

**Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority Board  
Board/Advisory Council – Strategic Planning [Part II]/Board Meeting  
June 9, 2022**

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Eric Lawson called the meeting to order in the Board Room at 3:00 p.m.

**II. Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum**

Present: Board Members:  
Bob Adrian, Geyer Balog, Les Buza, Bonnie Cornelius, Roger Frye, Lynnette Grzeskowiak,  
Judy Jones, Terry Larson, Eric Lawson, Gary Nowak, Terry Small

Advisory Council Members:  
Anne Ryan, Rebecca Stockford, Eileen Tank

Absent: Board Members:  
Pat Przeslawski (Excused)

Advisory Council Members:  
Alan Fischer, Janet Freeman (Excused)

Staff & Guests: Lisa Anderson, Carolyn Bruning, Connie Cadarette, Mary Crittenden, Erin Fletcher, Diane Hayka, Larry Patterson, Nena Sork, Jen Whyte

**III. Pledge of Allegiance**

Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance as a group.

**IV. Acknowledgement of Conflict of Interest**

No conflicts were identified.

**V. Appointment of Evaluator**

Bonnie Cornelius was appointed as evaluator for this meeting.

**VI. Information and/or Comments from the Public**

There were no comments presented.

**VII. Approval of Minutes**

*Moved by Gary Nowak, supported by Les Buza, to approve the minutes of the May 12, 2022 meeting as presented.* Motion carried.

**VIII. Consent Agenda**

- 1. McLaren Hospitals**
- 2. Partners in Prevention Amendment**
- 3. Autism Contract Updates**
  - a. Acorn Health of Michigan**
  - b. Autism of America**

*Moved by Terry Larson, supported by Gary Nowak, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.* Roll call: Ayes: Bob Adrian, Geyer Balog, Les Buza, Bonnie Cornelius, Roger Frye, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Judy Jones, Terry Larson, Eric Lawson, Gary Nowak, Terry Small; Nays: None; Absent: Pat Przeslawski. Motion carried.

**IX. June Monitoring Reports**

**1. Budgeting 01-004**

Connie Cadarette reviewed the Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Change in Net Position for the month ending April 30, 2022. Connie stated the variance columns look different, as they now show

the percentage used in relation to the amount of the year elapsed. NeMCMHA has received more revenue than expected, putting the Agency at \$1,106,000 over the budgeted amount. Currently, the Agency is underspent \$1,457,495, which includes \$325,525 of General Funds. Connie stated the line item for Interest and Other Revenue is at 129% due to a rebate received, which will be corrected by a budget adjustment. With 58.33% of year elapsed, the Agency has used 55.27% of the budget operating revenue.

Nena Sork and Connie discussed how extra COVID funds and federal dollars have created the surplus of revenue. Nena stated General Funds typically pay spenddowns for those on Medicaid, but during COVID they have not had to be paid. Having the extra funds has allowed the Agency to make one-time expenses that won't impact the budget once revenues come back down.

Larry Patterson reviewed the negative variances on the Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Change in Net Position. All of the expenses Larry reported on will require a budget adjustment. Operating expenses are at 54.87% of the budgeted amount with 58.33% of the year elapsed.

## **2. Ends 04-001**

The semi-annual report on the Ends the Board established for this fiscal year was reviewed. The "Services to Children" Sub-Ends have been impacted by staffing. Nena Sork stated these Sub-Ends were set when the children's department was fully staffed, and then they were down to one staff member. The department is now up to three staff members. Erin Fletcher stated some staff were lost due to the possible vaccine mandate when they obtained other employment, one staff member moved, and another went to an agency where they could get their student loans repaid. Nena reported that even with one staff member, home-based services are close to meeting their goals.

The Sub-Ends for "Services to Adults with Mental Illness and Persons with I/DD" have been affected by placement issues due to COVID, but they are close to meeting the Sub-End addressing developing additional supported independent services for two individuals currently living in licensed foster care.

Nena reviewed the "Services to Adults with Co-Occurring Disorders" Sub-Ends related to Behavioral Health Home, stating there is plenty of time left to complete them and they are picking up momentum.

The Sub-Ends for "Financial Outcomes" are doing great. Nena stated the Agency has never had this kind of financial situation before.

Nena updated the Board on the "Community Education" Sub-Ends. Nena stated the Agency is providing training for staff and the community by hosting in-person trainings at Alpena Community College (ACC), as well as providing virtual trainings. Eileen Tank asked if people were speaking with the schools to help end the stigma against mental health. Mary Crittenden spoke about safeTALK, which is a four-hour training that can help start conversations about mental health. All employees of the Alcona school district will be receiving this training in August before school begins. Mary stated The Sunset Project, a local nonprofit targeting 16 – 23 year olds, is creating a 55-minute program for students to discuss mental health. The Sunset Project hopes to pilot the program at ACC and then move to other schools, as well.

