

Virginia Addiction & Recovery Council (VARC)

April 25, 2024 1:00 – 3:00 P.M.

**Physical Location: Virginia Association of Community Services Boards (VACSB) 10128
West Broad Street #B
Glen Allen, Virginia 23060**

Senator John Bell, Interim Chair

Victor McKenzie, Jr., Secretary

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS John Bell, Senator, Interim Chair

Attendance: Each member shared his/her role on the council and agency/organization

II. Review of Minutes from December 7, 2023 Meeting John Bell, Senator, Interim Chair

Adopted minutes from December 7th. Moved and seconded. Unanimously approved.

III. Old Business

A. Presentation of nominees for VARC Chair & Secretary - Nathanael Rudney, DBHDS

- Expectations of VARC Chair: set agenda, identify presenters, sign off on annual report to General Assembly, sign off on legislative endorsement letters, sign off on interagency report on substance use, chair meetings, etc.
- Expectations of VARC Secretary: take meeting minutes, participate in agenda-setting process, suggest presenters, help keep us on course during meetings, etc.

B. Opportunity for nominees to share about themselves

- Senator John Bell opened the floor for nominations.
- Victor McKenzie, Jr., current Council Secretary, nominated himself for VARC Chair. He has served on the Council for 4 years and seeks to maintain a robust group for dialogue, conversation, and policy change around this important issue. He has previously chaired meetings in Senator Bell's absence.
- Delegate Adele McClure (HD-2) nominated herself for VARC Secretary. She is newly appointed to the Council but has served on the Arlington Community Services Board and Substance Use Disorder Committee for 7 years. She is very passionate about this work and sponsored legislation during the 2024 General Assembly Session to prevent opioid overdose deaths in Virginia.

- C. Vote for VARC Chair & Secretary Nominees w/ election determined by plurality
- Discussed ability for members to vote virtually and decided it is acceptable.
 - Motion for Victor McKenzie, Jr. to assume the role of VARC Chair seconded by Senator Bell and unanimously approved.
 - Motion for Delegate Adele McClure to assume the role of VARC Secretary seconded by Senator Jennifer Boysko and unanimously approved.

IV. New Business

- A. Summary of General Assembly bills that passed and budget that affect substance use services and relevant populations - Nathanael Rudney & Candace Roney - DBHDS
- Overview of the Conference Report from 2024-2026 Biennial Budget (HB30 and SB30) - On April 17th, the House of Delegates voted to reject the Governor's amendment and the new budget will not be signed off until May 13th. Since the substance of the report may change, the Council decided to postpone the budget presentation until our next meeting in July.
 - Delegate Adele McClure explained HB586, her bill to create state-wide training standards and a model policy for law enforcement officers to prevent opioid overdose deaths using Naloxone (Narcan).
- B. Presentation - Lynda Clark, AliveRVA - Peer Recovery Warmline and Coaching
- Substance Abuse and Addiction Recovery Alliance (SAARA) of Virginia is a state-wide organization advocating for individuals and families affected by substance use disorder and mental health disorders
 - Discussed stigma surrounding people with SUD
 - Current advocacy efforts: increasing Medicaid reimbursement rate for Peer Recovery Specialists and Family Support Partners; limiting the scope of barrier crimes for SUD/Mental Health Peer Recovery Specialists; increasing funding for state comprehensive harm reduction programs; reforming drug and criminal justice policy
 - Community education programs offered by SAARA: PRS training, ethics training, legislative training, REVIVE! Lay Rescuer and TOT training, workforce development training
 - AliveRVA Warmline Project - a partnership with Richmond Behavioral Health and Mental Health America of VA that offers peer to peer support and connects individuals with resources across the state
- C. Solicitations for presentations to the Council in 2024
- Suggestions: Kratom education, Association of Community Services Boards, Association of School Boards, Peer Recovery Specialists

V. Public Comment (5-minute speaking limit)

VI. Next Meeting – confirmed date: July 25, 2024
Seeking new conference room space

VII. Adjournment