

STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

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Betty Crance, Vice-Chairperson
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John Shepherd
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Renee F. Valdez
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Christopher Olivo
Yorktown
Bruce Ellsworth
Crozet
Kimberly Hunt
Roanoke
Betsy Lang
Hampton



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental

Services

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NELSON SMITH, COMMISSIONER

State Human Rights Committee Meeting

Minutes

Thursday, January 15, 2026

8:30AM

Western State Hospital (WSH)

103 Valley Center Drive

Staunton, VA 24401

[State Human Rights Committee - Region 1 | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)

Meeting ID: 275 787 452 828 52

Passcode: CS7VA2Ck

Convene

8:30 a.m.

SHRC Members Present Physically Will Childers, **Chair**, Betty Crance, **Vice Chair**, Kimberly Hunt, Bruce Ellsworth, Betsy Lang

SHRC Members Attending Virtually John Shepherd, Renee Valdez

SHRC Members Absent Christopher Olivo

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
Riley Curran, Human Rights Advocate, Facility
Artea Ambrose, Human Rights Advocate, Region 1
Dr. Dwain Shaw, CEO, Western State Hospital (WSH)
George Newsome, CEO, Commonwealth Center for Children & Adolescents (CCCA)
Jennifer Maddox, Chief Quality Officer, CCCA

Staff Attending Virtually Brandon Charles, Sr. Human Rights Manager, Facility Ops
Jennifer Kovack, Associate Director for Community Operations, OHR
Cassie Purtlebaugh, Regional Human Rights Manager, Region 1
Diana Atcha, Regional Human Rights Manager, Region 2
Nadya Said, Human Rights Advocate, Region 2

Lashanique Green, Human Rights Advocate, Facility
 Rebecca Laubach, Director, Quality Improvement Analytics & Processes (DBHDS)
 Rachel Cornett, Social Worker, Eastern State Hospital (ESH)
 Dr. Melissa Bennett, Chief Clinical Officer, ESH
 Elizabeth Cawthorn, Nurse Practitioner, ESH
 Dr. Hali Griswold, NGRI Forensic Coordinator, ESH
 Mathew Portner, Licensed Clinical Psychologist, ESH
 Meghan Rene, Patient Relations Director, ESH

**Others
 Attending in
 Person**

Karen Taylor, Sr. Assistant Attorney General, Counsel for the SHRC
 CR, Individual

**Others Attending
 Virtually**

Teresa Smith, Healthcare Compliance Unit Manager, Office of the Inspector General (OSIG)
 Carla Dallmann, VP Risk Management, Winchester Medical Center (WMC)
 Robert Dusing, Director of Behavioral Health, WMC
 Jennifer Reed, Clinical Manager Behavioral Health, WMC
 Dr. Louis Nardelli, Medical Director Behavioral Health, WMC
 Alexis Mapes, VP of Clinical Operations, Connections Health VA, LLC
 QG, Individual

Call to Order

At 8:36, Will Childers, SHRC Chair, called the January 15, 2026, SHRC meeting to order and welcomed all to the meeting. A call for introductions was made.

**Approval of
 Agenda**

At 8:34, the committee considered the agenda. Bruce Ellsworth motioned for approval. Betsy Lang 2nd. The agenda was approved as final, unanimously.

**Review of Draft
 Minutes**

At 8:37, the committee considered the draft minutes from the December 11, 2025, meeting. A change was made that John Shepherd, SHRC member, was not physically present at the meeting. Betty Crance motioned for approval. Kimberly Hunt 2nd. The draft minutes were approved as final with the aforementioned changes, unanimously. A call for introductions took place before proceeding.

**Welcome and
 Overview:**

At 8:39, Dr. Dwain Shaw, CEO, welcomed and thanked the committee for allowing Western State Hospital (WSH) to host the meeting. He started at WSH in Sept 2025. WSH is 100% full capacity: 1 for 1 exchange regarding admissions and discharges. Dr. Shaw has a background in legislation where patients are top priority. WSH has transitioned from being more Forensic to a more Civil population. A challenge faced by the facility is admitting more medically complex patients and the facility doesn't have medical surgical nurses. WSH has been committed to treating and managing all patients by providing the necessary training for their staff.

