

THE LAW OFFICES OF WILLIAM B. WYNNE, LLC
ATTORNEY AT LAW
90 Harrison Road
P.O. Box 237
Cheshire, Connecticut 06410

PHONE: (203) 271-1988
FAX: (203) 271-1917
E-Mail: bill@wynnelawllc.com

To The Whiting Forensic Hospital Task Force:

Good afternoon.

I am William Wynne, Chairman of the Whiting Forensic Hospital Advisory Board.

Serving with on the Board is or Secretary, Leslie M. Lothstein, Ph.D., ABPP, psychologist former of the Institute of Living, Eugene Hickey, LCSW, Velandy Manohar, M.D., and Jeffery Shelton, M.D, Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at Middlesex Hospital.

I have been a practicing attorney since 1984. In 1989, I brought the case of Mahoney v. Lensick to the Connecticut Supreme Court, which established that patients at institutions under the Department of Mental Health had the right for direct action for violations of their rights under the Patient Bill of Rights.

Shortly after, the Connecticut Legal Rights Project was founded pursuant to consent decree to have legal services available to patients at the state hospitals. I was the first attorney hired by the CLRP and I was assigned to Whiting Forensic Institute. I worked there for eight years.

I then left CLRP for private practice. Shortly after that, I was invited to join the Whiting Advisory Board.

In June 2017, I was asked to become chairman.

It was shortly after this time that the revelations of abuse of the patient at Whiting became public.

To the members of the Board, we were as shocked as persons on this Task Force and members of the general public.

We were never advised by the administration at Whiting that the incident had occurred, that there were numerous suspensions of staff or the fact that there was an investigation being conducted by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services.

Upon learning that there was a written report by the Department, we requested a copy

from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. We were refused a copy and were told that we had to make an independent Freedom of Information Request from the State Department of Health.

For the Board, we have reflected upon our past interactions with the Department and have come to believe that the Department has not been candid with us.

Under the Statute our role is that we shall confer with the staff of the division and give general consultative and advisory services on problems and matters relating to its work.

We have discovered, however, that without candor from the administration, we have no opportunity to give consultation and advice.

In all my years of serving on the Board, we were never consulted as to who be named the Director. This situation, fortunately, change somewhat with the selection of Director Hal Smith when we were invited to participate in interviews.

We were also never consult at to the separation of CVH and Whiting Forensic into separate entities. We learned that key reports regarding patient abuse were never provided to us.

You requested our testimony regarding a number of topics:

Areas of focus for discussion are:

- Membership
- By-laws
- Policies and procedures
- Meeting minutes and how records are kept
- Types of complaints, number of complaints, and how they are addressed by the advisory board

We welcome your questions regarding theses and any other topic.