

Petersburg Regional
Local Human Rights Committee Meeting Minutes
February 17, 2010

Committee Members Present:

Ms. Isabel Vartanian, LHRC Member
Ms. Marie Parker, LHRC Member
Mr. Michael Nichols, LHRC Member

Committee Members Absent

Mr. Steven Watkins, LHRC Member
Ms. Michelle McKeever-Davis, LHRC Member

Affiliate Members Present:

Ms. Kimberly Lindblad, Specialized Youth Services of Virginia, Inc.,
LHRC staff support and Affiliate
Mr. Ron Wallace, River City Residences, LLC, LHRC Affiliate
Mrs. Linda Wallace, River City Residences, LLC, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Lashanda Powell, Triumph Residential Services, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Tamika Myrick, Triumph Residential Services, LHRC Affiliate
Mr. Daniel Herr, Gateway Homes, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Victoria Gbedgo, Amazings Grace, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Catherine Harrison, Jireh House, LLC, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Carlotte Taylor, Jireh House, LLC, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Arleatha M. Simms, Simms Children Assistance Services, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Margaret Gwynn, A & C Alternative Care, LLC, LHRC Affiliate
Mr. Eugene Gwynn, A & C Alternative Care, LLC, LHRC Affiliate
Mr. Michael Wright, A & C Alternative Care, LLC, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Shirletta Highsmith, R.E.A.P., LLC, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Sherily Merritt, FamMat Services, LLC, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Audrey Campbell, ECCS, LHRC Affiliate
Mr. Jerry Von Poks, Poplar Springs Hospital, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Kelly Britt, Poplar Springs Hospital, LHRC Affiliate
Mr. Daryl Jefferson, We Care Residential Services, LLC, LHRC Affiliate

Affiliate Members Absent:

Ms. Eunice Blackwell, Savannah's House, LHRC Affiliate
Ms. Wilma Mullins, DBS Family Services, LHRC Affiliate

Others Present:

Ms. Carrie Flowers, Residential Advocate, Office of Human Rights

I. Call to Order

- a) Mr. Michael Nichols called the meeting to order at 5:48pm.

II. Approval of the minutes

- a) Ms. Gwynn noted a change required for the October 2009 minutes; “prospective” needed to be removed from the roster of attendees as these providers had all been previously officially accepted as affiliates to the committee. Ms. Parker moved to accept the October minutes with the correction; Ms. Vartanian seconded the motion. Motion carried.

III. Public Comments

No public comment

IV. New Business

- a) Poplar Springs Hospital (PSH) presented information to support the use of video surveillance in their Sexually Abusive Youth (SAY) program in the resident’s bedrooms. This would be pursued through a variance if the LHRC is in support of the same. Cameras have been in place for 11 years. The program began (as “Daybreak”) with single resident rooms but now the rooms accommodate two clients. As a result, there is the need for the cameras to ensure the safety of all residents. PSH explained that the request for a variance was brought before the SHRC in 2005; the SHRC deferred the matter to LHRC, where it had not previously been approved as per protocol. The variance was then approved at the LHRC and this was noted in the meeting minutes at that time. Additional annual reviews for this variance did not occur as required, and concerns were raised that video surveillance was not properly authorized through DBHDS/OHR. PSH quickly addressed the concern and the cameras are currently operating through an Emergency Variance, approved through the SHRC. The cameras are currently located in the resident’s bedrooms, but not in their bathrooms. Surrogate Decision Makers sign authorization permitting the video surveillance; that signature is a requirement prior to admission of these youths to the program. There have been no complaints in 11 years related to the presence of the cameras. Some of the residents have criminal histories related to their sexually abusive behaviors. Access to viewing the taped material is limited to certain administrative/risk management personnel. The tape is on a 2-week loop wherein old material is taped

over within 14 days if it has not been purposefully saved for some specific reason (i.e. investigation, etc). Options presented by PSH if it was required that the program discontinue use of the cameras, would be to have one staff in each room at all times (cost prohibitive), decrease program capacity to a number that would allow only one resident per room, or to discontinue the program altogether. Ms. Parker asked that PSH provide information as to how other secure sex offender programs manage the need for the highest level of supervision. This information was not available, although Mr. VonPoks was able to note that one other program utilizes motion detectors, which are seen as less reliable, according to Mr. VonPoks. Ms. Vartanian motioned to approve the request for a variance; she feels the procedure protects the residents. Ms. Parker seconded the motion. Motion carried. OHR will submit a written report inclusive of the comments shared in this meeting on this topic and PSH will be required to present their request for the variance formally to the SHRC at the next SHRC meeting.

b) Empowerment Clinical Consulting Services (ECCS) presented request to affiliate a new service, Therapeutic Day Treatment in the public schools. ECCS currently provides the “7 Challenges” program (substance abuse prevention), via the “Girls Circle” and the “Boys Counsel” in Caroline County Schools in one school. Some months ago, ECCS requested affiliation with this committee, however DBHDS had not approved the policies and procedures. ECCS submitted the Compliance Verification form to Ms. Margaret Walsh and is waiting to hear back from Ms. Walsh. Ms. Campbell will call the LHRC’s liason when she receives this verification from the SHRC so that a call-meeting can be arranged to give members an opportunity to vote on this program affiliation prior to the next LHRC meeting.

V. Old Business

a) Amazings Grace presented revised House Rules. It was clarified that House Rules are drafted to inform the clients of the rules of the house; they are not provided as a means to inform staff of what is/is not expected from them. Members recommended that the rule regarding clients smoking “away” from the house, be revised to indicate that any “Smoking should occur only in Designated Smoking Areas” as the existing language is unclear. Also, Amazings Grace revised the

brochure for clarity regarding who is authorized to administer medication in the home. Members recommended another revision to the brochure to indicate that all clients should receive some type of training regarding their own medications, not just those who are “*interested*” in receiving the training. Ms. Vartanian motioned to have the affiliate make those changes to the house rules and the brochure. Ms. Parker seconded the motion; motion carried.

VI. Advocate’s Report

- a) Ms. Flowers reminded affiliates of the need to submit an annual report which is due to her office by the 15th of the new year. Many affiliates still need to submit this report ASAP.

VII. Affiliate Reports

- Savannah’s House (not present at the meeting; no report submitted)
- Triumph Residential
- Jireh House, LLC
- Empowerment Clinical Consulting Services
- FamMat Services, LLC
- Gateway Homes
- Specialized Youth Services of Va., Inc.
- Poplar Springs Hospital
- River City Residences
- Amazings Grace
- Simms Children Assistance Services (awaiting licensing approval)
- A & C Alternative Care, LLC
- DBS Family Services, Inc. (not present; submitted report to OHR prior to meeting; awaiting licensing approval)
- R.E.A.P., LLC
- CVA Family Services (We Care Residential)

Ms. Vartanian motioned to accept reports presented; Ms. Parker seconded the motion. Motion carried.

VIII. Closed Session

There was no closed session during this meeting.

IX. Other Business

- a) Consideration was given to scheduling LHRC meetings to occur during the regular work day; Kim Lindblad will check in with the Committee Members not present at this meeting to see if a change in scheduling is appropriate. Meeting date schedule remains the same currently with upcoming meetings on May 12, 2010, August 11, 2010, and October 13, 2010.

X. Adjournment

- a) Ms. Vartanian motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Parker seconded the motion. Motion carried. The LHRC meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm.

3/5/10; kml