

# Montana ABLA Oversight Committee

## Meeting Minutes

**Date:** May 13, 2026

**Time:** 10:10 AM – 11:11 AM

**Chair:** Theresa Baldry

### **Attendees**

#### **Committee Members:**

- Theresa Baldry
- Kathleen Magone
- Michael Woods
- Lloyd Sparks

#### **State Staff:**

- Kristy Makela (minutes)

#### **Members of the Public:**

- None – Zoom link on DPHHS website was non-functional; public access was limited.

### **1. Call to Order**

#### **Summary:**

- Meeting called to order at 10:10 AM.
- Technical difficulties with Zoom prevented public access; the meeting link posted on the DPHHS website was not working.
- Committee noted possible switch to Microsoft Teams for future meetings.

### **2. Public Comment**

#### **Summary:**

- No public comment. Chair noted that members of the public likely could not join due to the broken Zoom link.

### **3. Opening Items**

#### **a. Approval of Agenda**

**Summary:**

- Agenda reviewed with one correction noted: “notes” changed to “minutes.”

**Decision:**

- Agenda approved unanimously as amended.
- Motion: Kathleen Magone | Second: Michael Woods

**Action Items:**

- None

**b. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (March 2026)**

**Summary:**

- Minutes reviewed; minor corrections submitted by Kathleen Magone prior to meeting.

**Decision:**

- Minutes approved unanimously as corrected.
- Motion: Kathleen Magone | Second: Lloyd Sparks

**Action Items:**

- None

**4. Business Items**

**DPHHS Website – Montana ABLE**

**Summary:**

- Zoom link on the website was confirmed non-functional; impacted public attendance.
- Committee agreed to switch to Microsoft Teams for July 2026 meeting and future meetings.
- Website update needed to reflect new meeting platform and correct connection information.
- Discussion of adding accessibility accommodation language to the website: “If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, please notify us at least two weeks in advance.”
- Cost and logistics of ASL interpretation raised (~\$75/hour); question of which budget covers it to be investigated.

- Ongoing work to reorganize documents on website (drop-down menus, grouping by year).

**Decisions:**

- Switch to Teams for July meeting and forward.
- Post accessibility accommodation request language on website pending committee approval.

**Action Items:**

- Michael Woods → Set up Microsoft Teams for July 2026 meeting; update website with new connection information.
- Michael Woods → Have personal email address (currently listed under MT Boards & Committees) removed from state website; contact Hannah Slusser re: removal.
- Lloyd Sparks → Draft accessibility accommodation language for committee review.
- Michael Woods → Determine which budget covers ASL or other accommodation costs.
- Michael Woods → Include MontGuide presenter (Marsha Goetting) on Teams invite for July meeting.

**ABLE Activities (Webinars / Trainings)**

**Summary:**

- Kathleen Magone reported attending several nationally available ABLE-to-Save Month webinars.
- Noted that recordings and materials are available on the national ABLE website for future reference.
- Presenters frequently include people with disabilities sharing lived experience.

**Action Items:**

- None

**Requests for Assistance / ABLE Account Concerns**

**Summary:**

- Chair reported no new formal requests for assistance received since the March meeting.
- Theresa Baldry completed initial concerns list drawing from meeting minutes June 2024 through January 2026.

- Kathleen Magone flagged that concerns raised by Delaney Collins (email dated May 5, 2026) should be incorporated into the concerns list; Michael Woods had already responded.
- Michael Woods confirmed he was instructed to forward compiled concerns to the ABLE Alliance representative, who will address them.
- Committee reviewed concerns from Delaney Collins' May 5th email:
  - (1) Request that ABLE representatives identify themselves and state location when contacted.
  - (2) Payroll deduction form promised on April 24 not yet received as of date of email.
  - (3) Processing delays on deposits and expenditures (6–12+ business days vs. standard 3–5).
  - (4) Long wait for debit card despite deposit made shortly after account opening.
  - (5) Customer service concerns with Fifth Third Bank representatives.

Committee noted that several concerns relate to Fifth Third Bank operations and consortium structure rather than Montana ABLE directly.

Committee discussed how to respond to Ms. Collins in a way that acknowledges limitations while confirming action.

#### **Decisions:**

- Concerns list to remain internal (not posted publicly).
- Michael Woods to be the single point of contact for responding to Ms. Collins.

#### **Action Items:**

- Theresa Baldry → Update concerns list to include Delaney Collins' May 5th concerns; distribute to committee by end of May.
- Michael Woods → Follow up with Ms. Collins on payroll deduction form status.
- Michael Woods → Confirm process with ABLE representative for payroll deduction forms.
- Michael Woods → Forward finalized concerns list to ABLE Alliance representative.
- Committee → Review updated concerns list at July meeting.

