned the Deaf Culture Festival on 9/27 and the seasonal Senior Tuesdays at Baxter as outreach/educational opportunities.*

*Next MEAD Meeting on 9/13 at Buker Community Center in Augusta*

- Disability Rights Maine (Riley Albair)

*Riley highlighted DRM's Outreach efforts from the summer.*

*\*An electronic copy of DRM's outreach report is available upon request.\**

*\*Brief technical difficulties\**

*Megan commented that the technical difficulties are "a great example of the reality for many people who are deaf and hard of hearing. And the problems of internet, connectivity, the struggles with technology, things not working as intended, so I think it's a great model for the patience and the tolerance that folks have to have, but it's a tireless effort.*

- T-Mobile Relay Communications (Mary Beth Mothersell, Senior Customer Relations Manager for Maine Relay)

*Mary Beth reviewed the most recent Traffic Report Data*

- Hamilton Relay/CapTel (Allison LaBrie)

*Allison reviewed the most recent Hamilton CTS Performance Data*

*\*An electronic copy of Hamilton's outreach report is available upon request.\**

### Old Business:

*Terry asked if there was an update regarding Council membership. Ben explained that there unfortunately is not, as there has not been any progress with Boards and Commissions. Michael added other similar organizations to the Council are in the same boat.*

- Website Update (covered earlier in meeting) brief discussion regarding 'Contact Us'
- Outreach RFP Update (Ben)

*Very brief overview with no details, as an interested party was in attendance. Ben advised Council members that if they had any questions, they could contact him directly.*

Captioned Telephone Services Presentation – Lisa Penney, Telecommunications Advocate, DRM

*\*An electronic copy and a recording of DRM's CTS Presentation is available upon request.\**

*Discussion of barriers to getting users to switch, consumer choice, what other states are doing, access to emergency services.*

*Hamilton discussed gathering of consumer data that was shared confidentially with the Council.*

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### New Business:

- CTS Subcommittee Update & Discussion (*part of CTS Presentation Discussion*)
- Discussion of topics for December meeting
  - o Future of ED Position w/ Atlantic
  - o Council Information Document
  - o 2026 Meetings Survey
    - Location, time, day, etc.

Next Meeting: December 5, 2025 (*same location*)

Adjourn

***Motion to adjourn at 12:00 by Michael Johnson, seconded by Jessica Perez. Unanimous.***

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