

WESTERN TIDEWATER COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD

BOARD MEETING

November 18, 2025

The regularly scheduled bi-monthly meeting of Western Tidewater Community Services Board was called to order November 18th, 2025, at 9:34 a.m. Attendance is recorded below:

PRESENT

Cindy Edwards, Board Chair
Lula Holland, Vice Chair
LaRhonda Mabry
Belinda Pitts
Sarah Rexrode
Renee Rountree
Margaret Ann Smith
William Webb

ABSENT

Dorothy Gamble
Audrey Lee
Erin Pack
Angela Vick

STAFF

Brandon Rodgers, Executive Director
Jeff Wilson, Board Attorney
Damara Beckett
Amy Byrne
Debbie Dashiell
David Hopkins
Brittany Johnson
Andrew Jurewicz
Justina Lambert
Latril Mariano
Lara Matthews
Michelle Moore

Ms. Edwards recognized Board Attorney Jeff Wilson (filling in for Ross Green), senior management staff, and Executive Director Brandon Rogers.

GUESTS

Guests attending were Jessica Schwartz and Kristin Martwinski

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Edwards invited all to attend the Thanksgiving luncheon following the meeting. Mr. William “Bill” Webb was introduced and welcomed as the new Board representative for Isle of Wight County.

The Nominating Committee recommended officers for next year: Erin Pack (Chair), Ms. Lula Holland (Vice Chair), and Margaret Smith (Secretary). With no nominations from the floor, the slate was approved unanimously.

Updated By-Laws were reviewed and adopted, effective January 1, 2026.

Two retirements were noted: Theresa Murch and Valerie Trivelpiece-Crovak, with appreciation expressed for their service.

MINUTES

Ms. Edwards asked the board for approval of the September 16, 2025, meeting minutes. As there were no corrections, upon a *motion* made by Sarah Rexrode and seconded by Belinda Pitts, the minutes were approved.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)/Conflict of Interest Act (COIA) Training

Board Attorney Jeff Wilson provided detailed training on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Conflict-of-Interest Act (COIA). He requested that members review both statutes online and informed Board members of many online resources.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

OLD BUSINESS

988 Vendor

The Executive Director reported that a contract with Protocol, the 988 Suicide Prevention Lifeline vendor, has been executed for the upcoming year, with a kickoff meeting scheduled today. The agency anticipates improved call answer rates under the new vendor.

Compensation Study

The compensation study is approximately 75% complete. Job Assessment Tools have been finalized and reviewed by supervisors. The next steps include compiling data with market analysis and presenting recommendations on compensation and classification. Specific requests include addressing tenure-related pay spread and differentials, as well as considering re-implementation of a grade/step system that was discontinued during COVID.

WTCSB Annual Report

Members also received the first-ever Western Tidewater Annual Report, prepared by the Business Development and Marketing Department. Commendations were noted for the team's work on this publication.

NEW BUSINESS

WTCSB Employment and Recruitment

The agency currently has approximately 750 employees (including full-time, part-time, hourly, temps, and interns) and 165 vacant positions. Two recent recruiting classes (20 in October and 12 in early November) have helped fill high-priority vacancies. Recruitment efforts included online ads, news spots, and gas station TV ads, resulting in a surge of applications. Leadership dedicated time to application screening and interviews, leading to successful onboarding classes, with 10–15 additional hires expected after Thanksgiving.

Policy violations remain the leading cause of staff separations. A recent survey identified professional development and work-life balance as key factors for retention.

Staff Retention Initiatives

The agency will implement formal service recognition for milestone anniversaries (1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 years, etc.). Recognition will include certificates or plaques, and award points redeemable for purchases. Existing staff will be honored for their most recent milestone. Additionally, the agency will launch **Forward Awards**, based on core values, to recognize staff achievements. These awards will include a luncheon, certificate, and bonus. Recognition events will occur twice annually, with an initial catch-up for all current staff.

Consumer Access to Services

Outpatient counseling wait time is approximately 15 days due to staff transitions, while case management remains under 10 days. Medication management continues to face challenges following the resignation of a nurse practitioner; recruitment for part-time or full-time licensed psychiatric nurse practitioners is ongoing.

Summary of Variances, Revenues and Expenses and Financial Review

The Fiscal Year 2026 first quarter ended September 30, 2026. The three disability areas show an estimated adjusted net income of \$808,801. This includes \$1.7 million in prorated restricted funds for capital projects. Administrative overhead remains at 8.21%, well below the 10% target. The overall revenue across all disabilities including restricted funds from prior years of \$44,336,180 represents an increase of \$4,082,259 or 10%.

Mid-Year Cost of Living and Bonus

Mid-year staff incentives included tiered cost-of-living adjustments (3% for lower pay bands, 2.5% for medium and 2% for higher pay bands) and a \$1,000 discretionary award, totaling \$2.7 million in retention initiatives.

Mr. Rodgers also mentioned that following up on previous Board discussion, write-offs have been reduced from \$500,000 to roughly one-quarter of that amount through improved workflows and collaboration.

Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics

The Executive Director also highlighted ongoing work with VACSB on Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) planning. Efforts include preparing a comprehensive grant application and statewide needs assessment to position Virginia for federal funding under this evidence-based care model. Consultant services have been engaged through VACSB and the National Council to assist with implementing a prospective payment system, improving cost reporting, and preparing the CCBHC grant application.

Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)

The agency is preparing for CARF accreditation for mental health outpatient services as part of CCBHC readiness.

WTCSB Board Tour

A site tour for board members is scheduled for December 4, departing from Harborview office at 10 a.m. The tour will include stops at all clinics, The Haven, Residential and Crisis Home.

Bylaws Update

Bylaws have been updated to allow remote attendance under specific conditions starting January 1.

CIT Collaboration

Discussions with Riverside Smithfield Hospital regarding CIT collaboration are ongoing, with mock ECO/TDO processes planned before the hospital's January 6 opening.

Closed Session

Upon a *motion* made by Renee Rountree, “move that the board enter into a closed meeting in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, § 2.2-3711(A)(1), for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter and seconded by Lula Holland, the board entered into a closed session. The Board voted to unanimously move into closed session.

The Board returned from closed session and certified by unanimous vote that only such matters as permitted in the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, § 2.2-3711(A)(1) were discussed during closed session.

Adjourn

As there was no further business, the regular meeting of the Western Tidewater Community Services Board adjourned at 11:08 a.m.