

Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority Board
Board Meeting
May 13, 2021
[This meeting was held in person and using ZOOM/Uber Conference]

I. Call to Order

Chair Eric Lawson called the meeting to order in the Board Room at 3:01 p.m.

II. Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum

Present: Bob Adrian, Geyer Balog, Les Buza, Bonnie Cornelius, Roger Frye, Lynette Greskowiak, Judy Jones (Uber), Terry Larson, Eric Lawson, Gary Nowak, Pat Przeslawski, Terry Small

Absent:

Staff & Guests: Lisa Anderson, Alan Bolter joined at 3:15 p.m., Carolyn Bruning, Connie Cadarette, Mary Crittenden, Renee Curry, Lynne Fredlund, Erin Fletcher, Ruth Hewett, 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

Geyer Balog 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 Roger Frye, supported by Gary Nowak, to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2021 meeting as presented. Motion carried.

VIII. Educational Session – Carter Kits

Erin Fletcher, Clinical Director, provided a brief background of the Carter Kits™ and the intended use of the kits. The kits are to aid First Responders when responding to calls involving individuals with autism and contain tools to assist in the encounter with the child. The Agency has ordered 27 kits to distribute to area law enforcement offices and first responders within our four county catchment areas. The Agency became aware of the kits as the Hillman United Methodist Church initially donated kits to first responders and law enforcement in Montmorency County. Our staff, Frank VanGoethem, compiled a brief summary of how to use the various elements in the kit and entitled it "Autism Primer."

Nena Sork reported the initial order was for the fire departments and law enforcement and then expanded to include the volunteer fire departments. Training will be provided when distributed. Terry Larson inquired as to the extent of the training that will be provided. Frank VanGoethem is a retired MSW Psychologist and has previously worked in the jail system. He will provide the training within the various departments. Mr. Larson noted the volunteer fire departments traditionally have scheduled training nights and this would be good to arrange training during those sessions.

Erin Fletcher reported the Children's Mobile Crisis Stabilization unit also received a couple kits. Bob Adrian suggested contacting Chief Forbush in Alpena as he can arrange to have credits associated with the training. The cost of the kits are \$80 per kit.

IX. Board Policy Review and Self Evaluation

1. Board Job Description 02-003

Eric Lawson noted the board is required to review and self-evaluated their compliance to this policy. Eric Lawson notes in the first bullet, it explains Board members are the link and the embodiment to the four counties this Agency serves. He reviewed the ways of including individuals receiving services in planning. The Advisory Council participates in the Strategic Planning process and a community needs assessment is conducted as a part of the annual submission to identify areas of focus based on input received. The Agency is working to become more visible in the community by participating in events such as "The Take Back Event," "Pop Up Pantries," "Suicide Prevention Walk" and will be hosting a Blood Drive on May 18th.

Alan Bolter joined the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

X. Environmental Scan

Alan Bolter, Associate Director of the CMHA, provided the Board members with a PowerPoint Slide packet. He noted he will be addressing the slides mainly related to the "Moving Towards Integration." Mr. Bolter reported Senator Mike Shirkey is the Senate Majority Leader and was active in the 298 threat in the past and the new "Gearing Toward Integration" seems to be picking up the focus again. Mr. Bolter notes this appears to be a "Senate Only" proposal. He reports the House is working on their own version. The Governor's Office is not involved. This is a Senate Republican proposal. He noted the Republicans control both the Senate and the House. He reported the new director, Director Elizabeth Hertel, spoke of the two proposals currently being considered. She believes the state should focus on access and improve the current system and ways to improve and increase service versus what is being proposed. One of the big questions remains is "Will the Governor Sign It?" Alan questions if the Governor would support; however, sometimes there are compromises made which might push this through. One item the Governor wants to see is the Legislature to move on the COVID federal dollars received. The legislators have not been pleased with the Governor's handling of the pandemic. At this point, it is unknown as to what might entice her to support the Gearing Toward Integration. In addition, many of the representatives/Senators are fairly new and were not around when the previous discussions occurred. Alan noted a "leave us alone" response would not be well received by the legislators. Advocacy will be important; however, during COVID, the advocacy challenge is greater due to limitations of attendance in group settings.

