



Telecommunications Relay Service Council of Maine

John Post, Chair
Benjamin Frech, Executive Director

160 Capitol Street, Suite 4 Augusta ME 04330



Quarterly Meeting Minutes

December 5, 2025

Governor Baxter School for the Deaf (Cafeteria)
1 Mackworth Island Falmouth, ME 04105

Called to Order @ 10:07 AM

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); Sylvia Most (Maine Office of the Public Advocate); Jessica Perez (Maine Connectivity Authority).

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

Absent: Megan Garrity (Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing) and Simon Thorne (Consolidated Communications).

Welcome & Introductions

Approval of the Meeting Agenda **VOTE**

Motion to accept the agenda by Sylvia Most, seconded by Jessica Perez. Unanimous.

Review of the Minutes of the 9/5/25 Council Meeting – **VOTE**

Motion to accept the minutes by Terry Morrell, seconded by Sylvia Most. Unanimous.

Due to time constraints, the Executive Director suggested taking items in need of a vote out of order. The first item was a one-year extension with Hamilton for Captioned Telephone Service through 12/31/2026. The terms of the agreement were sent around to the Council before the meeting (in order to avoid executive session during the meeting) and remain the same as the previous year's extension. Ben highlighted Hamilton's partnership throughout the subcommittee process and the extension negotiations.

Contract Extension w/ Hamilton through 12/31/2026 – **VOTE**

Motion to approve the extension through 12/31/2026 by Sylvia Most, seconded by Terry Morrell. Unanimous.

The second item taken out of order was the contract extension with Atlantic Staffing for Ben's services. Ben explained the Master Service Agreements (MSA) that the state has with multiple staffing agencies and that Atlantic is in the midst of negotiating with the State. The negotiations are ongoing and as a result, the State and Atlantic agreed to an extension through April 30, 2026 (Council's current agreement with Atlantic is through December 31, 2025). Ben and John had also discussed a minor increase in pay for the position with Atlantic. The terms of the agreement

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were sent around to the Council before the meeting (in order to avoid executive session during the meeting).

Motion to approve the extension through 4/30/2026 with an increase to the Executive Director's hourly rate of \$0.96/hour by Jessica Perez, seconded by Sylvia Most. Unanimous.

Report from the Executive Director

- Recap of Fall activity
 - o Ben shared the ED's Report on his screen, which was distribute to the Council prior to the meeting. The first item discussed was the Outreach RFP process. Ben reiterated the challenges with the RFP process that had been well-documented in prior meetings since the Outreach RFP process began in the Spring of 2025. The new contract will run for three years from November 1, 2025 through October 31, 2028, with two separate mutual option years for November 1, 2028 through October 31, 2029 and November 1, 2029 through October 31, 2030, respectively.
 - o Ben discussed the meetings of the CTS Subcommittee, but mainly focused on the third meeting of the subcommittee, which occurred after the September Council meeting, on October 6, 2025. Findings described above and to be discussed later.
 - o Ben then described the business meetings of the two national organizations the Council is a member of: the National Association for State Relay Administration (NASRA) held their meeting virtually on October 2, 2025 and the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA) on October 9, 2025. The two organizations were discussing a possible merger leading up to the business meetings. Ben described the logistics discussed at the meetings and that the main reason for the merger discussion was for the annual conferences. The overall feeling at the meeting was that a join annual conference could be held regardless of a formal merging of the organizations and that the merger could take longer than expected due to several variables and legal hurdles. The 2026 Conference will be in Kansas City, dates TBD. Ben will keep the Council updated.
 - o Ben then highlighted the Government Evaluation Act (GEA) Review that was submitted to the Legislature on October 31, 2025 and scheduled to be presented to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology sometime early in 2026. John asked if the report would need to have information regarding an audit. Ben responded that it was not required in the report and that the audit timeline was an item in the Council's by-laws and was unsure if an audit requirement was in the Council's statute (it is not). Ben went on to explain that finances go through the state and the Department of Administrative and Financial

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Services (DAFS) and that the monthly reports from them serve that purpose until the Council can formally perform an internal audit. Ben highlighted the assistance from DAFS with assembling the financial information for the GEA Review.

- Ben gave an overview of the Annual Report, which was submitted to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) on December 1, 2026 and was distributed to the Council prior to the meeting. Ben highlighted the information included in the report and a possible request to move the report to coincide with the budget report in the future. Sylvia offered to assist if a possible legislative solution presents itself. Jessica asked for clarification on the term, “report out legislation.” Ben explained the legislative process.
 - Finally, Ben asked if the Council would want to adjust the meeting schedules and locations. Mainly, moving the December meeting to November sometime before Thanksgiving, but also see if Friday mornings were best for everyone. Convenience would play a factor but also makes sense with the timing of some reports. Sylvia added that it would be helpful to know where everyone is located when deciding future meeting locations. Riley emphasized a preference for meeting in person. Michael volunteered the PUC as a possible meeting location.
 - Ben also briefly summarized the Council’s Report to the Secretary of State, due December 31, 2025.
- Outlook for 2026
- The top priority for early 2026 will be monitoring upcoming activity of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in regards to the modernization of TRS and how the Council would like to weigh in and what concerns the Council would have. Sylvia requested the relevant docket numbers.
 - MARS Report update, due late January/early February.
 - Considerations for raising awareness in early summer about the end of analog CTS (ending 12/31/2026).
 - Website maintenance and accessibility standards
 - Compliance with DOJ Accessibility rule by end of April.
 - Discussion about retention of state documents
 - The Council will coordinate with the Maine State Library to begin process of archival of pertinent documents.
 - Michael explained the project file system at the PUC.
 - A lengthy discussion was followed by John expressing support for the Council’s efforts in this area.

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Reports from Officers

- Report from John Post, Council Chair
 - o John discussed his attendance at the State Telecommunication Administrators Relay for T-Mobile (START) Conference (10/21-10/23), in Atlanta, GA.
 - o The conference covered technological updates, consumer needs, changes to billing, etc.

Other Reports:

- Maine Public Utilities Commission (Michael Johnson)
 - o Covered Earlier in meeting
- Office of the Public Advocate (Sylvia Most)
 - o Discussed how the affordability of electricity will affect Maine.
 - o OPA would like to partner to reach consumers to educate them about affordability.
 - o Also discussed a bill the OPA will have in the legislature in the upcoming session.
- Maine Connectivity Authority (Jessica Perez)
 - o Discussed challenges the agency is facing because of changes in federal policy.
 - o MCA trying to understand the cellular connectivity gaps, described a survey.
- Disability Rights Maine (Riley Albair)
 - o Riley presented DRM's comprehensive quarterly outreach report, which was shared with the Council prior to the meeting and is available upon request.
- T-Mobile Relay Communications (Mary Beth Mothersell, Senior Customer Relations Manager for Maine Relay)
 - o TTY users are 51%. Voice carryover is 28%. Voice is 21%. (Analog Only).
- Hamilton Relay/CapTel (Allison LaBrie)
 - o Allison summarized the quarterly report, which was shared with the Council prior to the meeting.

Sylvia expressed interest in training/education for Council members to better interact with the ASL speaking community. Jessica and John were also interested. Terry volunteered to do so at a future meeting.

The Council also discussed the attendance of Council members at community events. Sylvia added that attendance could result in filling of vacant Council seats (leading to a quick Council membership update, re: the Commission's seat, formerly held by Eric Conrad).

Next Meeting: March, TBD

Adjourned @ 11:26 AM

Motion to adjourn by Sylvia Most, seconded by Jessica Perez. Unanimous.

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