

Statewide Independent Living Council of Hawaii (SILC) Monthly Meeting Minutes [DRAFT]

Date: October 2, 2025

Time: 9:03 AM - 10:46 AM

Location (Zoom): <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83211242897?pwd=Qdaa9r43RJUyKEab9DygFMPsbtIP8y.1>

Location (In Person): Hub Coworking Hawaii, 1050 Queen St Suite 100, Honolulu, Hawaii

Call to Order – Patrick Gartside

Meeting called to order at 9:03 AM.

Meeting Procedures Review – Patrick Gartside

Patrick reviewed standard meeting procedures: meeting recorded, quorum required on screen, notify chair before leaving, raise hand to speak, identify yourself before speaking.

Roll Call / Attendance – Donald Sakamoto

SILC Members Present:

- Patrick Gartside, SILC Member (Chair)
- Jodi Asato, SILC Member
- Catia Garell, SILC Member
- Brian Hauser, SILC Member
- Vickie Kennedy, SILC Member
- Donald Sakamoto, SILC Member (Secretary)
- Annette Tashiro, SILC Member (Treasurer)
- Nani Watanabe, SILC Member (joined late)

SILC Members Absent:

- Philip Ana, SILC Member (Vice Chair) - Excused Absence
- Judy Guajardo - Excused Absence

- Val Janiskowski - Excused Absence
- Letty Zuno - Excused Absence

Staff:

- Amanda Lowe, Executive Director

Guests:

- Cheryl Matthews, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Designee
- Lea Dias, DVR Administrator
- Anchisa Kumpu, Professional Fellow from Thailand (ATRC)

Independent Living Philosophy – Amanda Lowe

Amanda read the Independent Living Philosophy statement: Independent living is a movement, program, and philosophy founded on the belief that people with disabilities should enjoy the same civil rights, choices, and autonomy as those without disability, with the right to live in the community of their choice with necessary supports. Persons with disabilities are the best experts on their own lives and bodies, deserving of equal opportunity to decide how to live, work, and participate in their communities.

Proof of Notice – Patrick Gartside

Notice for this meeting was posted on the state calendar last Friday, posted on the SILC website, and emailed to members with the packet.

Approval of Minutes - September 4, 2025 – Patrick Gartside

- Annette noted corrections that should be made to minutes
- Cat Garell noted agenda not posted on website

Brian Hauser questioned Aloha Independent Living Hawaii report showing only one information and referral for the entire quarter (noted as content question, not minutes correction).

Motion: Annette Tashiro motions to approve minutes (later amended by Donald Sakamoto to accept with corrections)

Second: Vickie Kennedy

Result: Unanimous approval

SILC Reports

SILC Activities Report – Amanda Lowe

September activities aligned with SILC's four goals:

Goal 1: Enhance Independent Living Network Impact

- September 4th quarterly meeting with officer elections: Patrick Gartside (Chair), Philip Ana (Vice Chair), Annette Tashiro (Treasurer), Donald Sakamoto (Secretary)
- Policy and Procedures Committee established (Patrick, Philip, Annette, Cat); met September 8th, working on manual
- Survey Committee formed (Philip, Nani, Jodi, Val, Brian) to improve community data collection

Goal 2: Inform and Guide Response to Emerging Issues

- Annette attended Resiliency Action Planning Committee, Alzheimer's research/housing events, Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) Division's Roadmap to Advocacy Orientation (Sept 10)
- Donald participated in Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizen Advisory Committee (transportation decarbonization) and Disability Communication Access Board parking meeting (Sept 8)

Goal 3: Enhanced Systems Change

- Partnership with DD Council for neighbor island legislative forums
- SPIL Committee meetings began for potential amendments
- Philip and Amanda met with Hawaii Disability Rights Center on Honolulu AUTHORITY for Rapid Transit (HART) construction accessibility
- Annette participated in Opening Doors National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) webinar on Hawaii's system silos (Sept 19)

Goal 4: Equal Access During Disasters

- Annette participated in Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Stop the Bleed session (Sept 9) and conducted outreach to Windward Buddhist Temple

Patrick added: Attended Deaf Awareness Day at Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind as only non-American Sign Language (ASL) vendor, discussed youth leadership collaboration opportunities with Comprehensive Services Center's summer youth leadership camp and school's transition team.

Patrick emphasized council members should submit activity reports in any format comfortable - detailed organized documents or simple email updates.

Discussion: Donald asked about survey language accessibility (Title VI). Patrick explained the committee exploring a Customer Relationship Manager (CMR) system for multiple formats/languages, with the option to schedule calls instead of surveys. Jodi invited SILC to the May 6th Assistive Technology Awareness event at Windward Community College partnering with mental health awareness. Patrick noted that tabling supplies are available and plans for a unified events calendar.