Alan Bolter reviewed the elements of the Gearing Toward Integration proposal the Senate is contemplating. Some of the language from the Robert Gordon proposal a couple of the years back are included in this proposal. This proposal would create new entities (Specialty Integrated Plans (SIP)) to develop newly integrated plans requiring a bid process. Licensing requirements would be necessary and the requirements mirror the Medical Health Plans. The insolvency coverage is identified and the PIHPs are capped as to their reserves so this would automatically disqualify them from submitting a bid. The proposal indicates the changes cannot be moved from phase to phase without meeting some metrics; however, the metrics are not identified in the proposal. Once the phased in process is completed, the PIHPs would be eliminated. The Department will require the new SIPs to contract with the community mental health boards; however, this could be as little as \$1. This would allow the SIPs to bring in other providers which would not be mandated to provide the same documentation such as recipient rights, etc. This would dramatically limit the role of the CMHs and local government roles. This proposal will follow the budget process and might be presented in late summer, early fall. Mr. Bolter guesses bills will be introduced within the next couple of weeks on the Senate side.

The House has their own proposal. Essentially, the House's proposal, led by Representative Mary Whiteford, would create one statewide entity (ASO) to manage all the behavioral health benefit and eliminate all the PIHPs. It does not integrate financing with the Medicaid Health Plans. A PIHP could potentially be the ASO. It also describes the system to go to a fee-for-service model. Alan notes this proposal seems to be more open minded and willing to listen to input. What does this entity look like? It is a public or quasi-public entity, not a not for profit. How many would make sense?

Alan Bolter noted the Talking Points focus more on the Senate proposal as the Senate is more set on what they want where the House is still willing to work. Integration has to take place on the ground at the patient level. Financial integration does nothing to improve services. He stressed this must be publicly governed with oversight. A flaw with the Senate proposal is that it does not include housing, employment supports or recipient rights – only focuses on the health home model. There are no reporting requirements on the mild to moderate behavioral health. Another question is “Why is this change being made in the middle of a pandemic?”

Mr. Bolter reports there has been one Action Alert published and a report was published during the last push with Section 298 with many recommendations noting the Senate should look at the data from those reports prior to making changes. He indicates there are reports coming out for the Behavioral Health Homes and the Opioid Health Homes and with the CCBHCs expansion, the Department has worked diligently to provide services. There have been some resolutions passed at County boards against this integration push.

Mr. Bolter informed the Board the House and Senate are working on pushing out their budgets and the budgets should be released soon. Alan noted the legislators are working to push through a supplemental to release some COVID funds.

Gary Nowak requested advice as to what this Board can do to help. Alan suggested reaching out to the Senators/Representatives in our districts. He suggested we continue to work with our sheriff, local police, local school districts, etc. as the insurance companies do not work with them. Alan reported Senator Stamas was a good supporter on the Direct Care Wage increase. Alan Bolter reported he did not reach out to Michigan Municipal League (MML). Gary Nowak requested a copy of the proposal and he can get it passed in Rogers City.

Eric Lawson inquired about the Local Match Draw Down phase out. Alan Bolter reported in the Senate Budget, there is \$10M dollars of General Funds earmarked to cover the second and third year of the draw down. The House Budget only included the boilerplate language and did not include the phase out language but reverted back to the old language. Alan Bolter noted CMHAM will continue to lobby this issue as well.

Gary Nowak suggested we send a letter to both Senator Stamas and Representative Sue Allor related to Gearing Toward Integration. *Gary Nowak moved to send a letter to Senator Stamas and Rep Allor with Eric Lawson's approval, seconded by Bonnie Cornelius.* Bob Adrian reported Alpena County board meets the last meeting of the month and could have the motion approved at that meeting (May 25th). Motion carried.

XI. Board Policy Review and Self Evaluation

1. Board Job Description 02-003 (continued)

Pat Przeslawski noted this policy is well written.

2. Board Core Values 02-014

Board members reviewed the policy and there were no revisions recommended. Les Buza reported this policy is also written well with everything in place. Eric Lawson reported our policies are written to support independence of individuals.

XII. May Monitoring Reports

1. Treatment of Consumers 01-002

The Recipient Rights met in April and the Activity Report covers January – March, 2021. She reported the incident report has some categories that doubled, most likely attributed to the pandemic environment. Pat Przeslawski noted committee members also had an educational session related to levels of disciplinary action for substantiated rights violations. The Committee also reviewed internal Policy 3610 – Prohibited and Unacceptable Conduct.

2. Budgeting 01-004

Connie Cadarette reviewed the Statement of Revenue and Expense for month ending March 31, 2021. She reviewed the underspent revenues in Medicaid and Healthy Michigan. She notes the Direct Care funding was received noting it was budgeted for; however, it was budgeted conservatively. The General Funds are also in excess due to the spend-downs being on a pause at this point.

