

Western State Hospital  
Staunton, Virginia  
*Local Human Rights Committee Meeting Minutes*  
*Jeffrey's Building, Rom 95 at 12:30*  
*October 24, 2011*

**Present:** Kathy Belcher, Donna Gum, Hal Meyers, Mark Schorsch, Rob Wade, Committee Members; Chuck Collins, WSH/Regional Advocate; Mark Seymour, WSH Advocate; Erin Haw, VOPA; Ellen Harrison Liaison to WSH Director

**Absent:** Heidi Campbell, Mahlon Webb, Committee Member

Ms. Gum, Committee Chair, called the meeting of the Local Human Rights Committee to order on October 24, 2011. With a motion from Mr. Meyers and a second by Ms. Belcher, the minutes from the September meeting were approved. A quorum of members was present. The agenda was approved with changes on a motion from Mr. Meyers and seconded by Mr. Wade.

The committee opened the meeting to anyone wishing to remark during the public comment period. An article recently published in the Staunton News Leader was discussed. This positive article featured WSH staff member Lyn Hall and the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) classes that are offered at WSH. The 2011 Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services Conference was discussed. Commissioner Jim Stewart spoke at the conference and many agencies were in attendance and sponsored information tables. Mr. Collins discussed an issue that was brought up at VCSB LHRC meeting by Heidi Campbell regarding housing placement following the closure of the Beverly Apartments (Hotel) in downtown Staunton.

Ms. Harrison provided follow-up information regarding recent concerns with ward closure during monthly mall breaks. Ms. Harrison reported that the Stribling Building is open all day when malls are closed and clients are encouraged to visit the library, recreation rooms, etc. There were two wards that closed during mall breaks, however this has been addressed and all wards are also to remain open during mall breaks. Ms. Harrison also reported on a recent CMS survey at WSH. The survey lasted for five days at which time three surveyors inspected all areas of the hospital. There were no areas of deficiency reported from surveyors. Positive feedback was received from Commissioner Stewart to commend WSH staff on a job well done.

Mr. Collins reported on the recruitment of Advocate positions due to the down-sizing and possible closure of training centers. The Advocate positions are necessary to assist clients being discharged from training centers into community placement. The reduction of beds will mean more of a strain on mental health facilities in Virginia. The loss of beds also indicates a need for crisis stabilization units in each region. Mr. Collins worked with 12 clients not reflected on the complaint report; none of these cases required a hearing.

Ms. Haw distributed VOPA's FY12 Objectives. These objectives include strategic plans and priorities for VOPA.

The Patient Complaints List, Barriers to Discharge List, and the IFPC minutes were all reviewed.

Under Community Connections, Ms. Gum reminded members that planned to attend the MHA-A Annual Dinner to send payment to reserve a table. Mr. Schorsch reported on the recent NAMI Walks victory. NAMI "We Care" Augusta raised over \$5000, coming in second in the state for funds raised.

Agenda requests for future meetings include: inviting Ms. Lyn Hall, Dr. Gardella and Sherry Untiedt (SSDI discussion).

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The next meeting will be held November 28 at 12:30 p.m. With no further business to discuss and from a motion made by Mr. Meyers and seconded by Ms. Belcher, the meeting was adjourned.

**APPROVED:**

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Donna Gum, Chair

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Elizabeth T. Little, LHRC Secretary