#### **Committee Membership / Appointments**

##### **Summary:**

- No person with a disability is currently serving on the committee.
- Kathleen Magone officially submitted her resignation to the Lieutenant Governor; her last meeting will be July 2026.

- Kathleen Magone met with Lt. Governor Juras, who was unaware of pending applications from people with disabilities and agreed to move the appointment process forward.
- Kathleen Magone will meet with Erika Johnson Notie (attorney, Missoula, specializing in estate planning, special needs trusts, and ABLÉ accounts) to discuss potential committee appointments.
- Lt. Governor Juras asked that any formal letter regarding committee concerns be copied to Director Brereton and herself.

**Action Items:**

- Kathleen Magone → Meet with Erika Johnson (June 14) to discuss possibility of committee role and expectations.
- Lt. Governor Juras → Advance appointments process for person-with-disability vacancy (per Kathleen's conversation).
- Theresa Baldry → Continue seeking candidates with financial expertise to fill Kathleen's seat.

**Email & Attachments from Sara Sparks (Letter, dated 12/8/2025)**

**Summary:**

- Michael Woods has not yet received clarification on the origin, purpose, or authority of the letter.
- Committee confirmed the key questions remain: Is this an official legal opinion? What authority does it carry? Are there inaccuracies that need correction?

**Action Items:**

- Michael Woods → Circle back to determine status; item carried forward to July agenda.

**RFP Process for Montana ABLÉ – Committee's Statutory Role**

**Summary:**

- Michael Woods reported no update; RFP decisions appear to occur above his level and without committee involvement.
- Committee discussed that prior committees may not have actively engaged in this process, leading the state to proceed without them.
- Committee agreed a formal letter to DPHHS leadership is needed to assert the committee's statutory role in the RFP process and request inclusion going forward.
- Michael Woods to identify the appropriate state contact who oversees the RFP process (potentially inherited from Kathy).

- Letter should be copied to Director Brereton and Lt. Governor Juras per Kathleen's recommendation.

**Decisions:**

- Committee will draft and send a letter to state leadership explaining its role and requesting process inclusion.

**Action Items:**

- Michael Woods → Identify appropriate DPHHS contact overseeing the ABLE RFP process.
- Theresa Baldry or designated member → Draft letter to state leadership regarding committee's statutory oversight role; copy Director Brereton and Lt. Governor Juras.

**5. Work Plan / Upcoming Topics**

**Summary:**

- July 2026 meeting will focus on MontGuide presentation with Marsha Goetting.
- Committee agreed to hold a preparatory working session in June to review the MontGuide draft and consolidate feedback before the July meeting.
- Travis Hoffman and Lucy (last name not stated) to be invited to the June working session or asked to submit written input.

**Action Items:**

- Theresa Baldry → Send MontGuide draft to committee for individual review prior to June 10.
- Theresa Baldry → Contact Travis Hoffman and Lucy regarding participation in or written input for the June 10 working session.
- Michael Woods → Set up Microsoft Teams link for June 10 working session; include note-taker if possible.
- All Committee Members → Review MontGuide draft and come prepared with comments for June 10 brainstorming session.

**6. Next Meetings**

**MontGuide Working Session:** Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at 3:00 PM (via Teams)  
(Committee brainstorming only – not a formal committee meeting)

**Next Regular Meeting:** Wednesday, July 8, 2026 at 10:00 AM

## **7. Adjournment**

- Motion: Lloyd Sparks
- Second: Kathleen Magone
- Passed unanimously

**Meeting adjourned at 11:11 AM**

### **Action Items Summary (Quick Reference)**

- Theresa Baldry → Update and distribute concerns list (by end of May); draft letter re: RFP oversight role; send MontGuide draft to committee; contact Travis Hoffman and Lucy re: June 10 session.
- Michael Woods → Set up Teams for July meeting and June 10 session; update website (new meeting link, accessibility language); remove personal email from boards/committees website; follow up with Ms. Collins on payroll form; identify RFP contact at DPHHS; forward concerns list to ABLE Alliance; clarify Sara Sparks legal letter; send Marsha Goetting Teams invite.
- Lloyd Sparks → Draft accessibility accommodation language for website; investigate ASL/accommodation cost coverage.
- Kathleen Magone → Meet with Erika Johnson re: committee appointment.
- All Members → Review MontGuide draft before June 10 working session.

**Minutes prepared by:** Kristy Makela

**Status:** Draft – Pending Approval