Statewide Independent Living Council of Hawaii (SILC)

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes [DRAFT]

Date: Thursday, June 11, 2026
Time: Approximately 1:00 PM – 1:42 PM
Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)
Presiding: Annette Tashiro, Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Annette Tashiro called the meeting to order and confirmed attendance.

Present:

- Annette Tashiro – Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair
- Philip Ana – Vice Chair
- Judy Guajardo – Member
- Amanda Lowe – Executive Director (staff)

Not Present:

- Patrick Gartside – unavailable

Chair Tashiro identified the purpose of the meeting as discussing changes to the SILC Resource Plan, together with the question of where the Council's funding comes from as the next State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) is developed.

2. Funding Sources and Current Financial Position

Executive Director Lowe clarified the funding structure: SILC receives Part B funding and Innovation and Expansion (I&E) funding, under a contract with the Designated State Entity (DSE) covering FY 2025, FY 2026 and FY 2027 — the life of the current SPIL. Chair Tashiro confirmed the Resource Plan figure of $101,615 for the period October 1, 2026 through September 30, 2027.

Members clarified the meaning of the term "reserves." Executive Director Lowe explained that the balance of roughly $200,000 represents funds SILC has received in prior periods and not spent, rather than a formally designated reserve, and noted the terminology has caused some confusion. Chair Tashiro confirmed that this is the balance the Council has drawn on when expenditures exceeded the amount available in a given expenditure period.

Executive Director Lowe reported that the bookkeeper, Kim, advised at the recent quarterly meeting that SILC has generally been spending approximately what it receives each quarter. The Council invoices the DSE quarterly and receives approximately $33,000 per quarter.

Balances reported: The most recent bookkeeping report received from Kim covers May 2026. Chair Tashiro reported an available checking balance of $212,936.16 as of June 3, 2026, which includes the approximately $200,000 in unspent prior-period funds.

Ms. Guajardo asked whether the SPIL amendment to increase the budget had been abandoned, and whether the Council would need to spend down the balance before requesting more, noting that SILC cannot realistically operate on $101,615. Chair Tashiro stated her understanding that the DSE does not count the unspent balance; the awarded amount is what the Council operates with, and it is up to SILC to be prudent and to develop additional resources going forward.

3. Resource Development and Grants

Borealis Foundation Application

Executive Director Lowe reported that SILC has applied, jointly with the Hawaii Disability Rights Center (HDRC), for a grant from the Borealis Foundation. HDRC approached SILC approximately two days before the deadline and is the lead applicant. The total request is $200,000, of which HDRC would receive $150,000 and SILC $50,000.

The proposed project is a statewide resource mapping effort — identifying, island by island and then statewide, which disability agencies and organizations exist and what expertise each holds — with the final product taking the form of a resource directory. Executive Director Lowe described it as a post-COVID scan and regrouping, and as a valuable partnership opportunity. A decision is not expected until November.

She noted that the grant does not allow indirect costs, meaning the full $50,000 would go to program work. Ms. Guajardo suggested that future grant-seeking prioritize opportunities that permit indirect costs, and recommended reaching out to stakeholders to gather the resources they hold in their communities, which could then be verified against the project findings.

Other Grant Opportunities

- Ms. Guajardo reported that grants are available to offset the cost of cybersecurity insurance, which she understands is effectively required of nonprofits and can add approximately $4,000 per year to an insurance policy.
- Executive Director Lowe noted an interest in pursuing Grants in Aid, with SILC potentially taking the lead on the application and writing in the two Centers for Independent Living.
- Ms. Guajardo and Executive Director Lowe agreed to share grant notices with one another, since opportunities relevant to one organization may suit the other.
- Ms. Guajardo described an emergency preparedness "go-bag" program presented at a recent conference, funded by grant money and assembled with intergenerational volunteers including college and school students, and suggested SILC consider a similar approach given the emergency management provisions in the SPIL.

4. SPIL Committee Update — Resource Management Language

Executive Director Lowe reported that the SPIL Committee met the previous day and that each organization worked through the SPIL goals and objectives, evaluating progress to date.

Vice Chair Ana reported a substantive discussion on the resource management objective. To share in grant funding, an organization must be named in the grant itself with its portion of the funding designated so that it can be drawn down. He cited the Ford Foundation grant as an example, in which Leti wrote in an arrangement allowing herself and Roxanne to partner in providing emergency resources. He stated the SPIL language on resource management needs to be updated so that SILC and the two Centers have a clear method for structuring and managing shared grants.

Executive Director Lowe agreed, noting that the underlying objective is to expand funding for the independent living network as a whole, not for SILC or the Centers individually, and that pursuing grants collectively would be a good investment.

5. Budget Amendment Strategy

Ms. Guajardo asked whether the budget revision would proceed under the current SPIL or wait for the next three-year plan. Executive Director Lowe indicated the next SPIL Committee meeting will return to amendments, and that a committee member had asked to first work through where the Council stands against the current plan — the exercise just completed.

