

**EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS AUTHORITY MINUTES**  
**January 22, 2015**

Vice Chair Babette Leek opened the January 22, 2015 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 Monique Smith

Staff Present: Cathy Wolf, Gene Seamen, and Noelle Bruce

Guests Present: None

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 November 13, 2014 meeting minutes; the motion was properly seconded and carried.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**NEW COMPLAINTS:**

**15-060-9004 – State Operated Facility** – Per a phone call with a hospital social worker she advised the coordinators that there were allegations by a patient that she was fed feces and urine by staff. There were many allegations the patient made of abuse by staff. The coordinator met with the patient who made several allegations of physical abuse by specific staff. She made allegations of being tricked into eating feces and urine by specific named staff. She stated if she had bad behaviors food would be withheld. She threatened suicide and self-harm if returned to the facility. She asked that she would be transferred to a jail or mental health ward instead of the facility. The patient wanted to call the police to make a complaint about the facility. The coordinator and hospital staff went to assist her in making the call, but her phone was wrapped up behind her bed so she could not reach it. Per hospital staff they did not do this, but the patient was being supervised in her room by staff from the facility. The coordinator contacted Office of Inspector General (OIG) and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). The patient was a ward of the state. Office of State Guardian (OSG) signed the release. Per discussion with OSG staff it is not uncommon for this ward to make false allegations. The patient has pica. She was

in the hospital for exploratory surgery and a hernia was being repaired. Per the patient the hernia occurred because of being beaten by staff. Per OIG, Public Health had referred the case to them. This means that only OIG from DHS will be investigating a DHS run facility. Sandra Kopels made a motion to not accept because of other agencies already investigating the same complaint; the motion was properly seconded and carried.

**15-060-9005 – State Operated Facility** – About 4 days later the coordinator received a complaint from a former employee of the same facility, who worked with individuals with profound developmental disabilities. He stated he had been fired from the facility. He alleged that he was punished for contacting OIG when he witnessed staff under the direction of his supervisor stand groups of 5-7 individuals in a shower naked on a wet floor and literally spray them down as part of a shower protocol. Some of the individuals being sprayed were barely able to stand. He reported the incident to the lead unit administrator who acted like it was no big deal. He then reported it to the unit director who acted concerned at first, but later explained that this is what the residents were used to. He stated he was disciplined for contacting OIG during working hours. He then was fired for leaving his backpack on the floor. His backpack only contained puzzles and books that he was using with the residents. The coordinator made a referral to IDPH and OIG. The complainant was referred to the Attorney General’s Office and third party legal advocacy agencies. Sandra Kopels made a motion to not accept because of other agencies already investigating the same complaint; the motion was properly seconded and carried.

**15-060-9006 – Nursing Home** – The complainant alleges that a resident, who is receiving hospice services, has had property thrown away by staff. That pain and psychotropic medication is not provided timely, sometimes as late as 2-4 hours later. The resident has terminal cirrhosis of the liver and has had dementia related to the illness. A family member actually observed items previously given to the patient in the trash the day after receiving them. The administrator has asked the family to move the patient to a psychiatric ward because of the dementia, but she will lose hospice services if the move is made. Paulette Brock made a motion to accept the case; the motion was properly seconded and carried.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

**14-060-9011 -The Pavilion** - The report is progress.

**14-060-9012 - Carle Hospital** – Sandra Kopels made a motion to request the case be transferred to the Peoria region; the motion was properly seconded and carried.

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

#### **CASE CLOSURES:**

**13-060-9010: Shapiro Developmental Center** – Sandra Dixon made a motion to close the case and make the report public; the motion was seconded and carried.

**OTHER UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

None

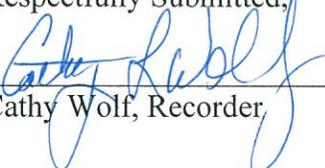
**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS:**

The 2015 meeting calendar was provided to all members. There was discussion on recruiting new HRA members to replace two openings and future retirees.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Sandra Dixon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:46 p.m.; the motion was seconded and carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Cathy Wolf, Recorder