



Membership Committee Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2026

Attending Members

Kara Ponton [SA], Chair
Harold Ashe [FA]
Sonia Jones [SA]
Sascha Bittner [SA]

Members Absent

None

Others Attending

Aaron Carruthers
Austin Murphy
Brandi Halstead
David Delgado
Julie Eby-Mckenzie
Kenya Martinez

Others Attending (cont)

Lisa Cooley
Lori Walker
Maria Teresa -
Franco Kearns
Renee Bauer
Robin Maitino-Erben
Sheraden Nicholau

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Kara Ponton [SA] called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM

2. ESTABLISH QUORUM

A quorum was established.

3. WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

Executive Director Aaron Carruthers welcomed new committee member Sascha Bittner to her first Membership Committee meeting. Members and others in attendance introduced themselves.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

5. APPROVAL OF JULY 2025 MEETING MINUTES

It was moved/seconded (Ashe [FA]/Bittner [SA]) and carried to approve the July 2025 meeting minutes as presented. (Motion passed unanimously. [See page one for a record of members present]).

6. MEMBERSHIP WORKGROUP REPORT

Committee Chair Kara Ponton [SA] provided a summary of the August 2025 Membership Workgroup Report, which included an overview of reappointments and vacancies for the Regional Advisory Committees and the Local Self-Determination Advisory Committees.

7. DEMOGRAPHIC MAP

Executive Director Aaron Carruthers reviewed a map showing the current demographic makeup of the Council.

Members expressed that African American and Latino representation in disability statistics may be underreported due to barriers such as fear, low income, and lack of diagnosis. Members also noted that the other category on the disability chart may include individuals with dual diagnoses.

8. APPOINTMENT AND VACANCIES

Executive Director Aaron Carruthers presented the current Appointment and Vacancies Tracking Form to the Committee.

9. APPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL

The Committee reviewed applications for expired and vacant seats in the At-large, North Coast, and North State region categories.

Applicant 988 was held pending a legal opinion on a potential conflict of interest.

It was moved/seconded (Ponton [SA]/Ashe [FA]) and carried to move applicants 970, 971, 982, and 985 forward to the interview process. (Motion passed unanimously. [See page one for a record of members present]).

10. MEETINGS AND ADJOURNMENT

The next scheduled Membership Committee meeting is April 7, 2026. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 PM

Legend:

SA = Self-Advocate

FA = Family Advocate