



State of Wisconsin
Statutory Council on Blindness

Post Office Box 2659
Madison, WI 53701-2659

Telephone: 414-207-8820

Website: dhs.wisconsin.gov/scob

Statutory Council on Blindness (SCOB) Quarterly Meeting Minutes

**Monday, June 9, 2025
9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.**

Quarterly meeting Action Items and Motion Items

A. Action Items

- 1. Action Item:** DHS Staff Support will send the link to the grant project website that Helen shared to all Council Members.
- 2. Action Item:** DHS Staff Support will email details about both the United Council meeting and the GCPD quarterly meeting to all SCOB Council Members.
- 3. Action Item:** DHS Staff Support will send information about the Wisconsin Coalition for Social Connection, including a website link, to all Council Members.
- 4. Action Item:** DHS Staff Support will create a subcommittee to develop and add information about mental health, isolation, and "Telling your Stories" to the SCOB website.

B. Motion Items

- 1. Motion Item:** Brenda Brunet made a motion to approve June 9, 2025, Quarterly Meeting Agenda as amended. Chuck Fehl seconded the motion. Motion carried.



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- 2. Motion Item:** Jenny Marchewka made a motion to approve the March 3, 2025, Quarterly meeting minutes. Brenda Brunet seconded the motion. Motion carried.
 - 3. Motion Item:** Kerry Robinson made a motion to create a subcommittee to work with DHS Staff Support to develop and add content related to mental health issues and social isolation to SCOB website. Jenny Marchewka seconded the motion. The motion carried.
 - 4. Motion Item:** Jenny Marchewka made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kerry Robinson seconded the motion. Motion Carried.

C. Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome and introductions: **Patty Zallar, Chairperson.**

Committee members present: Patty Zallar, Chuck Fehl, Kerry Robinson, Brenda Brunet, Kathi Zoern, Jenny Marchewka, and Felicia Clayborne.

Committee members absent (Excused): Tami Franztel.

Guest Present: Tyler Jerke.

DHS staff support present: Zachary Davenport, Department of Health Services (DHS), Bureau on Aging and Disability Resources (BADR); Amber Mullett, DHS, BADR; and Ann Sievert, DHS, BADR.

II. **Patty Zallar, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 9:09 A.M.**

- The meeting was made available via phone at (669) 254-5252 with Meeting ID: 161 403 7815 and via [Zoom](https://zoom.us).

III. **Review and Approve Meeting Agenda**



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- Brenda Brunet made a motion to approve June 9, 2025, Quarterly Meeting Agenda as amended. Chuck Fehl seconded the motion. The motion carried. Motion Item 1.

IV. Review and Approve March Statutory Council on Blindness Quarterly Minutes

- Jenny Marchewka made a motion to approve the March 3, 2025, Quarterly meeting minutes. Brenda Brunet seconded the motion. Motion carried. See Motion Item 2.

V. Public Comment on Issues Affecting Wisconsin Residents Who are Blind or Visually Impaired

- No public comment was made.

VI. Social Isolation & Loneliness Presentation Grants Update

- Helen Sampson provided background information on her grant work related to Social Isolation and Loneliness. Helen shared several examples of funded projects and describe the positive impact these grants had on their respective communities. Additionally, she discussed strategies individuals can use to reduce social isolation and loneliness and shared relevant resources.
- DHS Staff Support will send the link to the grant project website that Helen shared to all Council Members. See Action Item 1

VII. GCPD Updates & Working Together



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- DHS Staff Support shared the Governor Committee's People with Disabilities (GCPD) is currently opening the United Council membership. Chuck Fehl expressed interest in participating in the upcoming United Council meeting.
 - GCPD has requested that a representative from SCOB attend their in-person quarterly meeting on August 27th, 2025.
 - DHS Staff Support will email details about both the United Council meeting and the GCPD quarterly meeting to all SCOB Council Members. See Action Item 2.

VIII. Break

- 15 Minute Break (10:20 AM – 10:25 AM)

IX. WI Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness Presentation

- Jill Renken discussed how social isolation and loneliness constitute a growing public health epidemic, and provided an overview of their associated health impacts.
- Jill also gave an overview of the Wisconsin Coalition for Social Connections and its program and committee. She encourage Council Members to consider joining the coalition's committee if interested.
- DHS Staff Support will send information about the Wisconsin Coalition for Social Connection, including a website link, to all Council Members. See Action Item 3.

X. Blind and Visually Impaired Mental Health Data Points



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- Denise Jess shared and reviewed the data points from a research study, *Big Data Report*, with Council Members. Denise highlighted what is needed to address the issues identified and discussed available resources for Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired and experiencing mental health challenges.
 - Council Members asked Denise for her recommendations on actions SCOB could take. Denise suggested including information on mental health and isolation on the DHS's website about mental health. She also recommended adding "Telling your stories" section and stigma reduction on SCOB's website.
 - DHS Staff Support will create a subcommittee to develop and add information about mental health, isolation, and "Telling your Stories" to the SCOB website. See Action Item 4

XI. Discuss and Follow up on Engage for Change

- DHS Staff Support shared the information about the follow-up survey for the Engage for Change event.

XII. SCOB Recommendations & Action Items

- Council Members agreed to discuss the ADA 35th Anniversary Celebration at the next Executive Committee meeting.
- The Council Members agreed to include additional information on mental health issues affecting individuals who are Blind or Low Vision on SCOB website. Kerry Robinson made a motion to create a subcommittee to work with DHS Staff Support to develop and add content related to mental health issues and social isolation to SCOB



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website. Jenny Marchewka seconded the motion. The motion carried.
See Motion Item 3

- Jenny Marchewka and Kerry Robinson volunteered to be part of the subcommittee.

XIII. Adjourn

- Jenny Marchewka made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kerry Robinson seconded the motion. Motion Carried. See Motion Item 4.

The meeting Adjourned at 12:57 P.M.