

**Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority Board
Board Meeting – February 12, 2026**

I. Call to Order

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

II. Seating of New Board Member

Eric officially sat Anne Ryan, representing Presque Isle County, as a Board member.

III. Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum

Present: Bob Adrian, Bonnie Cornelius, Jennifer Graham, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Charlotte Helman, Dana Labar, Eric Lawson, Lloyd Peltier, Anne Ryan, Terry Small

Absent: Kara Bauer LeMonds (Excused)

Staff & Guests: Carolyn Bruning, Connie Cadarette, Rebekah Duhaime, Erin Fletcher, John Galarza, Jared Kendziorski, Liz Kowalski, Jason Lepper, Mikki Manion, Kerry Rastigue, Pam Shannon, Nena Sork, Kara Steinke, Kay Wagner, Jen Walburn, Kayla Wikaryasz, Deanna Yates

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance as a group.

V. Appointment of Evaluator

Bonnie Cornelius was appointed as evaluator of the meeting.

VI. Acknowledgement of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were acknowledged.

VII. Information and/or Comments from the Public

None were presented.

VIII. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Charlotte Helman, supported by Lloyd Peltier, to approve the minutes of the January Board meeting. Motion carried.

IX. February Monitoring Reports

1. Budgeting 01-004

Connie Cadarette reviewed the Statement of Revenue and Expense and Change in Net Position for the month ending December 31, 2025, with 25% of the year elapsed. Medicaid is underspent by \$849,902, Healthy Michigan is underspent by \$96,426, General Funds are underspent by \$8,535, and BHH is underspent by \$16,918. She reviewed the PA423 Board regulations regarding money collected from insurance, which must flow through General Funds and then into Local Match. The auditors are wrapping up the FY25 audit, and they will present to the Board soon. The unofficial closing number was \$4,745 underspent of the \$42 million budget. She does expect FY26 rates to lower and possibly be recouped for the first few months of the fiscal year, resulting in about \$1 million less in the budget. She does not feel it will severely impact the budget, as she had budgeted conservatively. Connie introduced Jared Kendziorski as the new Accounting Manager.

2. Staff Treatment 01-003

Mikki Manion, the Agency's HR Manager from Rehmann, reviewed the new Turnover Report. Direct care workers have the highest turnover rate, which is in line with numbers reported by the State. HR will be doing a deep dive to learn how these numbers can be improved. Focus groups with the RTWs and a new supervisor training series start next week.

3. Treatment of Individuals Served 01-002

Liz Kowalski reported the Recipient Rights Advisory Committee met on January 28, and Connie and Jared attended to discuss finances. There were 24 complaints received, resulting in 12 investigations, and 10 substantiated complaints. Liz introduced Pam Shannon as the new Recipient Rights Advisor. She was previously the Recipient Rights Officer at Wellvance.

Moved by Lynnette Grzeskowiak, supported by Terry Small, to accept the February Monitoring Reports.
Motion carried.

X. Board Policies Review

1. Asset Protection 01-007

The Board reviewed the policy and sought clarification on how many bonded employees the Agency has. They requested a revision to the third bullet under item number one. This will be brought back to the Board for approval in March.

2. Board Committee Principles 02-005

The Board reviewed the policy and there was a consensus that they are following it appropriately.

3. Delegation to the Executive Director 03-002

The Board reviewed the policy and did not find any necessary revisions.

XI. Linkage Reports

1. NMRE Board

Eric reported the largest topic of discussion concerned the RFP, which was pulled on January 29, and possible new challenges down the road. Board members praised Nena and the other rural CMH directors who stood up for the individuals the Agency serves.

2. Advisory Council

Lloyd reported they met on Monday at their new start time of 4:30 p.m., and they had good discussion. They reviewed input received from the stakeholder survey required for the MDHHS Annual Submission.

XII. Continued Discussion of Executive Director's Contract

Board members continued discussion of Nena's contract, reiterating that they should have had more time to review her proposed salary, as they felt rushed to approve it due to already being at the 90-day extension point past the contract expiration. The two raises included in her new contract will only bring her salary up by 8%, when she is already in a deficit of 17%. There are worries that if they had to replace her, they would have to greatly increase the salary to remain competitive. Nena reiterated that she had to increase staff salaries in increments to raise them up to the average, and she feels she must do the same for herself. The Board discussed whether it is appropriate to reopen a signed contract and ultimately decided that Nena and Eric should discuss options and bring it back to the Board.

XIII. Operations Report

Erin Fletcher reported on operations for the month of January. Access completed 56 routine screens, which is above average. The Outpatient Counseling department is onboarding a new clinician, helping their numbers to increase to 98 individuals served (24 children and 74 adults). The total of unduplicated individuals served in January was 965.

XIV. Board Chair's Report

1. CMHA PAC

Eric shared information about the CMHA PAC, which is seeking donations from Board members.

2. Schedule Nominations Committee Meeting

The Nomination Committee will meet to discuss the upcoming election of Board officers in April. The committee will consist of Anne Ryan, Jennifer Graham, Terry Small, and Lynnette Grzeskowiak, and they will meet at 2:30 p.m. prior to the March 12 Board meeting.

XV. Executive Director's Report

Nena reported she and Kara Steinke met with Judge Green, and they plan to meet with the probate judges in all four counties. Nena also attended her regular meetings, including the CMHA Member Services Committee, NMRE Finance, NMRE Board, and NMRE Ops. She met with Cam Cavitt to discuss the Rural and Frontier Caucus, which he would like to partner with. She discussed her desire to lead the way on creating evidence-based mental health practices for rural communities.

XVI. Information and/or Comments from the Public

None were presented.

XVII. Information and/or Comments for the Good of the Organization

None were presented.

XVIII. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the NeMCMHA Board is scheduled for Thursday, March 12, 2026, at 3:00 p.m., with the Nominations Committee meeting at 2:30 p.m. beforehand.

1. March Agenda Items

The proposed March agenda items were provided.

XIX. Meeting Evaluation

Bonnie reported she feels the Board members came prepared to govern and everyone is allowed the opportunity to contribute to conversation. She was satisfied with what the Board accomplished, and the provided materials were sufficient.

XX. Adjournment

Moved by Terry Small, supported by Lynnette Grzeskowiak, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

This meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

[Signed by Bonnie Cornelius on March 12, 2026]

Bonnie Cornelius, Secretary

[Signed by Eric Lawson on March 12, 2026]

Eric Lawson, Chair