

**Public Guardian and Conservator Advisory Board
Quarterly Meeting**

Tuesday, November 19, 2024, 10:30 a.m.

Virtual Meeting

**Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services
8004 Franklin Farm Drive
Henrico, VA 23229**

APPROVED MINUTES

Members Attending Virtually: Lindsay Pickral, Chair; Lucy Beadnell; MacKay Boyer; Saundra Davis; Susan Elmore; Mary Jane Hall; Katherine “Kathy” Harkey; Susan Jenkins; Ellen Nau; Reynold “Rusty” Jordan; Kimberly King; Angie Phelon; Donna Smith; Cristi Zedd

Members Absent: Tara Ragland

DARS Staff Attending Virtually: Charlotte Arbogast; Marcia DuBois; Catherine Harrison; Laura Koch; Bronwyn Lewis; Ansley Perkins; Fay Lewis

Welcome and Introductions

Lindsay Pickral, Chair

Chair Lindsay Pickral called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m. and welcomed members and DARS staff. It was confirmed that a quorum was present.

Ms. Pickral read the powers and duties of the Board as a reminder about the PG CAB’s purpose and role under the Code of Virginia.

Review and Adopt Agenda

Lindsay Pickral, Chair

Lindsay Pickral presented the proposed agenda. Lucy Beadnell made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Kimberly King. The members voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

Review and Adopt Minutes from September 10, 2024

Lindsay Pickral, Chair, Laura Koch, and Board Staff

Board staff presented the minutes from the meeting held September 10, 2024. The minutes were approved as prepared.

Public Comment

Lindsay Pickral, Chair

Lindsay Pickral opened the floor for public comment. No comments were presented.

Division for Community Living Report

Marcia DuBois, DARS Deputy Commissioner

Deputy Commissioner Marcia DuBois provided an update the Division for Community Living. She addressed the following topics:

- Hiring within the Division for Community Living.
- Progress with the Guardian Training DARS is developing, as required by recent legislation. The training will launch on July 1, 2025, and the newly hired program coordinator will begin on December 10.
- Efforts to address needs of the residents of Southwest Virginia following Hurricane Helene.
- The work that DARS is doing with the CIL network on innovative strategies to expand Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).
- DARS' observance of Ageism Awareness on October 9. This included a "fireside chat" between Deputy Commissioner Kiersten Ware and Dr. Tracey Gendron, Director of the VCU Center on Aging and Chair of the Dept. of Gerontology. The event also featured a video of Dr. Gendron's latest TEDx Talk, available on YouTube: "[Why you feel younger \(or older\) than your age.](#)" The discussion provided insight on ways to reframe aging. The video is available on YouTube: "[Ageism Awareness Day fireside chat.](#)"

Public Guardian Program (PGP) Updates

Laura Koch, Public Guardian and Conservator Program Director

Laura Koch informed the Board that all Local Public Guardian Programs are currently in compliance with the ideal staff-to-client ratio of 20:1, and DARS has received no complaints since the last Board meeting. Based on currently available data, the program has a total of 1,263 clients and is 94% full, compared to 93% as of the last Board meeting.

During the 1st quarter of FY 2025:

- There was a net addition of 14 active clients, for a total of 1,148. Another 115 clients are currently in process, meaning the program is holding a slot for them while waiting for completion of the court process.
- Twenty-four active clients left the program in the first quarter, all due to death of the client.
- Twenty-three clients were removed from the program while still in-process. Twelve were removed because an alternative to public guardianship was found, which is a positive development. Another 8 were removed because of issues with the referring party, which is typically related to lack of follow through with the court process.

Ms. Koch shared that planning is under way for DARS' 2025 statewide annual training for employees of Local Public Guardian Programs. The training will take place in May 2025 in the Richmond area. Once the exact dates and venue are finalized, Board members will receive an invitation. Members are welcome to attend the entire two-day training or any portion thereof.

Ms. Koch stated that the Guardian Training discussed by Ms. DuBois is expected to be approximately one hour, and she hopes some Advisory Board members will be willing to help review and provide feedback on the training prior to launch. The new program coordinator will attend the March meeting and will provide more details at that time.

Ms. Koch ended by sharing a client success story reported by Jewish Family Service of Tidewater.

Charlotte Arbogast, DARS Senior Policy Analyst - Virtual Presentation
The Basics of Policy and Advocacy

Ms. Arbogast did an educational presentation that included an overview the legislative and regulatory process for federal, state, and local governments and the sources of public policy ideas. She encouraged Board members to educate others and raise awareness about the Public Guardian and Conservator Program, as well as guardianship in general; however, members were reminded that when sharing an opinion about a bill or legislative item, they must make it clear that they are speaking as a member of the public, unless authorized to represent the Board's position on the matter.

Other Business

Lindsay Pickral, Chair

There was no other business.

Next Meeting

Lindsay Pickral, Chair

Lindsay Pickral stated that the next meeting of the Public Guardian and Conservator Advisory Board will be on Tuesday, March 18, 2025.

Public Comment

Lindsay Pickral, Chair

Lindsay Pickral opened the floor for public comment. No comments were presented.

Meeting Adjournment

Lindsay Pickral, Chair

The meeting was adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

Meeting materials electronically emailed:

1. Proposed Meeting Agenda November 19, 2024
2. Draft Meeting Minutes September 10, 2024
3. Policy and Advocacy slide show presentation.