

STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Will Childers, Chairperson
Hardy
John Shepherd, Vice-Chairperson
Charlottesville
Betty Crance
Fincastle
Renee F. Valdez
Alexandria
Christopher Olivo
Yorktown
Bruce Ellsworth
Crozet
Kimberly Hunt
Roanoke



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental

Services

Post Office Box 1797

Richmond, Virginia 23218-1797

NELSON SMITH, COMMISSIONER

State Human Rights Committee Meeting

Minutes

Thursday, May 22, 2025

9:00AM

Rockbridge Area Community Services (RACS)

241 Greenhouse Rd.

Lexington, VA 24450

<https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/f32f41a0-1b7d-4b6f-a2eb-4c4270182b1b@620ae5a9-4ec1-4fa0-8641-5d9f386c7309>

Meeting ID: 222 942 963 015 5

Passcode: t5Hn9mm7

Convene

9:00 a.m.

Taneika Goldman
State Human Rights Director
Taneika.Goldman@dbhds.virginia.gov

Office of Human Rights
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Richmond, VA 23219

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SHRC Members Will Childers, **Chair**; John Shepherd, **Vice Chair**, Christopher Olivo, Renee Valdez, Betty Crance,
Present Physically Kimberly Hunt, Bruce Ellsworth

SHRC Members

Attending

Virtually

SHRC Members

Absent

Staff Present

Physically

Taneika Goldman, State Human Rights Director

Delisa Turner, Executive Administrative Assistant, OHR

Mary Clair O'Hara, Associate Director for Quality and Compliance, OHR

Cassie Purtlebaugh, Regional Human Rights Manager, Region 1

Artea Ambrose, Human Rights Advocate, Region 1

Staff Attending Virtually	<p>Tony Davis, Human Rights Advocate, OHR</p> <p>Jennifer Kovack, Assoc Director, Community Operations, OHR</p> <p>Andrea Milhouse, Regional Human Rights Manager, Region 4</p> <p>Bryan Columbus, Assistant Admin to Operations, OHR</p> <p>Diana Atcha, Regional Human Rights Manager, Region 2</p> <p>Latoya Wilborne, Regional Human Rights Manager, Region 5</p> <p>Tomeka Gilbert, Human Rights Advocate, Region 4</p> <p>Elizabeth Ezell, Patient Relations Assistant, Central State Hospital (CSH), DBHDS</p> <p>Bridgette Bland, Human Rights Advocate, Region 4</p> <p>Amaya Henderson, Human Rights Advocate, Region 4</p>
Others Attending in Person	<p>Karen Taylor, Sr. Assistant Attorney General, Counsel for the SHRC</p> <p>Sarah Lawrence, Compliance Manager, RACS</p> <p>Kathryn Moats, Compliance Director, Wall Residences</p> <p>Shari Medley, Director, Pathways Youth Services and Peaceful Pathways</p> <p>Sharon Swann, Admissions (Childcare Supervisor), Pathways Youth Services and Peaceful Pathways</p> <p>Cait Henry, QMHP, Program Director, The STARS Program</p>
Others Attending Virtually	<p>Cate Powell, LCSW, Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer, Gateway Homes, Inc</p> <p>A K</p> <p>Larry Witcher</p> <p>Sara Viers, Community Options Director, Wall Residences</p>
Call to Order	<p>At 9:04, Will Childers, SHRC Chair, called the May 22, 2025, SHRC meeting to order and welcomed all to the meeting. A call for introductions was made.</p>
Approval of Agenda	<p>At 9:06, the committee considered the agenda. Taneika Goldman informed the committee of a change: at 11:00 where the Appeal of the Northern VA Hospital LHRC Findings will be postponed to the June 2025 meeting and the Appeal of the Central Region LHRC Findings previously scheduled for 12:45 will commence at 11:00. Taneika Goldman also indicated additional business to be addressed during "Other". Betty Crance motioned for approval. Bruce Ellsworth 2nd. The agenda was approved as final with the aforementioned changes, unanimously.</p>
Review of Draft Minutes	<p>At 9:08, the committee considered the draft minutes from the April 10, 2025, meeting. John Shepherd motioned for approval. Renee Valdez 2nd. The draft minutes were approved, unanimously.</p>
Welcome and Overview:	<p>At 9:09, Sarah Lawrence welcomed the committee to Rockbridge Area Community Services (RACS). Ms. Lawrence gave the committee a brief overview of RACS' history and services. RACS was established as a mental health clinic in 1973 and became a Community Service Board in 1982. RACS mission is to promote health and wellness through the provision of behavioral health,</p>

substance use, developmental and prevention services. They offer crisis support, outpatient therapy, substance abuse counseling, school-based therapeutic support, etc. They have peer recovery specialists to educate and assist with the substance use prevention. RACS also has a day program called the Magnolia Center that provides adults with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities with daily activities and support.

