

WESTERN TIDEWATER COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD

OUTCOMES

March 18, 2026

The regularly scheduled bi-monthly meeting of Western Tidewater Community Services Board was called to order March 18, 2026, at 9:37 a.m. Attendance is recorded below:

PRESENT

Dr. Erin Pack, Board Chair
Lula Holland, Vice Chair
Cindy Edwards (Emeritus)
Dorothy Gamble
Belinda Pitts
Sarah Rexrode
Renee Rountree
Margaret Ann Smith
Bill Webb
Vicki Wiggins-Pittman (Emeritus)

ABSENT

LaRhonda Mabry
Angela Vick

STAFF

Brandon Rodgers, Executive Director
Ross Greene, Board Attorney
Damara Beckett
Amy Byrne
Ebony Canady
Katie Cook
Debbie Dashiell
David Hopkins
Brittany Johnson
Andrew Jurewicz
Samantha Leto
Latril Mariano
Lara Matthews
Michelle Moore
Jeffrey Scott
Sara Thuecks
Vonda Warren-Lilly

No guests were present

1. Public Comments:

- There were no comments from the public.

2. Approval of Minutes/Outcomes:

- Board of Director's Meetings

Outcome: As no corrections were necessary, upon a ***motion*** made by Lula Holland and seconded by Margaret Smith, the minutes of the November 18, 2025 meeting were approved as submitted.

3. Call to Order/Introductions/Announcements:

- Dr. Pack called the meeting to order at a.m.
- Board Members, the Executive Director, Board Attorney and staff were recognized
- Dr. Pack reported participation in the March 4 Crisis Intervention Center (The Haven) groundbreaking and noted positive feedback from state and local officials
- The Chair announced and confirmed Budget Committee appointments with representation from Franklin, Suffolk, and Isle of Wight County
- Dr. Pack proposed that Ms. Cindy Edwards be recognized as Board Member Emeritus noting her years of service with the Board

Outcome: Upon a ***motion*** made by Belinda Pitts and seconded by Lula Holland, the Board appointed Cindy Edwards as Board Member Emeritus in recognition of more than 12 years of service, including service as Chair.

4. OLD BUSINESS:

- Compensation Study
 - Preliminary results of the Compensation Study were presented, indicating potential budget impacts of \$1-\$3 million depending on implementation strategy.
 - Leadership is pursuing a balanced approach to address tenure, internal equity, and pay structure consistency.
 - Evergreen is expected to present the final compensation and classification structure to the Board following Budget Committee review.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

- Employment and Recruitment Update
 - There are currently 778 full-time, part-time, hourly and temp employees with projections close to 900 FTEs by the end of next year due to program expansions.
 - There are 129 vacant positions and there are continued challenges hiring for 24/7 programs, even with a \$10,000 differential offered for shiftwork in some programs
 - 63 new employees have been welcomed since the last meeting
 - More staff were onboarded than separated from employment
- Same Day Access (SDA)
 - Current onboarding for outpatient services is 18 days

- Current onboarding for mental health case management is 14 days
- Current onboarding for medication management continues to have the longest wait. The agency is extending an offer for a full-time in-person Medical Director who resides locally. Recruitment challenges continue in this area.
- Summary of Variances
 - A positive variance of \$5.5 million is reported
 - Mr. Rodgers noted this amount includes retained earnings for construction projects
 - Leadership reported overall fiscal strength while continuing to monitor vacancies and program impacts.

6. Isle of Wight Counseling Center and Bridges

- A new Director, Ebony Canady, LCSW, was hired in January and will provide leadership across multiple crisis programs.
- The Bridges program reopened following a temporary closure due to a serious incident
- Comprehensive corrective actions included staffing changes, enhanced clinical training, additional nursing support, and implementation of Verbal Judo de-escalation techniques.
- Structured onboarding and documented competency checkoffs are now in place, with recurring refresher trainings maintained.
- Leadership confirmed the program is now fully staffed and operating with improved oversight and consistency.
- Responding to a board question, Mr. Rodgers reported crisis turnover is around 40%, comparable to statewide CSB average and slightly better than peers.

7. SCIP/Prevention

- WTCSB staff in Isle of Wight Schools were recognized with an Isle Inspire Award for collaborative mental health and wellness services.
- Leadership emphasized the importance of continued on-site engagement in school systems.
- Vonda Lilly introduced SCIP employees present.
- Staff provide training on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and Mental Health First Aid
- Clinic teams provide children's treatment, case management and outpatient services
- A final MOU was approved with Southampton County Schools, achieving the agency's strategic goal of partnering with all local school divisions.