Vice Chair Ana noted that Chair Gartside is the member who knows the budget in detail and wants to increase it, particularly to support additional staffing, and that he has begun a dialogue with DVR, which is willing to consider a new budget.

Executive Director Lowe raised the possibility of separating the amendments — submitting one amendment for the budget and a separate amendment for the more contested items — so that the budget revision is not delayed. She offered to ask Cheryl Matthews, or Hiyab at ACL, who serves as SILC's liaison, whether this is permissible.

Members discussed the distinction between technical and substantive amendments, and agreed that substantive amendments require a public forum. Chair Tashiro noted that a public forum will be required in any event for the next three-year SPIL. Ms. Guajardo advised that if multiple amendments are to be made, doing them together may be preferable unless the scope is too large to tackle at once. Members noted that any amendment would also require agreement from the Centers for Independent Living and the DSE.

Ms. Guajardo stated that the budget increase is justified and that DVR should understand it, since the original budget was built with no expectation of growth and was intended only to maintain operations. She emphasized that the Council is not seeking to double the budget, but to add funding sufficient to break even. Chair Tashiro added that the Council now has real figures from actual activity rather than estimates, particularly for networking and travel.

Ms. Guajardo cautioned that the availability of the unspent balance allows the Council to keep operating while planning, which is not a sound long-term approach; the funds accumulated largely because there were no labor expenditures, and now that SILC is operational, sustaining funding is needed.

6. Interest-Bearing Account

Ms. Guajardo asked whether the Council holds an interest-bearing or money market account. Chair Tashiro confirmed this remains an outstanding item for the Committee that has not yet been reached. Vice Chair Ana noted Chair Gartside is supportive of the idea, and members recalled that Jodi Asato had reported her organization uses a money market account. Chair Tashiro noted that Chair Gartside had introduced an investment professional, but that she had asked to slow the process given that she is new to the Council's finances and wants the Committee to review options transparently.

7. Bookkeeping Alignment and Staffing

Executive Director Lowe reported that she provided Kim and her colleague Kathleen with a copy of the budget so that the bookkeeping categories can be aligned with the Council's own categories, addressing prior confusion about which expenses were recorded where.

Members revisited the staffing discussion previously raised at the executive level: moving the Executive Director to full time as of October, with part-time office support added to take on scheduling, meeting invitations, and similar administrative work across the several committees. Ms. Guajardo noted that this work consumes substantial time and interrupts the creative and strategic work of the Executive Director role.

8. Neighbor Island Travel and Outreach

Executive Director Lowe noted that the Council's commitment to holding quarterly meetings on different islands creates a known, recurring expense four times a year that was not contemplated when the original budget was prepared.

Members reflected on the recent Kona, Hawaiʻi Island gathering, to which members traveled from several islands, as a valuable exercise. Ms. Guajardo observed that the islands differ culturally and that in-person presence strengthens understanding and the ability to fulfill the mission, which is not one-size-fits-all. Executive Director Lowe cited an example from that meeting: a partner from The Arc raised a client issue over lunch, the group problem-solved together, and she was able to connect the partner with the executive director of the Kauai Disability Rights Center.

Ms. Guajardo advised that the invitation to participate in the upcoming Lānaʻi event is filling up and that registrations should be submitted promptly; Executive Director Lowe agreed to complete the form that afternoon. Members also discussed Molokaʻi, where Ms. Guajardo is meeting with a community group about partnership, and noted that Aloha Independent Living has representation there and that SILC participated in an event on Molokaʻi last year.

9. Emergency Preparedness Committee

Executive Director Lowe reported that the Council has adopted committee charters, including one for an emergency preparedness committee, and that this committee still needs to be stood up. Both Leti and Roxanne have indicated they have staff who would like to serve, and members discussed the possibility of pursuing an emergency preparedness grant as an independent living network.

10. Next Steps and Next Meeting

Members agreed the priority is to secure Chair Gartside's time to work on the new budget, since he holds the most detailed knowledge of it and has begun the dialogue with DVR. Vice Chair Ana proposed that the Committee write to Chair Gartside requesting that he work with the Committee on the new budget, and that the next meeting be devoted solely to the budget, with Chair Gartside presenting the draft he has been developing. Once a draft exists, the DSE would be invited to a subsequent meeting to review it, and the proposal would then be presented to the Centers for Independent Living.

Ms. Guajardo emphasized the urgency, noting the fiscal year ends September 30 and that only about three months remain, and offered to meet early in the morning or after work hours to accommodate schedules. She observed that banking and accounting are running smoothly and that the budget is the outstanding item requiring attention, and that SILC needs its portion settled so the Centers can work on theirs. Chair Tashiro agreed to email Chair Gartside on behalf of the Finance Committee.

Next meeting: Thursday, July 9, 2026, subject to confirmation of Chair Gartside's availability. The week of July 20 was considered but set aside, as Ms. Guajardo will be attending the US Aging Conference in San Diego July 17–21. The next full SILC meeting is July 6, 2026.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.