

**EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS AUTHORITY MINUTES**  
**September 18, 2014**

Vice Chair Babette Leek opened the September 18, 2014 meeting of the East Central Regional Human Rights Authority (HRA) at 4:05 p.m. at the State Office Building, Main Conference Room, 2125 S. First Street, Champaign, IL 61820

Members Present: Vice Chair Babette Leek, Paulette Brock, Sandra Dixon, Sandra Kopels, and Janet Manning

Members Absent: Chair Annette Becherer and Jack Li

Staff Present: Cathy Wolf

Guests Present: Gia Orr, Bill Scheidemantel, and Monique Smith

Vice Chair Babette Leek stated that personally identifiable information should not be presented in public meetings to protect the privacy of those persons with disabilities on whose behalf the HRA conducts investigations.

Introductions were made.

**MINUTES:**

Sandra Dixon made a motion to approve the May 1, 2014 meeting minutes; the motion was properly seconded and carried.

Paulette Brock made a motion to approve the July 17, 2014 meeting minutes; the motion was properly seconded and carried.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

Monique Smith shared her past experiences and skills as an HRA applicant.

Resignation from Jack Li was presented.

Gia Orr presented information on the Community HRA. This included legislative advocacy, public awareness, presentations, training outreach and advocacy for the quality of life for those with disabilities who are incarcerated.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Ratifications**

**14-060-9003: Case Closure - Fox Developmental Center** – Janet Manning made a motion to approve the ratification; the motion was seconded and carried.

**14-060-9008: Case Closure - Shelby County Community Services** – Sandra Kopels made a motion to approve the ratification; the motion was seconded and carried.

### New Complaints

**14-060-9011 – Mental Health Hospital** – The complaint alleges that a patient at a mental health hospital was denied the use of a wheel chair while having a seizure which caused an injury. A release has been signed. It was tabled at the last meeting. Sandra Kopels made a motion to open the case; the motion was seconded and carried.

**14-060-9012 – Hospital** – The complaint alleges that a patient without due process was not allowed to leave the hospital. She has been there for over 4 months. She has tried to leave against medical advice, but the hospital security prevented her from leaving. Her diagnosis is dementia from HIV and delirium from hyperthermia. Supposedly she had taken a walk in the cold weather and became confused. She was found unconscious out in the frigid weather. She was taken to by ambulance to the hospital.

The coordinator asked if there had been any court orders to commit her to the hospital and was advised that they had not been to court. This hospital is a medical hospital, not a mental health unit. The father wants to take care of her with the help of her boyfriend.

The coordinator met the patient and she signed a release for the HRA to investigate. This information was presented to the chair, co-chair and another HRA citizen volunteer. It was agreed to open an emergency case. However the hospital then pursued the court for an emergency guardianship order with Office of State Guardian (OSG).

After consulting with our Director, she provided the following directives: “Given the individual’s change in legal status since the complaint was initially presented to the HRA, the contested pending guardianship proceedings as well as the individual’s placement challenges which might be further complicated by an active HRA case, and the lack of urgent rights issues with the involvement of the court and OSG, I am recommending that the HRA postpone/table case acceptance pending further review and after the permanent guardianship hearing ...”

An attorney for OSG, Bill Scheidemantel, at 5:05 p.m. visited the meeting and shared that once the order was received from the judge that OSG would consider signing the release. Sandra Kopels made a motion to open the case for investigation upon receipt of the release; the motion was seconded and carried. Bill Scheidemantel left the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

**15-060-9001 – Mental Health Hospital** – Anonymous complaint that patients are locked out of the patient rooms (there are 25 patients) from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. There is only one communal bathroom for them to use when bedroom doors are locked. Allegedly the one bathroom is filthy and there is urine on the floor. There is concern that some of the patients have communicable diseases. Patients have to walk through the urine in order to use the only bathroom available. There is no release because the complaint was anonymous, but we could investigate looking at policies and procedures and possibly making a surprise visit at a later date. At the last meeting the HRA advised the coordinator to refer to Department of Public Health. The coordinator was advised that it had been referred to the Joint Commission. The HRA advised the coordinator to contact the Joint Commission to see if there would be any follow-up and report back to the HRA.

**15-060-9001 – 16 Bed Group Home** – The complaint alleges that an individual who lives at a 16 bed home, wants to have visits from a certain person, but his guardian is restricting all contact except by mail with the complainant. That person hasn't been given any idea of how long it is in effect, and whether it will be reviewed. So far this restriction has lasted six months. The complaint questions whether there are documented reasons of harm, harassment, etc. There is no release.

The coordinator had contacted the guardian to obtain a release. The guardian explained that at this time for the safety of her ward and others individuals in the home she felt that only contact by mail could be allowed for a certain individual. She explained that at previous visits this person would tell her ward that no one loved him or cared for him and he was not safe in the home. This person's attempts to manipulate the ward would cause behaviors.

There had been other issues involving this person's visitation because she would not adhere to safe parameters for the staff and other residents. The guardian has made the following restrictions that any contact between this person and the individual must be by mail only. She also had the home email the HRA a copy of her directives. The home's human rights committee has approved of the restriction. Sandra Kopels made a motion to not accept the case for investigation; the motion was seconded and carried.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

#### **CASE PROGRESS REPORTS:**

None

#### **REPORT OF FINDINGS:**

Guest Monique Smith left the meeting at 5:25 p.m. Vice Chair Babette Leek made a motion to enter into closed session pursuant to Section 3955/21 of the Guardianship and Advocacy Act to discuss confidential case details; the motion was properly seconded and carried.

Open session reconvened at 5:34 p.m. having taken no action in closed session.

**13-060-9010: Shapiro Developmental Center** – Vice Chair Babette Leek made a motion to approve the report, the motion was properly seconded and carried.

#### **CASE CLOSURES:**

None

#### **OTHER UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

November's meeting is moved to November 13, 2011 so that all HRA board members may attend.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS:**

None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Janet Manning made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:44 p.m.; the motion was seconded and carried.

Respectfully Submitted

  
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Cathy Wolf, Recorder