

Western State Hospital
Staunton, Virginia
Local Human Rights Committee Meeting Minutes
Webb Learning Center, Room B1031 at 9:30AM
August 22, 2016

Present: Heidi Campbell, Committee Chair, Kathy Belcher, Vice Chair; Karen Cochran, Secretary; John Beghtol, Tina Stelling, Teri Sumey and Cheryl Talley, committee members; Erin Haw, dLVC Advocate; Artea Ambrose, OHR Advocate; Gail Burford, Liaison to WSH Director; Glenda Sheffer, WSH Administrative Support

Absent: Ski Washington, committee member

Guests: Mrs. Sami Schwartz, citizen and former WSH employee; Mr. Don Swanson, RN, and Ms. Wanda Saner, Social Worker from 1 Hickory; Dr. Bob Gardella and other members of the 2 Elm treatment team; Dr. Judith Curry-El from 2 Pine

The Local Human Rights Committee was called to order on August 22, 2016, by Ms. Campbell, Committee Chair. A quorum of members was present. The minutes from the July 25th meeting were reviewed. Ms. Sumey made a motion to accept the minutes with changes. Ms. Talley seconded the motion and the committee accepted the minutes by vote. The agenda was approved as written by a motion from Ms. Sumey, a second from Ms. Cochran and vote of the committee.

During the Public Comment time, Mrs. Sami Schwartz, a former employee of Western State Hospital, addressed the committee with her concerns regarding how patients are treated at WSH. When asked, Mrs. Schwartz indicated she was not seeking the assistance of the LHRC; she simply wanted to make the committee aware of her perception of patient care provided at WSH.

Mr. Don Swanson, RN, and Ms. Wanda Saner, Social Worker, presented the Unit Rules for 1 Hickory. Minor changes were made to the unit rules this year, primarily to make the rules more recovery focused. The only major change is to allow Level 2 patients to visit the Canteen one time per week.

The committee asked what accommodations are made for patients who are illiterate or have limited reading and writing skills. Mr. Swanson indicated that staff directly assists these patients, as well as those with limited English proficiency, with any reading and writing tasks. The 1 Hickory unit rules were accepted with a motion from Ms. Talley and a second from Ms. Sumey. The committee voted to accept the 1 Hickory unit rules.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Belcher, the committee entered closed session pursuant to Virginia Code §2.2-3711, a.15 and §2.2-37.05.5 for the purpose of discussion of medical record / treatment plans.

Mr. Don Swanson and Ms. Wanda Saner, of the 1 Hickory Treatment Team, presented the quarterly treatment plan review for Mr. SM. The committee voted to accept the treatment plan for another quarter.

Upon reconvening in open session, all members of the Local Human Rights Committee certified that to the best of each ones' knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempt from statutory open meeting requirements, and only public business matters identified in the motion to convene the closed session were discussed in closed session.

The committee revisited an attendance issue for a current LHRC committee. The discussion resulted in a motion by Ms. Talley to suspend Mr. Ski Washington's committee membership. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sumey and was approved by vote of the committee. Ms. Sheffer will advise Mr. Washington of the committee's decision by mail. This correspondence will include contact information

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for Ms. Artea Ambrose. Pending a response from Mr. Washington, Ms. Ambrose will present the recommendation for removal to the State Human Rights Committee for final approval.

Two applications for membership were received. The committee reviewed the applications and asked Ms. Sheffer to contact these individuals to request that they attend the September meeting to be interviewed.

Clarification was recently received from Dr. Jack Barber, Interim Commissioner of DBHDS, regarding LHRC review of documentation for Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) referrals. Due to changes in the Human Rights Regulations dated October 8, 2014, the LHRC is no longer required to review the documentation for ECT referrals. Ms. Campbell expressed concerns that the change to the regulations was made two years ago and the committee was not advised at that time.

Ms. Ambrose presented the Advocate's Report. She noted that Mr. Maynard Ritchie has begun working 3 days per week at Western State and 2 days per week at the Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents.

The Patients Complaint Report for July was reviewed. The committee asked about Social Workers providing patients with referrals for lawyers. Social Workers can provide a list of lawyers; however, they may not give recommendations for specific lawyers.

The Extraordinary Barriers List was reviewed. No specific concerns were noted.

Community Connections comments included the following:

Mr. Beghtol presented information upcoming current NAMI events and plans:

- He provided a copy of the completed concept paper regarding the establishment of Crisis Stabilization, Detox, and Diversion facilities in this area. The board continues to seek individuals who can provide testimony to legislators.
- There will be a NAMI fundraiser at Cici's Pizza on Thursday, August 25th from 12:00PM until 7:00PM.

Ms. Sumey updated the committee on MHA-A events and actions

- A new live play regarding suicide, "Laughter in Sacred Spaces," will be held on Thursday, September 1st at the Weyers Cave Community Center.
- Several 4-week informational meetings are being planned for the community. They are hoping the first series will be "My Family Member has a Mental Illness – Now What?"
- They will be participating in "Packing the Streets" in downtown Staunton.

Dr. Bob Gardella and Dr. Christy McFarland presented the 2 Elm Unit Rules for the committee's consideration. Only minimal changes were noted this year. Ms. Sumey made a motion to approve the unit rules. Ms. Talley seconded the motion, which passed with a vote of the committee.

Dr. Curry-El presented the unit rules for 2 Pine. The changes to the rules from last year are primarily cosmetic. However, they did add verbiage to clarify the differences between Civil and Forensic patients. They also updated the amount of cash funds civil patients may obtain from the Cashiers' Office. Forensic patients may request funds through their Social Worker. Following Ms. Cochran's motion to approve the rules, Ms. Talley seconded the motion and the committee voted to provide final approval.

The next meeting will be held September 26, 2016, at 9:00 a.m. in Room B1031 of the Webb Learning Center. Committee members will gather in the lobby to be escorted to the meeting location.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED:

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Heidi Campbell
Chair

Glenda D. Sheffer
WSH Administrative Support