Appeal Extension Request: At 9:16, Taneika Goldman informed the committee of a timeframe extension request made by E.J., an individual receiving services from District 19 Community Services Board. Mrs. Goldman outlined the relevant Human Rights Regulations and explained that even though the decision would be noted in the meeting minutes, the Human Rights Advocate would inform E.J. and the provider of the decision directly. Bruce Ellsworth motioned to approval. Kimberly Hunt 2nd. The extension request was approved, unanimously.

Other At 9:21, Taneika Goldman notified the committee that Virginia Center for Behavioral Rehabilitation (VCBR) was granted exemptions to the regulations by the Commissioner. Exemptions to the regulations include: five (5) under Dignity, five (5) under Freedoms of Everyday Life, one (1) under Access and Amendment of Services Records and one (1) under Use of Seclusion, Restraint and Time Out. She recommended inviting Jason Wilson, Facility Director, for VCBR to an upcoming SHRC meeting to provide an overview of their services and programs, discuss the general needs of the individuals they support along with explaining the exemptions and the alternative policies they have in place. She spoke about the Hiram Davis proposed closure and acknowledged the concerned feedback she received from SHRC members. Betty reiterated how important the dental services provided there are. John stated the tour was one of the most meaningful he has participated in. Since the committee is able to voice and elevate concerns of others, the committee decided to draft a letter highlighting the potential impact closure of the facility/programs will have on the community.

Public Comment: At 9:32, Will Childers announced the public comment period. There was no public comment

BREAK At 9:37, Will Childers called for a brief break.

Appeal: At 9:44, the SHRC facilitated the appeal of the fact-finding and recommendations from Tri-City LHRC in the matter of L.W. vs Central State Hospital (CSH). A call for introductions took place by Will Childers prior to proceeding.

The Individual presented virtually. Elizabeth Ezell, Patient Relations Assistant, presented virtually on behalf of CSH. In agreement with the preference of the Individual, the committee decided to review the appeal in open session.

Will Childers informed the parties that they would receive the findings of the SHRC in writing within 20 working days and at 10:06, upon a motion by John Shepherd, and Christopher Olivo 2nd, the committee convened in closed session pursuant to VA CODE § 2.2-3711 (A) (4) (8) and (16), for the protection of the privacy of individuals in personal matters not related to public business, discussion of their medical records, and for consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

At 10:27, upon a motion by John Shepherd and Renee Valdez 2nd, the SHRC returned to open session. Upon reconvening in open session each member certified that, to the best of their knowledge, only matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such matters related to the stated reason for going into closed session were heard, discussed, or considered.

Christopher Olivo motioned to uphold both findings of the Tri-City LHRC in the matter of L.W. vs Central State Hospital (CSH). Betty Crance 2nd. Motion passed.

BREAK

At 10:30, Will Childers called for a brief break.

LHRC Liaison Reporting:

At 10:41, the SHRC considered LHRC liaison reporting. Will Childers stated that he attended a virtual training for Dignity of Risk with Alonzo Riggins, OHR Training and Development Coordinator.

Subcommittees:

At 10:45, the SHRC considered reports from the subcommittees.

SHRC Appeals Procedures Workgroup

The SHRC Appeals Procedures Workgroup had nothing to report.

Policy Subcommittees

Taneika Goldman stated that the subcommittee will have a policy structured around the use of behavior treatment plans at the Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents (CCCA) for review by the June 2025 committee meeting.

Membership Subcommittee

Will Childers informed the subcommittee of a potential applicant, and he will reach out to the individual with plans for an interview virtual interview at the June 2025 meeting.

Officer Nominating Subcommittee

Will Childers informed the subcommittee that the Chair and Vice Chair are elected for a 12month period, and his and John's terms are set to expire in June 2025. Will acknowledged his

appointment of Chris, Betty and Renee to the subcommittee and that they will put forth the Slate of Officers for the full committee to vote on at the June 2025 meeting.

