Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority
Board Meeting and Budget Public Hearing – October 8, 2026

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:	Bob Adrian, Dennis Bannon, Bonnie Cornelius, Jennifer Graham, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Charlotte Helman, Eric Lawson, Kara Bauer LeMonds, Lloyd Peltier, Anne Ryan, Terry Small.
Absent:	Dana Labar (Excused)
Staff & Guests:	Carolyn Bruning, Connie Cadarette, Rebekah Duhaime, Erin Fletcher, Jason Lepper, Brooke Paczkowski, Kerry Rastigue, Nena Sork, Kara Steinke, Jen Walburn, Lisa Wilson

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance as a group.

Chair Eric Lawson struck item VIII from the agenda, as the NEMROC contract is not yet finalized.

IV. Acknowledgement of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were acknowledged.

V. Information and/or Comments from the Public

None were presented.

VI. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Charlotte Helman, supported by Terry Small, to approve the minutes of the September Board meeting. Motion carried.

VII. Consent Agenda

Board members received a handout with one additional item for the consent agenda, the Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) Interagency Cash Transfer Agreement (ICTA). The consent agenda included Compassionate Care, Bay View Center, Catholic Human Services, Touchstone Services, Inc. dba Light of Hope Clubhouse, Autism of America, Acorn Health, The Sunset Project, Partners in Prevention, Assistance to Independence (ATI), Thunder Bay Transportation, 10 inpatient hospitals, Karen's Accounting, Amanda's Payroll Services, Case Management of Michigan, and North Shores/Alpine CRU/Bay City CRU.

Moved by Bob Adrian, supported by Lynnette Grzeskowiak, to approve the October 2026 Consent Agenda. Roll Call: Ayes: Bob Adrian, Bonnie Cornelius, Jennifer Graham, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Charlotte Helman, Eric Lawson, Kara Bauer LeMonds, Lloyd Peltier, Anne Ryan, Terry Small; Nays: None. Absent: Dana Labar. Motion carried.

VIII. October Monitoring Reports

1. Budgeting 01-004

Connie Cadarette reported on revenue and expenses for the month ending August 31, 2026, with 91.67% of the year elapsed. Larger variances are mostly due to timing and should even out next month due to their prepaid nature. Staff Recruiting and Development will retain a variance due to more expensive Indeed postings, which did yield positive results in recruiting qualified staff. The variance on Miscellaneous Expenses is due to state hospitalizations. The Change in Net Position is at $1,060,687, which are funds that can be kept. General Funds are underspent by $28,477. Medicaid and Healthy Michigan combined are underspent by $1.2 million, of which around $400,000 will be sent back to the NMRE at the end of the year. There are 46 days of cash on hand.

2. Compensation and Benefits 01-008
Rebekah Duhaime reported that the only change to the monitoring report from last year was the new expiration date for the Executive Director's contract.

Moved by Bonnie Cornelius, supported by Lynnette Grzeskowiak, to approve the October monitoring reports. Motion carried.

IX. Public Hearing: FY27 Budget

Chair Eric Lawson opened the public hearing for the FY27 budget at 3:12 p.m.

Connie reviewed the proposed FY27 Budget, starting with the Revenue Budget. Changes included not budgeting for NMRE incentive revenue, as it is not expected for FY27. An increase of 2.5% was budgeted for Medicaid rates. BHH will see an increase in revenue, up to $690,000. Food Stamps has decreased as all food stamp amounts have gone down due to redeterminations. The total amount budgeted for FY27 is $43,363,309, an increase of $1,103,460 over FY26.

Connie next reviewed the Expenditure Budget (by account) for FY27. An increase of $748,502 was budgeted for Salaries. Connie based the budgeted Health Insurance amount off FY26 usage and then added a 9% increase. Dental and Vision Insurance rates are going down. Mileage will increase to $0.71 for the new fiscal year. The Expenditure Budget (by program) was created assuming full staffing across all departments. The Capital Purchases budget includes six replacement vehicles to be purchased.

Moved by Terry Small, supported by Charlotte Helman, to approve the proposed FY27 Budget. Roll Call: Ayes: Bob Adrian, Bonnie Cornelius, Jennifer Graham, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Charlotte Helman, Eric Lawson, Kara Bauer LeMonds, Lloyd Peltier, Anne Ryan, Terry Small; Nays: None. Absent: Dana Labar. Motion carried.

Chair Eric Lawson closed the public hearing for the FY27 budget at 3:26 p.m.

X. Board Policies Review

1. Annual Board Planning Cycle 02-007
The Board reviewed the policy, noting that they could better "celebrate," as noted in number three.

2. Executive Director Job Description 03-003
Board members and Nena discussed the usefulness of the short policy as the Executive Director's job description. This approach to the job description comes directly from the Carver Model. Per the policy, Nena's performance is viewed as covering "organizational performance as a total."

3. Monitoring Executive Director Performance 03-004
The Board discussed how this policy fits with the Executive Director Job Description Policy, in that the Board has Ends that the Executive Director must strive to meet while staying within her Executive Limitations.

