

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



CVH WHITING TASK FORCE

MEETING SUMMARY

Co-chairwoman Linda Schwartz convened the meeting.

Ms. Schwartz asked members to introduce themselves. Members present included Ms. Schwartz, Mike Lawlor, John Rodis, Shaun Mastroianni, Nancy Alisberg, Paul Acker, Kimberly Beuregard, and Lori Hauser.

Invited guest speakers present included Thomas Hennick, Public Education Officer from the Freedom of Information Commission, and Ellen Lachance, Executive Director at the Psychiatric Security Review Board.

Thomas Hennick, Public Education Officer, Freedom of Information Commission (FOI) presented:

Mr. Hennick noted that the FOI law exists to make sure that public entities do their work in public. He discussed three types of meetings; regular, special, and emergency meetings. A regular meeting is a meeting that has been scheduled and appropriately advertised in advance. A special meeting is a meeting that has not been scheduled in advance, although otherwise it is similar to a regular meeting. The main difference between a regular and special meeting is that in a regular meeting members can make a motion and vote to add items to the agenda, and in a special meeting they may not add any new items to the agenda. An emergency meeting should be avoided and it only exists for extreme cases, such as life and death situations.

The FOI law also allows the task force to go into executive sessions. Should the task force have any concerns such as pending litigation, personnel matter, safety and security, then they may cite such a reason during a meeting and must vote to go into an executive session. Executive session meetings are not open to the public, however, if a decision that requires action is reached during such a meeting, that action has to be public and be recorded in the minutes.

FOI law requires that task force meetings are open to the public, and that meetings can be audio or video recorded by all.

Should task force members not comply with FOI laws, the public can file a complaint with the Commission by claiming that the task force attempted to hide information from the

public. A member may withhold information from the public if it relates to concerns similar to those of an executive session, or if they receive documents, such as patient records, pertaining personal information of the patients. In such an instance, they may cite medical exemptions and withhold personal components of the documents.

Additional information includes the rights of members to participate in a task force meeting by means of electronic conversation, such as a speakerphone or skype. Electronic communication should be limited among members unless it relates to the logistics of a meeting. Discussions pertaining to the performance of the task force duties should be held in public.

Mr. Hennick offered to be of assistance should any of the task force members need further assistance in fulfilling their role.

Ellen Lachance, Executive Director, Psychiatric Security Review Board (PSRB) presented:



PSRB May 20,
2019.pdf

Members discussed agenda items for the next task force meeting. Members decided that the next meeting would include presentations from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DHMAS) Commissioner, Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, and Kathy Flaherty, Executive Director at the CT Legal Rights Project, Inc., on the Patient Bill of Rights.

The next task force meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2019 from 12:00 to 3:00 PM.

Additionally, members agreed on two dates as possibilities for the Whiting hospital tour, June 18 and June 27 from 12:00 to 3:00 PM. Task force staff will arrange the tours and coordinate with DHMAS on the best date.

Ms. Schwartz adjourned the meeting.