**Max Appeal
Subcommittee**

The Max Appeal Subcommittee had nothing to report.

Appeal:

At 11:00, the SHRC facilitated the appeal of the fact-finding and recommendations from Central Region LHRC in the matter of A.K. vs Gateway Homes, Inc. A call for introductions took place by Will Childers prior to proceeding. Will Childers also informed the parties that they would receive the findings of the SHRC in writing within 20 working days.

The Individual presented virtually. Cate Powell, Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer, presented virtually on behalf of Gateway Homes, Inc. In agreement with the preference of the Individual, the committee decided to review the appeal in closed session.

At 11:03, upon a motion by John Shepherd, and Renee Valdez 2nd, the committee convened in closed session pursuant to VA CODE § 2.2-3711 (A) (4) (8) and (16), for the protection of the privacy of individuals in personal matters not related to public business, discussion of their medical records, and for consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

At 11:59, upon a motion by John Shepherd and Renee Valdez 2nd, the SHRC returned to open session. Upon reconvening in open session each member certified that, to the best of their knowledge, only matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such matters related to the stated reason for going into closed session were heard, discussed, or considered.

Christopher Olivo motioned the following regarding the matter of A.K. vs Gateway Homes, Inc.: to uphold Finding #1, Finding #2 and Finding #4, to overturn Finding #5 and Finding #6 and to expand on the LHRC recommendation for training and enter their own recommendation related to Gateway Homes' follow-through on ensuring A.K. has the opportunity to enter a statement of disagreement. Renee Valdez 2nd.

BREAK

At 12:02, Will Childers called for a brief break.

**Provider
Roundtable:**

At 12:12, the SHRC held a Regional Community Provider Roundtable session with representatives of providers in the Region 1 area: (RACS, The STARS Program, Pathways Youth Services and Peaceful Pathways, and Wall Residences). Taneika Goldman facilitated the segway for the providers in attendance to share about themselves and their organizations, specifically about the services they offer, one initiative they are most proud of and if applicable, a challenge

they believe the SHRC may be aware of and/or can assist with. A call for introductions of committee members and DBHDS staff present took place by Will Childers prior to proceeding.

BREAK

At 1:02, Will Childers called for a brief break.

LHRC Business:

At 1:11, the SHRC considered LHRC business.

Cassie Purtlebaugh, Human Rights Advocate Manager, Region 1, presented Charlottesville LHRC appointment recommendations.

Diana Atcha, Human Rights Advocate Manager, Region 2, presented Northern VA Hospitals LHRC appointment recommendations.

Latoya Wilborne, Human Rights Advocate Manager, Region 5, presented Southeastern Regional LHRC appointment recommendations.

Betty Crance made a motion to approve the appointment and re-appointments for LHRC membership. Bruce Ellsworth 2nd.

Motion passed.

Region 1

Charlottesville LHRC

Joey Warren – Appointment

Margaret Harvey – Appointment

Sarah Anderson – Reappointment

Region 2

Northern VA Hospitals LHRC

Susan Evers – Reappointment

Susan Haenisch – Reappointment

Region 5

Southeastern Regional LHRC

Cynthia Frazier – Appointment

Dr. Natacha Dolson – Appointment

**Community
Operations
Update:**

At 1:20, Jennifer Kovack gave an overview of the Office of Human Rights (OHR) community-based operations. She broke down the organizational structure and OHR Regional Contact Map, along with providing a staff update that highlighted two new employees: Tomeka Gilbert, Human Rights Advocate, Region 4 and Bryan Columbus, Administrative Assistant to Operations working out of Central Office. She gave data points that were significant to OHR proactive and protective actions in Fiscal Year '24. Jennifer Kovack finished her presentation with her involvement/insights into community operations workgroups/ projects; Mortality Review Committee (MRC), Home and Community Based Services (HCBS), Mandatory Provider Remediation (MPR), SHRC workgroup, just to name a few.

Taneika Goldman informed the committee of the next meeting in Marion with a possible townhall at Southwestern Virginia Mental Health Institute (SWVMHI) and plans for a presentation from the Office of the State Inspector General (OSIG) along with an update on data obtained from licensed provider submissions of the Annual Seclusion & Restraint Form.

Adjournment

At 2:21, the May 22, 2025, SHRC Meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting

June 26, 2025

Region 3-Marion