Financial Report – Patrick Gartside

No detailed report due to treasurer transition. Patrick provided brief update:

- Met with Supporting Strategies bookkeepers
- Future reports will include detailed narrative, not just beginning/ending balances
- One-month reporting lag, in others words the treasurer will be reporting on the previous month: next meeting will include September financials
- Amanda emphasized transparency goal and welcomed suggestions from council members

Committee Reports

Policies and Procedures Committee – Amanda Lowe

- Met once as full committee, once for touch base
- Drafting manual covering day-to-day operations: expense reimbursement, conflict of interest, elections
- Received technical assistance from Independent Living Technical Assistance Center, reviewed other state examples
- Hope to present draft to full council next month
- Welcomes additional volunteers

State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) Committee – Patrick Gartside

Committee: Patrick, Brian, Philip, Leti, Roxanne, Amanda

First meeting discussed potential amendments:

- Redefining Centers for Independent Living (CIL) service areas
- Adjusting SILC resource plan budget to align with activities
- Proposed community outreach position

Notified Administration of Community Living program officer. Next steps: follow-up meeting, present amendments to council, conduct public forum.

Donald asked about the timeline. Patrick: hoped for September 30th completion but the process will take a couple more months.

Survey Committee – Amanda Lowe

- Materials sent to members, meeting pending Philip's return
- Reviewing three state examples
- Considering whether to maintain two surveys or consolidate
- Focus: collecting best data to inform future amendments/SPILs
- Centers for Independent Living invited to participate in development

Patrick added centers will provide boots-on-the-ground perspective.

Advocacy Activity

HART Construction Accessibility Issues – Donald Sakamoto & Amanda Lowe

Donald attended the HART Dillingham Project workshop (Sept 11, Kalihi Kai Elementary). Lisa, 63-year-old legally blind resident, reported:

- Crumbling sidewalks from construction
- Safety and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) concerns
- Unreturned HART hotline calls

Donald connected Lisa with SILC and Hawaii Disability Rights Center (HDRC), submitted photos documenting Title II violations. Lisa uses a stroller to navigate damaged sidewalks. Donald previously raised concerns in January 2024 with the Equal Opportunity Office with no resolution.

Amanda and Philip met with Hawaii Disability Rights Center (Lou, Howard Lester) who agreed to collaborate.

Discussion: Brian Hauser noted Client Assistance Program information for CILs is omitted from Hawaii Disability Rights Center website/brochures. Patrick agreed to follow up.

Upcoming Forums – Patrick Gartside & Amanda Lowe

Kaua'i Legislative Forum Recap (October 1st)

Patrick and Amanda attended Developmental Disabilities Council forum with 12-15 vendors, strong attendance. Nancy Romain gave an excellent DVR presentation. Self-advocates led portions celebrating National Disability Employment Awareness Month. SILC distributed easy-to-read SPIL guides, had ~10 conversations about the State Plan for Independent Living, and collected surveys.

Upcoming DD Council Legislative Forums:

- **Big Island:** Kailua-Kona (Oct 8), Hilo (Oct 10) - SILC has resource tables and panel time
- **Moloka'i:** Oct 18 (Nani attending with Savannah)
- **Maui:** Oct 21 (Savannah coordinating, many registrations, ASL interpreters arranged, potential politician conflict with budget hearing)
- **O'ahu:** Legislative briefing (format TBD)

Other Events:

- **White Cane Walk:** Oct 17, State Capitol (Ho'oponopono Services resource fair) - SILC submitted form
- **Lana'i Health Fair:** Nov 1 (Val coordinating)

Amanda will email dates for volunteers.

SPIL Amendment Process:

After community feedback: finalize with SPIL Committee, coordinate with Administration for Community Living (ACL), host online public forum(s) for 200-person mailing list.

Discussion: Donald asked about hearing from attendees about transportation challenges on Big Island forums. Patrick confirmed conversations with Kauai transportation providers and will engage others. Nani updated on Maui planning. Brian requested forum information; Nani offered to send DD website link. Cat asked about member compensation; Patrick explained transportation/per diem covered but not honorariums - Policies Committee to review. Brian noted SILC previously paid for neighbor island travel and provided lunch.

Break

10-minute break at 10:05 AM. The meeting resumed at approximately 10:20 AM (extended by 5 minutes).

Bill 60 Update – Donald Sakamoto

Bill 60 requests HART extend rail to University of Hawaii Manoa (originally planned, cut short; now ending Kaka’ako instead of Ala Moana due to funding/legal issues).

Donald submitted testimony (Sept 24 Infrastructure, Transportation, and Technology Committee) requesting disability input before studies/environmental impacts, citing:

- Ongoing Dillingham Title II ADA violations
- Concerns about Nimitz Highway third phase (5-6 years through 2030-2031)

Amanda converting photos to text format for accessibility.

