

**Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority Board
Board Meeting – March 13, 2025**

- 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: Lester Buza , Bonnie Cornelius, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Charlotte Helman, Judy Jones, Dana Labar, Eric Lawson, Kara Bauer LeMonds, Gary Nowak, Terry Small
Absent: Bob Adrian (Excused), Lloyd Peltier (Excused)
Staff & Guests: Carolyn Bruning, Connie Cadarette, Mary Crittenden, Rebekah Duhaime, Erin Fletcher, Jason Lepper, Brooke Paczkowski, Brenda Stanton, Jen Walburn

- III. **Pledge of Allegiance**
Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance as a group.

- IV. **Appointment of Evaluator**
Judy Jones was appointed as evaluator of the meeting.

- V. **Acknowledgement of Conflict of Interest**
No conflicts of interest were acknowledged.

- VI. **Information and/or Comments from the Public**
There were no comments from the public.

- VII. **Approval of Minutes**
Moved by Bonnie Cornelius, supported by Charlotte Helman, to approve the minutes of the February Board meeting, as presented. Motion carried.

- VIII. **March Monitoring Reports**
1. Budgeting 01-004
Connie Cadrette reported on the Statement of Revenue and Expense and Change in Net Position for the month ending January 31, 2025, with 33.33% of the year elapsed. All State reporting was submitted on February 28, and the auditors will be presenting their reports to the Board in May. Connie reviewed line items with larger variances, noting which items are expected to smooth out over time, and which required adjustment. Medicaid funds are overspent by \$294,440 and Healthy MI is overspent by \$152,121, for a total due to the NMRE of \$46,561. General Funds are in a better position this month, with an overspent amount of \$211,176. Behavioral Health Home was cut off from the bottom of the report, so Connie shared it received \$134,442 in revenue and had \$131,185 in expenses, for a net positive amount of \$3,257. The Agency's overspent amounts are not necessarily due to expenses, but rather to the Agency/the NMRE not receiving the correct revenue from the State.

Moved by Lynnette Grzeskowiak, supported by Kara Bauer LeMonds, to approve the March Monitoring Report. Motion carried.

- IX. **Board Policies Review and Self-Evaluation**
1. Budgeting 01-004
Connie confirmed that the Agency is compliant with the policy, explaining that the Agency does have funds in a cash reserve, which meets the Board policy requirement regarding cash and cash equivalents (not physical assets). The funds in the cash reserve are local funds, not Medicaid funds.

2. Board Members' Ethical Code of Conduct 02-008

Board members were asked to sign the back of the Ethical Code of Conduct and return it to Rebekah Duhaime. The Board also received a handout of covenants that are used by the CMHA and its committees. Eric said the covenants are best practices for how Board members should conduct themselves, and they are echoed in the Board's bylaws. Bonnie and Eric agreed that the Board is following this policy and that they are careful with noting any conflicts of interest that may arise.

X. Board Member Recognition

Eric presented certificates to Board members who have reached milestone years including Les Buza (15 years), Bonnie Cornelius (10 years), Eric Lawson (10 years), and Bob Adrian (5 years). This will be Judy's last meeting after dutifully serving on the Board for 12 years.

XI. Recess and Refreshments

The Board recessed at 3:21 p.m. for refreshments following Board member recognition.

Chair Eric Lawson called the meeting back to order at 3:32 p.m.

XII. Linkage Reports

1. NMRE Board

Eric reported the NMRE Board voted to require the five CMHSPs to stay withing the per member per month formula for funding. This was a necessary vote due to the state of funding for the CMHSPs. This will help to ensure no specific CMH overspends, which could be to the detriment of the entire NMRE. Per member per month funding provides funds for every Medicaid member in the specified area, regardless of their status of being served by the Agency. When there are large drops in the number of Medicaid enrollees, the State has to raise rates to make up the difference, but they have not done this. There have also not been correct payments received for individuals on HABs waivers. Nena has plans for the Agency to reduce expenses which have been reported to the NMRE. There are a couple of Boards in the region that will have to cut services to be able to meet their per member per month. Nena reiterated that Northeast used surplus funds during COVID for one-time expenses, and did not add items that would cause ongoing budget increases. Some of the Agency's highest cost individuals are in group homes and some of them lost their Medicaid or were placed on the incorrect type of Medicaid to keep them open in the system. There is a lot of manual labor involved in redetermining Medicaid cases, which can result in a lot of human error.

Eric discussed the CMH PAC, which uses donations to give CMHA a voice, but the disparity between what other lobbying groups spend is huge. The CMHA PAC has around \$50,000, while others have millions.

XIII. Operations Report

Mary Crittenden reported on operations for the month of February. Due to weather and illness numbers were down a little. A psychiatrist and outpatient therapist are also both out on maternity leave. Access had 36 routine requests for services and no emergent or urgent request. Home-based services served 12 individuals and Children's Services served 45. A lot of kids have transitioned into outpatient therapy services. Outpatient counseling served 91 individuals. Overall, 963 unduplicated individuals were served during the month of February. Mary said spring is the busiest time of year, especially for crisis services.

XIV. Endowment Fund Grant Awards

The Board reviewed the two grant awards provided by the Endowment Fund at the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan. These funds are mostly provided by staff contributions through payroll. The committee that reviews requests for funds is comprised of staff and community foundation members. Most requests are for items to be used for employment or education. Brooke Paczkowski reported about 50 staff members contribute to the fund through payroll deductions every payday.

XV. Board Chair's Report

Schedule Nominations Committee Meeting

Les, Terry, Lynnette, and Charlotte, representing all four counties, will meet at 2:30 p.m. prior to the April 10 Board meeting.

XVI. Executive Director's Report

Nena reported on her activities for the last month, including attending the CMHA winter conference in Kalamazoo where Executive Directors met with MDHHS staff. There was a lot of discussion around Alpena County being named a micro urban county. This would make Alpena non-exempt from rural exemptions. Nena discussed possible necessary budget changes, including staffing in the group homes located in frontier counties. Pending licensing for increased beds in one group home, the Agency may close a group home in Alcona County. The current staffing would remain the same. Terry, an Alcona County Commissioner, said he would be in support of this given all the evidence. The Board expressed support for this proposed change.

Nena reviewed the State's move to put the PIHPs up for bid. The State has created a survey, though it appears to be skewed in its questions. The Board agreed to have Nena send the survey out to staff.

Dana Labar left the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

XVII. Information and/or Comments from the Public

None were presented.

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

Kara presented information on the mental health map she has been working on with Partners in Prevention. The Alpena version of the map will launch on Monday, March 17. All four counties should be done by May. Nena reported everyone at NAMI was very excited for the launch.

XIX. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the NeMCMHA Board is scheduled for Thursday, April 10 at 3:00 p.m.

1. April Agenda Items

The proposed April agenda items were reviewed.

XX. Meeting Evaluation

Judy reported everyone came prepared and felt free to talk. She felt the materials were very informative. Judy said the Board is very special because of their different backgrounds.

XXI. Adjournment

Moved by Lynnette Grzeskowiak, supported by Terry Small, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. This meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.

[signed by Bonnie Cornelius April 10, 2025]
Bonnie Cornelius, Secretary

[signed by Eric Lawson April 10, 2025]
Eric Lawson, Chair