- Appeal Follow up:** 9:03, Jennifer Maddox, Chief Quality Officer, CCCA gave updates to the actions taken by the facility in response to the SHRC appeal findings: 25-21 & 25-22. A few updates to reference: CCCA has retrained investigators, begun to provide complete copies of investigations to legal guardians, and committed to submitting any additional documents for future LHRC fact-finding review hearings to protect the rights of individuals. A call for introductions took place before proceeding.
- Tour Debrief:** At 9:11, the committee discussed the facility tour on January 14, 2026, at CCCA. Kimberly Hunt shared a highlight regarding the struggle to hire the right staff for the right reasons pertaining to the care of patients. The committee focused on the reduction of the use of restraints and monitoring of the blind spots within the facility. They showed great appreciation for the staff interactions. Betty Crance spoke on how Jennifer Maddox caught and accessed a potentially problematic situation very professionally.
- CCCA Report:** At 9:22, Riley Curran presented the advocate's report on human rights complaints, the use of restraint and other noted human rights activities involving CCCA for Jan 2025 – Nov 2025.
- Public Comment:** At 9:30, Will Childers announced the public comment period. There were no public comments.
- Presentation:** At 9:35, Rebecca Laubach gave an Overview of Learning Communities. A Learning Community can be a group, place, space or collaborative environment where shared goals, ideas, problems and questions can be presented to one another. She spoke about terminology, features and resources and gave examples of low, medium and high resources for learning communities.
- BREAK*** At 10:00, Will Childers called for a brief break.
- Variance Update:** At 10:11, Diana Atcha presented the annual variance update for Youth For Tomorrow. Riley Curran presented the annual variance update for WSH. Renee Valdez motioned for approval. Betty Crance 2nd. The variance updates were approved, unanimously.
- Appeal:** At 10:24, the SHRC facilitated the appeal of the Fact-Finding and Recommendations from Charlottesville Area LHRC in the matter of C.R. v Winchester Medical Center (WMC). 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 in person. Carla Dallmann, VP Risk Management, WMC, presented virtually on behalf of the provider. The committee decided to review the appeal in closed session out of concern for the preservation of all involved individuals' privacy and confidentiality.

At 10:27, upon a motion by Betty Crance, and Bruce Ellsworth 2nd, the committee and parties to the appeal convened in closed session pursuant to VA CODE § 2.2-3711 (A) (4) and (16), for the protection of the privacy of individuals in personal matters not related to public business, and discussion of their medical and mental health records.

At 11:55, upon a motion by Betty Crance and Bruce Ellsworth 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.

BREAK

At 11:56, Will Childers called for a brief break.

Appeal:

At 12:10, the SHRC facilitated the appeal of the Fact-Finding and Recommendations from Prince William County LHRC in the matter of M.K. v Connections Health VA, LLC. A call for introductions took place by Will Childers prior to proceeding. Will Childers also inform the parties that they would receive the findings of the SHRC in writing within 20 working days.

Nadya Said, Human Rights Advocate, presented virtually on behalf of the Individual. Alexis Mapes, VP of Clinical Operations, presented virtually on behalf of the provider. Out of respect for the individual not being present, the committee decided to review the appeal in closed session.

At 12:12, upon a motion by Betty Crance, and Betsy Lang 2nd, the committee and parties to the appeal convened in closed session pursuant to VA CODE § 2.2-3711 (A) (4) and (16), for the protection of the privacy of individuals in personal matters not related to public business, and discussion of their medical and mental health records.

At 12:59, upon a motion by Betty Crance and Betsy Lang 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.

Appeal: At 1:02, the SHRC facilitated the appeals of the Fact-Finding and Recommendations from Tri-City LHRC in the matter of Q.G. v Eastern State Hospital (ESH): a) CHRIS Report – 20250065, b) CHRIS Report – 20250083, c) CHRIS Report – 20250085. A call for introductions took place by Will Childers prior to proceeding. Will Childers also inform the parties that they would receive the findings of the SHRC in writing within 20 working days.

The Individual presented in virtually. Rachel Cornett, Social Worker, presented virtually on behalf of the provider. In agreement with the preference of the Individual, the committee decided to review all appeals in open session.

BREAK At 2:24, Will Childers called for a brief break.

At 2:32, Betsy Lang motioned to defer the deliberation on appeals in the matter of M.K. v Connections Health VA and Q.G v ESH to a later meeting date. Kimberly Hunt 2nd. Motion passed, unanimously.

At 2:35, Betsy Lang motioned that the committee conduct its own Fact-Finding hearing in accordance with 12VAC35-115-210(E)(4) in the matter of C.R v WMC on a date to be determined. Bruce Ellsworth 2nd. Motion passed, unanimously.

**Other / LHRC
Liaison Reporting
/ WSH Report:** At 2:40, the committee received and accepted the WSH advocate report.
Will Childers indicated that he attended the Staunton Area LHRC meeting.

Taneika Goldman mentioned the email updates she sent to the committee on January 6, 2026, related to Governor-elect Spanberger's transition team and that Daryl Washington has been named the new DBHDS Commissioner.

The next in-person meeting will be on March 5, 2026, in Region 1 at Region Ten CSB

Adjournment At 2:51, the January 15, 2026, SHRC Meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting
February 10, 2026
Virtual