***Moved by Gary Nowak, supported by Lynnette Grzeskowiak, to approve the June Monitoring Reports as presented.*** Motion carried.

## **X. Linkage Reports**

### **1. Northern Michigan Regional Entity (NMRE)**

#### **a. May 25, 2022**

Gary Nowak stated the NMRE is in good financial position and Catholic Human Services has received liquor tax dollars. Gary reported the state and Eric Kurtz are working to help Northern Lakes Community Mental Health.

## **2. Board Association**

### **a. Spring Conference Update (June 7 & 8, 2022)**

Bonnie Cornelius, Erin Fletcher, Roger Frye, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Judy Jones, Eric Lawson, and Nena Sork attended the Spring Board Association Conference. Eric stated the conference was great and provided opportunities to talk to each other and provided many learning opportunities. Bonnie shared that she went to a presentation with firefighters and first responders, and she learned about their issues with suicide, drugs, and divorce. Bonnie stated they will be coming to Hubbard Lake to do a talk. Nena and Bonnie stated the keynote speaker was wonderful. Eric went to a talk on the history of the dysfunction between the CMHs and MDHHS. Eric stated there are a lot of new initiatives they are using to try to work better together. Lynnette stated the incarceration talk was a great learning opportunity about homelessness and re-incarceration. Nena thanked Board members for taking the time to attend the conference.

## **XI. Operations Report**

Mary Crittenden reviewed the services provided by staff for the month ending May 31, 2022. I/DD served 56 individuals in employment and MI served 17 individuals with employment. Touchstone Clubhouse had 99 attendees. Peer Support served 34 individuals. Overall, 1,052 individuals were served in May.

Gary Nowak inquired about the status of Clubhouse. Nena Sork stated they made a lot of changes during COVID, including some renovations. Nena stated supervisors will incorporate visiting Clubhouse into orientation for new staff.

## **XII. Chair's Report**

### **1. Strategic Plan Review**

Eric Lawson provided the Board with a potential sample of the materials they will receive for the July meeting of Strategic Planning. Diane Hayka stated the materials are from last year's report and the Board will be looking at them to make changes at the next meeting. Eric and Diane suggested Board members review the provided materials, along with Eric Kurtz's environmental scan, and past monitoring reports to prepare for next month's discussion on Ends.

Eileen Tank discussed parents having resources available to them to discuss mental health issues, as something she would like the Board to focus on. Lynnette Grzeskowiak stated parents struggle with social media, as school issues come home via their children's phones. Eric Lawson and Eileen discussed resources and education groups parents could utilize. Mary Crittenden stated The Sunset Project is hoping to have parents of high school students go through their program first, and then have the kids go through it. Board members agreed to discuss this issue next month.

### **2. Executive Committee – Director's Contract**

Eric Lawson stated the Executive Committee met concerning the Director's contract. The contract dates don't currently line up with the Director's evaluation at the end of the fiscal year, so they have decided to extend the current contract for three months, and after the Director's evaluation in August, the Board will enter a new three-year contract.

*Moved by Lynnette Grzeskowiak, supported by Roger Frye, to approve the Director's Contract.* Roll call: Ayes: Bob Adrian, Geyer Balog, Les Buza, Bonnie Cornelius, Roger Frye, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Judy Jones, Terry Larson, Eric Lawson, Gary Nowak, Terry Small; Nays: None; Absent: Pat Przeslawski. Motion carried.

### **3. Policy Workshop Action**

Eric Lawson stated the Board discussed raising their per diem to \$50 for a half day (four hours or less) and \$75 for a full day (over four hours). A meeting out of catchment area or a conference day will be a \$75 per diem. Bonnie Cornelius stated the per diem hasn't been changed in years and Eric stated the Board has taken care of employees, so it is appropriate for the Board to now consider their own compensation.

***Moved by Gary Nowak, supported by Terry Small, to approve changes to Policy 02-009 Board Members Per Diem.*** Roll call: Ayes: Bob Adrian, Geyer Balog, Les Buza, Bonnie Cornelius, Roger Frye, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Judy Jones, Terry Larson, Eric Lawson, Gary Nowak, Terry Small; Nays: None; Absent: Pat Przeslawski. Motion carried.

Eric Lawson shared that two CARF consultants attended the policy workshop to discuss changes and they suggested adding language to comply with CARF standards. Eric discussed the proposed changes to the policies, and stated the biggest additions were regarding the Executive Director's evaluation, clarifying the process that already occurs.