Testimony cut short by Chair Radiant Cordero but key points made. Councilmember Matt Weyer (District 2, Wahiawa, North Shore) questioned Director Roger Morton about:

- ADA compliance (Morton confirmed compliance)
- Restrooms (attendants will open on request; more at Middle Street Transit Center; can use airport restrooms at airport station)

Testimony Process Discussion: Amanda explained the need for SILC testimony policy. Donald consulted Philip and submitted as Citizens for a Fair Americans with Disabilities Act president instead of SILC member. Donald noted Disability Communications Access Board (DCAB) requires full board approval before submitting testimony. Patrick responded SILC doesn't need rules as strict as DCAB/State Rehab Council; Policies Committee developing procedures possibly allowing chair/executive director to sign on to SPIL-aligned issues without full council vote.

Council Member Spotlight: Home Modification and Fall Prevention – Cat Garell

Cat presented on Occupational Therapy perspective for home modification screening:

POPE Assessment Model:

- **Person:** Abilities, disabilities, goals, caregiver concerns
- **Occupation:** Activities of Daily Livings, cooking, cleaning, bill paying
- **Performance:** Task completion, identifying barriers
- **Environment:** Physical home barriers

Assess high fall risk zones (stairs, car, shower, toilet), observe actual performance vs. reported abilities.

Resources:

- **CDC STEADI:** Four prevention steps, validated risk assessment tool
- **American Association Retired Persons (AAPP) HomeFit Guide:** Simple modifications without healthcare professional

Accessibility Pyramid:

- **Entry:** Universal design (anyone with checklists)
- **Mid:** Aging in place, ADA (specialists needed)
- **High:** Catastrophic injury (healthcare professionals required)

Programs:

- **Palolo Chinese Home Grant:** Federal program, free modifications (up to \$5,000) for urban Honolulu seniors who fell/hospitalized
- **University of Southern California (USC) Course:** Teaching fall prevention at USC Gerontology School (starting November)

Discussion:

Donald shared Life Alert experience; noted cost but emphasized importance for seniors/people with disabilities. Patrick suggested Google Home/Alexa for voice-activated emergency calls but noted limitations

if unconscious. Cat confirmed new radar-based fall detection technology (similar to police speed radar) being developed for homes/nursing homes that doesn't require manual activation.

Patrick asked about Kaua'i family with a young woman (disability onset age 12) needing home modifications and IL skills training. Cat explained:

- Department of Health Developmental Disability program Long Term Services and Supports funding for those at high institutionalization risk
- Available through Quest and some health plans (Hawaii Medical Service Administration (HMSA), Ohana, UnitedHealthcare) for Medicaid recipients
- Medicare covers assessment but not modifications
- School might help with home-based issues
- Offered to provide guidance

Nani thanked Cat, noted neighbor island resource gaps, will connect with contacts/events, mentioned affordable bathroom modification needs for elderly.

Open Discussions / Q&A

HART Rail Opening – Donald Sakamoto

- Private dedication ceremony Oct 15 for second phase (Pearl Harbor to Airport to Middle Street Kalihi stations)
- Free public rides Oct 16-19 with Holo card to experience the rail
- Concerns: airport lagoon drive distance/accessibility for disabled persons, restaurant locations at Middle Street
- Proposes rally to restore Mayor's Committee for Disabilities at 530 S King Street grass area (no permit needed, just notify Arts and Cultures department)

Patrick suggested coordinating group rail ride for accessibility testing (informal, not official SILC business).

Mau'i County Fair – Nani Watanabe

- Starts today (Oct 2); Friday is "special fair day"
- Savannah from the DD Council suggested changing name to "inclusion/accessibility"
- Mau'i Deaf Friends, Mau'i Wheelers, Kalihi O Maui participating
- First year not in 25-year parade tradition
- Education needed for new coordinators

State Elections Commission – Donald Sakamoto

- Attended meeting yesterday (10 AM-almost 6 PM, available on YouTube)
- Proposal to eliminate mail-in ballots, require in-person voting one day with absentee for military/special needs
- Eliminate electronic ballot machines
- Vote passed 5-4 (9 members), goes to legislature for hearings next year
- Act 136 passed 2019; mail-in originally for Kauai testing only, expanded statewide 2020 due to COVID
- National Federation of the Blind testified for electronic ballots for independence and secured voting
- Concerns: limited polling places (two per county); people miss having polling places at different schools
- Will testify at legislative public hearings

National Federation of the Blind Convention – Annette Tashiro

- Oct 10-11 at Elks Club
 - Exhibit time Friday 3:30-5:30 PM only
 - Annette saved SILC table; she and Donald attending
 - Patrick can help staff table (not attending Hilo forum 1-5 PM same day)
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Meeting Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Brian Hauser

Second: Donald Sakamoto

Result: Motion passes unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 10:46 AM.