4. Board Ends Statement 04-001
The Board reviewed revisions which reflect changes made to Ends during strategic planning.

Moved by Terry Small, supported by Kara Bauer LeMonds, to accept the revised Board Ends Statement Policy. Motion carried.

XI. Linkage Reports

1. Northern Michigan Regional Entity (NMRE) Board
Eric reported this was Chip Johnston's last meeting as the Executive Director of Centra Wellness, as he is retiring after 36 years in the CMH system. Chip began the Crisis Response Officer program with the Benzie County

Sheriff in response to state-required adult mobile crisis response, which had requirements that were unfeasible in rural Michigan. The CMH pays half a deputy's salary and trains them, and then, as an employee, they can access applicable electronic health records to help individuals in crisis. Ferris State University will be doing research to make the Crisis Response Officer program an evidence-based practice.

Eric shared that mediation on the NMRE's lawsuit regarding the MDHHS contract was not successful and it will be going to a hearing. The issues are the 7.5% cap on the internal service fund and the items added from the result of the Waskul Settlement.

2. Advisory Council

The Council had a quorum for the first time since February. They discussed the Walk a Mile Rally in Lansing and a conference Light of Hope Clubhouse members recently attended. The Council has reached its minimum membership amount of eight members.

XII. Operations Report

Erin reported on operations for the month of September, reviewing the distinctions between the different case management programs. I/DD Case Management serves individuals of any age with an I/DD diagnosis. They served 131 individuals in September. MI Adult Case Management serves adults between the ages of 18-54 and they served 69 individuals in September. Older Adult Case Management serves individuals over the age of 55 and they also served 69 individuals in September. The total of unduplicated individuals served in September was 993.

XIII. Board Chair's Report

1. FY27 Strategic Plan

Board members received their spiral-bound FY27 Strategic Plans.

2. Schedule Nominations Committee Meeting

There are four Board members with terms expiring on March 31, 2027: Terry, Eric, Kara, and Charlotte. Bonnie, Lynnette, Dana, and Lloyd will make up the Nominations Committee and will meet at 2:30 p.m. before the November 12 Board meeting.

3. CMHA Fall Conference (October 26 & 27): Attendees and Voting Delegates

Kara, Dana, Bonnie, Lloyd, and Anne will all be attending the conference. Bonnie and Lloyd will be the voting delegates on Sunday evening.

XIV. Executive Director's Report

Nena and Jen Walburn introduced Lisa Wilson as the new Quality Improvement Coordinator. Lisa had previously worked for the Agency as an I/DD Case Manager.

Nena reviewed her activities over the last month, including meetings attended and chaired. Much of the month consisted of meetings with contract providers to finalize their FY27 contracts. A lot of time has been spent on one specific case that has become outside the scope of the Agency concerning medical care. She has been consulting with attorneys and the State to gain support. She met with VOYA for their annual review of staff retirement accounts, which earned between 11-14% on investments over the year.

Nena reported that the Agency was awarded a two-year, $663,196 grant to create an evidence-based program based on the Agency's Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) program. Kara Steinke, CAO, wrote the grant for the Michigan Health Endowment. The Agency will partner with a university to create a replicable evidence-based practice to share with other CMHs in the state and nationally. Hospital recidivism has gone down by 40-60% since Dr. Spurlock started having individuals stay on court orders for a longer period to ensure they have true insight into their mental illness and need for treatment.

The Agency had the second highest rate of return for the NMRE's annual consumer survey, with 232 completed surveys. Nena was glad to see the percentage of individuals who feel CMH staff treat them nicely has increased to 95%.

Chip Johnston will be starting a consulting business, Platte Management and Contracting Services, after his retirement from Centra Wellness. Nena asked the board to approve entering into a contract for consulting services at the rate of $1,000 per month, with a maximum cost of $12,000 for the year. This would provide a minimum of five hours from Chip each month, though he would be able to work more at no additional cost. He will be focusing on the new program with the Alcona County Sheriff and SIP homes. The contract will also include provisions that if the Agency is in funding or revenue deficit, the contract will end without a 30-day waiting period.

Moved by Terry Small, supported by Charlotte Helman, to approve entering into a contract with Platte Management and Contracting Services. Roll Call: Ayes: Bob Adrian, Bonnie Cornelius, Jennifer Graham, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Charlotte Helman, Eric Lawson, Kara Bauer LeMonds, Lloyd Peltier, Anne Ryan, Terry Small; Nays: None. Absent: Dana Labar. Motion carried.

XV. Information and/or Comments from the Public

None were presented.

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

Nothing was presented.

XVII. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the NeMCMHA Board is scheduled for Thursday, November 12, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.

1. Proposed November Agenda Items

The November agenda items were reviewed.

XVIII. Adjournment

Moved by Charlotte Helman, supported by Terry Small, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

This meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

[Signed by Bonnie Cornelius on November 12, 2026]
Bonnie Cornelius, Secretary

[Signed by Eric Lawson on November 12, 2026]
Eric Lawson, Chair