***Moved by Gary Nowak, supported by Lynnette Grzeskowiak, to approve revisions to Policy 02-007 Annual Board Planning Cycle from the Policy Workshop.*** Motion carried.

### **XIII. Director's Report**

#### **1. Director's Update**

Nena Sork provided Board members with an update of the various activities she participated in during the past month. Mary Crittenden attended the NMRE Operations Meeting for Nena during the week of May 16. For the week of May 23, Nena attended the NMRE Board meeting, a webinar on crisis services in the state, and a meeting on MI Kids Now. During the current week, Nena attended the Management Team meeting and she just returned from the CMHA Summer Conference.

Nena stated all three NeMCMHA offices were HRSA approved to be federal student loan forgiveness sites. Individuals with specific degrees identified by the federal government can work for the Agency and apply to have their federal student loans forgiven. The Agency doesn't do the approval, as staff would have a contract directly with the federal government to have up to \$50,000 in student loans paid off for a two-year service agreement. More funds are available for additional years of service. The Agency will have a new nurse practitioner in July or August, as well as a new psychiatrist in August, and they can both benefit, if accepted. Nena stated she has lost staff over the years due to other agencies offering student loan forgiveness. It will be very beneficial for recruiting and retaining staff. Nena said people from all over the Agency worked together to quickly complete the application, and it was approved by HRSA in 26 days.

Nena said the Agency is providing lots of training for the community, which includes continuing education credits for staff and community members. Julie Hasse and Peggy Yachasz have been accepted to present at the Gentle Teaching International Conference, and another staff member may apply to be a presenter at a future CMHA conference.

Nena has her annual meetings with county commissioners coming up. She will be meeting with Alpena County on June 28, Alcona County on July 6, Montmorency County on July 14, and Presque Isle County on July 29. Nena has a meeting scheduled with Judge Alan Curtis June 10 and will be meeting with the new sheriff, Erik Smith on June 16. Nena and Erin Fletcher will be trying to meet with all the school superintendents this summer.

Nena stated the current amount being lapsed is \$1.4 million. Last year at this time, the Board agreed to staff retention/reinvestments payments. Larry Patterson and Connie Cadarette have run the numbers and the Agency would be able to do another retention payment of 3%. Nena discussed the recruitment efforts that are currently taking place, including sign-on bonuses, the HRSA approval, and social media drives. Nena stated staff are making less due to inflation rates going up. Connie discussed the differences between doing a percentage-based payment versus a flat rate. Connie stated in the past when they have done flat rates based on part or full-time, people complained more than when the payments were percentage-based, due to some part-time staff consistently working more than 40 hours a week. Nena likes that these payments to staff ultimately put more money back into the local economy of the communities served. The proposed retention payment would be included in the last June paycheck as a one-time special payment, not a salary increase.

*Moved by Roger Frye, supported by Bonnie Cornelius, to approve a 3% staff retention payment for June.* Roll call: Ayes: Bob Adrian, Geyer Balog, Les Buza, Bonnie Cornelius, Roger Frye, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Judy Jones, Terry Larson, Eric Lawson, Gary Nowak, Terry Small; Nays: None; Absent: Pat Przeslawski. Motion carried.

Nena shared CARF will be coming to do their review in either July or August. Employee recognition will be on August 16 and the staff picnic will be held on August 17.

**XIV. Information and/or Comments from the Public**

There was no information and/or comments presented.

**XV. Information and/or Comments for the Good of the Board**

Rebecca Stockford liked attending the Day of Recovery. Rebecca went to Hobby Lobby after attending, and was in the store when the tornado hit it. Rebecca stated she hid in the bathroom. Barb Murphy and Eileen Tank did a presentation on peer support and everyone said it was great.

Eileen Tank stated Joseph Reid was a great speaker at the Day of Recovery, and he has a very helpful book, "Broken Like Me."

Les Buza brought up that the Advisory Council per diem has never been raised from the \$25 it was set at when it began. Les would like to see it go up to at least \$30. Terry Larson would like to have all committees raised to the same amount. This will be added to the next Board agenda for discussion.

**XVI. Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority Board will be held Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

**1. Set July Agenda**

The July agenda items were reviewed.

**2. Meeting Evaluation**

Bonnie Cornelius stated the meeting started right on time, and was one of the better meetings. Bonnie said it feels good when they can give more money to staff. Bonnie suggested Board members attend a conference if they have a chance.

**XVII. Adjournment**

*Moved by Les Buza, supported by Lynnette Grzeskowiak to adjourn the meeting.* Motion carried. This meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

[Signed by Bonnie Cornelius on 07-14-22]

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Bonnie Cornelius, Secretary

[Signed by Eric Lawson on 07-14-22]

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Eric Lawson, Chair

Rebekah Duhaime  
Recorder