8. Behavioral Health Redesign

- Implementation of the Behavioral Health Redesign was delayed until at least mid-2027, allowing time for revisions and advocacy
- Proposed Psychosocial Rehabilitation service changes raised sustainability concerns due to accreditation costs and reimbursement reductions.
- Redesign includes bundled reimbursement for First-Episode Psychosis services for individuals ages 16-25; however, implementation of that model is also delayed with interim state funding supporting current services.

9. Retained Earnings

- Mr. Rodgers explained that under Policy 6005 CSBs are permitted to carry forward a portion of state funds under their performance contracts and proposed revisions clarify this process. Earlier proposals to eliminate the policy were tabled.
- Current revisions are expected to allow CSBs to retain up to a 25% carryover of state funds
- Regional funds, separate from local funds, support hub-based services including mobile crisis response, the Crisis Receiving Center, Bridges, and Crisis Therapeutic Homes.
- Discussions regarding retained earnings related to WTCSB's 988 call center continue.
- Call volume has increased from 1000 calls per month to nearly 6000 resulting in annual contract costs rising from \$1 million to \$3 million.
- Approximately half of current volume consists of overflow calls from Region 4 creating additional pressure on Region 5 funds.
- DBHDS has restricted use of certain retained 988 funds, despite rising costs
- The agency is closely monitoring expenses, sharing data with DBHS, and will notify the Board if formal support is needed.

10. Legislative Updates

- VACSB is actively opposing HB1292 and SB735 extending temporary detention and certified evaluator sunset related to hospital-based preadmission screening programs
- VACSB is monitoring proposed minimum wage increases and Virginia's paid sick leave program under FMLA which would require employer and employee taxes beginning in 2027 and taking effect in 2028.
- Medical Malpractice is being monitored

11. Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)

- There is increased emphasis on CARF accreditation as part of the Behavioral Health Redesign
- The agency is pursuing CARF accreditation for outpatient services as a preparatory step.
- This will prepare the agency in case accreditation becomes required for billing services.

12. Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHC)

- CCBHC has been tabled until 2027 due to lack of commitment from DMAS
- Timelines were constrained due to recent leadership changes
- The new DBHDS Commissioner supports CCBHC
- Andrew will attending cost-reporting training to ensure readiness

13. CRC Groundbreaking

- A brief video of the groundbreaking was presented

- The contract was awarded to GC Commercial with design services provided by Hudson & Associates Architects
- Projected construction cost is \$5,066,285
- Phase 2 begins in December 2026
- Phase 3 includes construction of new treatment space and a garage for the Marcus Alert co-response vehicle
- The facility is expected to be operational by early next calendar year

14. Solace Landing

- The grand opening and neighborhood open house was held in early March and was well received
- Several individuals have utilized this program and operations are smooth
- Renovations totaled approximately \$160,000
- The agency is pursuing CARF accreditation for outpatient services as a preparatory step.
- This will prepare the agency in case accreditation becomes required for billing services.

15. Adult & Child Crisis Therapeutic Homes

- Subdividing 30 acres to build two homes
- Hoping for groundbreaking late 2026 or early 2027
- Changing some interior space to add space for a sensory room
- Awaiting next County public hearing
- Additional fencing will be added and there will be less parking spaces
- Hired a construction project manager
- Grand opening possibly late 2027

16. Employee Benefit Adjustments

- In response to employee suggestions, Mr. Rodgers is considering additional benefits
- Suggested increase in amount agency pays for employee + one insurance
- Asked for dependent care coverage, improved contributions to HSAs, retirement accounts, 529s for kids, tuition reimbursement, etc.
- There is a proposal to increase agency cost for employee + one insurance from 20% to 50%
- “A la carte” options will be offered and the agency proposes to add \$1000 for each employee toward their choice
- Cost to the agency will be \$670,000 for “a la carte” benefits and \$890,000 for increased insurance costs, both of which are affordable

Outcome: Upon a ***motion*** made by Cindy Edwards and seconded by Belinda Pitts, increased insurance costs for employee + one and “a la carte” benefits were approved.

17. Forward Awards

- Mr. Rodgers announced Forward Awards in honor of years of service and demonstration of employees that are exemplary at showing core values
- Awards will be semi-annual
- Seven employees will be chosen to represent each core value
- Debbie Dashiell is the recipient of the first award for 35 years in residential work

18. 5K Run

- Latril Mariano will be planning a “color run” 5K to take place in May
- The event will address mental health stigma
- Each mile will have a mental health message, and a color will be thrown on the runner
- The event will have a DJ, vendors, mental health goodies and t-shirts

19. Community Connections

- Mr. Rodgers announced that Community Connections conversations will be held in each locality in May
- Dates will be shared with the Board

20. Adjournment

- Dr. Pack requested that Board members respond to the meeting announcement sent out by Sara to confirm whether they will be attending the meeting or not
- As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:29 a.m.