

Northwestern Local Human Rights Committee

The next scheduled meeting of the Northwestern Local Human Rights Committee will be on July 8, 2008 at Timber Ridge at **6:00** p.m.

MINUTES OF THE MAY 13, 2008 LHRC MEETING

The May 13, 2008 meeting of the Northwestern Local Human Rights Committee was held at NW Works in Winchester, VA.

Members Present: Ms. Greta Doering, Ms. Jean Snider, Mr. Fred Sabia, and Ms. Nancy Cartier. **Member Absent:** Ms. Mary Louise Mattingly

Others Present: Chuck Collins and Mark Seymour (Advocates); Mark Gleason (Liaison/NWCS); Lori Donovan (SVCR); Amy Smith, Kim Sanders, Dana Papke, and Ed Hoefle (Grafton); Karen Tompkins (Timber Ridge); Elizabeth Rust, Heidi Fields (Family Preservation Services); Lana Hurt (Wall Residences); Brian Kesner (Community Alternatives VA); John Brauer, Glenda Anderson, Troy Hawkins, Chris Hott, Angela Schroyer, Danny Thorne, Pamela Fishback, Lynne, and Dawna Tetteh (NW Works); Rick Provenzano (Crossroads Counseling); Clif MacDonald (Good Life Corp); Caroline Soder and Rebecca Garrett (Heart Havens, Inc.); Cassie Phipps (Lutheran Family Services); Paul Scardino. (National Counseling Group, Inc.); Chris Rousseau (Intensive Supervision & Counseling); Denise Wiitala (Bridging the Gaps); Kelly Murphy (Blue Ridge Residential Services); Eddie Cassidy (Lord Fairfax House); KK Stroop (Shen-Paco); Kym Carpenter (Winchester Medical Center); and Gail Partlowe (NWCS).

Call To Order: Ms. Doering called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M., and welcomed all in attendance. She thanked Mr. Brauer/NW Works for providing refreshments. All affiliates introduced themselves and briefly highlighted activities going on in their respective programs. Ms. Phipps reported that licenses had been received for the foster care and therapeutic day treatment programs. Ms. Tompkins reported that they would have a trail dedication on June 3, 2008, and that a visit by the West Virginia Department of Education was very positive. Mr. Brauer referred to the post card regarding their haunted casino night in October.

Meeting Minutes: Ms. Cartier made a motion to accept the minutes of March 11, 2008 and Ms. Snider seconded, the motion carried.

Public comments: None

Advocate Update: Mr. Collins complimented the Northwestern Local Human Rights Committee, stating it was the most well organized and supported LHRC in his region. With respect to human rights matters involving LHRC affiliated, Mr. Collins stated that all had been reported quickly and handled in a very proficient manner.

Both Mr. Collins and Mr. Seymour provided an update on imminent changes in the community mental health system. As of July 1st there will be 26 changes to the Code of

Virginia specific to involuntary commitment, mandatory outpatient treatment orders, etc. The changes will create new challenges to community providers, local hospitals, law enforcement, courts, and jails. These changes are expected to increase the number of individuals who may be subject to involuntary commitment.

This is occurring against a backdrop of decreasing private and state hospital beds throughout the Commonwealth. For example, Western State Hospital lost 12 staff through budget cuts, thereby decreasing the general availability of bed space. As a result of all of these changes, most community providers must find ways to serve more people with less available resources. Both Mr. Collins and Mr. Seymour thanked the affiliates for their good communication and problem solving.

Mr. Collins will attend a training for special justices regarding the new Code of Virginia changes. This will occur on June 27. There will be no LHRC seminar this year because of budget restraints. There will be another regional training in Charlottesville on June 4th at 10:00 a.m.

Kym Carpenter (Winchester Medical Center) briefly addressed the needs of individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI) individuals. There are currently very limited placement options for individuals with TBI. Most are due to car accidents and after 90 days insurance will not pay as they are considered “chronic”. The matter was staffed briefly, and suggestions were made regarding several placement options that may be considered.

Program Reports:

Family Preservation Services – Ms. Heidi Fields

Good Life Corporation – Mr. Clif MacDonald

Grafton – Ms. Amy Smith

Heart Havens, Inc. – Ms. Caroline Soder

Program Reviews:

Community Alternatives – Brian Kesner reported that their new group was open and provided pictures for the committee. They now have 10 homes altogether, 3 homes have 5 persons and the other 7 have 4 persons.

Old Business: Ms. Denise Wiitala provided a report on the status of Bridging the Gaps, as she was unable to attend the last meeting.

New Business: Mr. Gleason addressed the status of the Northwestern LHRC, which was established in 1990. It is currently the largest LHRC in the region, and its success is largely due to the cooperation and support of all involved. Since its inception, the LHRC has been supported by Mr. Seymour, Mr. Collins, and Mr. Gleason. The maintenance of the LHRC itself for the past 18 years, including infrastructure support, has been provided by Northwestern Community Services (NWCS).

Mr. Gleason asked whether another LHRC affiliate would be willing to take over, or support NWCS in providing, this maintenance function. He also suggested that the matter of affiliation dues would be revisited, as the Northwestern LHRC has the lowest dues in the region. Other LHRC’s have annual dues that range from \$150.00 to \$400.00 dollars. An increase may allow NWCS to hire an individual to support the LHRC

meetings. Eddie Cassidy (Lord Fairfax House) noted that a large increase in dues could cause financial hardship to smaller affiliates in these uncertain financial times. This will be considered by the LHRC, and it will report back at a future meeting on the matter.

Mr. Gleason thanked the organizations who host the LHRC meetings, noting that they provide additional support (food and staff) to the LHRC beyond their dues. This is greatly appreciated by all.

Close of Meeting/Scheduling of Next Meeting: The next LHRC meeting will be on July 8 beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Timber Ridge School.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 to convene into Executive Session

Executive Session: Ms. Snider moved that the LHRC convene into closed session to discuss confidential client matters pursuant to the protection of privacy exemption as noted in Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(4). Mr. Sabia seconded and the motion was approved.

Ms. Dawna Tetteh was appointed as Authorized Representative for “MN” for residential services.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Gail R. Partlowe, NWCSB Administrative Assistant

Gretta Doering, Chair

Mark Gleason, LHRC Liaison