Larry Patterson reviewed the expenses identified and reviewed the variances. He reported the Self Insured Benefits expense is a timing issue and is normally adjusted a couple of times a year based on actual usage. He reviewed the contract inpatient and contract residential line items. The telephone and connectivity was impacted due to some charges and this will most likely require a budget adjustment. The property and liability will clear when the asset distribution is received. The client equipment includes the previous purchase of a wheelchair for a client who has since passed away. He notes at this point in the year expenses look good.

3. Financial Condition 01-005

Connie Cadarette reviewed the Statement of Net Position and Change in Net Position for March 31, 2021, end of the 2nd quarter. She reported the unrestricted cash would keep the agency running for 45 days. She noted the underspent dollars is removed prior to reporting the days.

Gary Nowak questioned how the new accounting system integration is working. Connie Cadarette reported they are beginning to work on the new chart of accounts. The initial integration plan was postponed due to changes at the state level. Implementation will not start until July/August.

Moved by Gary Nowak, supported by Les Buza, to accept the May Monitoring Reports as presented. Motion carried.

XIII. Linkage Reports

1. Northern Michigan Regional Entity (NMRE)

a. Board Meeting April 28, 2021

Gary Nowak reported the NMRE is in good financial situation. Roger Frye reported there was much discussion related to the PA2 funds sitting out there. Roger Frye noted the counties are to be contacted to encourage usage of these funds from the liquor tax. Because the funds are restricted to providers with substance abuse services, sometimes the requests received are not eligible. Bob Adrian reported there is some progress being made toward the counties spending the PA2 dollars; however, there is a lot more to go.

b. Board Meeting March 24, 2021

The minutes for the March meeting were included in the mailing.

c. Appointment of NMRE Representative

Eric Lawson reappointed Roger Frye to the position on the NMRE Board.

2. Community Mental Health Association of Michigan (CMHAM)

a. Spring Conference Update

The Spring Board Conference scheduled for June. Board members were provided a copy of the agenda for the conference. Board members were encouraged to review the sessions and let Diane Hayka know if they wish to attend.

XIV. Operation's Report

Mary Crittenden reviewed the April Operation's statistics with Board members. She reviewed the access screens, employment services and CLS services. A total of 1,074 individuals received services during this timeframe.

XV. Chair's Report

1. Strategic Planning Discussion Continues

The June meeting will continue our process for Strategic Planning and will include collaboration with the Advisory Council. The semi-annual Ends report will be presented.

2. Annual Report Draft

Eric Lawson noted the Annual Report is in draft form and reviewed some of the articles to be included in the newsletter. A letter from the Chair and Director to the community needs to be added. Eric Lawson requested input as to what should be included in this message. Pat Przeslawski reported this board is very dedicated and there is respect, empathy and cohesiveness. She notes not all boards operate in this fashion. Eric Lawson noted there is now a mixture of ages and take advantage of the talents of the members on our board.

Nena Sork noted losing those tenured individuals who have worked at the state and in the legislature is a detriment. Our board is proud to serve the communities they serve. Gary Nowak reported communication with the community is important.

Roger Frye reported staff talents need to be promoted in the community as well as we have very good staff.

XVI. Director's Report

1. Director's Update

Nena Sork provided Board members with an update of the various activities she has participated in during the past month. She noted a letter from NMRE CEO, Eric Kurtz, was included in the handouts today outlining a recent meeting discussing benefit stabilization at both the staff and provider levels. She reported the regional directors met in Petoskey to strategize on services.

Nena Sork reported the Agency is lapsing about \$2.6M at this point in the year and each month approximately \$400,000 is added to this. She reported the Board provided authorization to allow for purchase of needed wheelchair vehicles and home renovations. She reported there is a crisis for maintaining workforce levels and this is an issue in each county. Some of the positions within the agency requires specific licensure. At this time we are searching for three clinicians and a supervisor. The NMRE Directors identified things that could be used to assist in recruitment, retention and reinvestment of staff. Nena reported this Agency built the Direct Care Wage increase in the budget and the agency will continue this in the future whether the state provides the continued funding or not.

She notes a small internal workgroup met to discuss options. She notes employers are all fighting for workers and we would like to keep the staff we have trained and oriented. She notes one item would be to provide a lump sum each month for retention of possibly 2% - 3%. She provided a scenario of shortage of staff during quarantine periods due to COVID. After brainstorming, it was decided to award the staff a per diem of \$150 for each 8-hour shift they picked up to cover for these instances. Nena Sork reported she met with Lance Rhines, Service Representative of OPEIU (union), to discuss the possibilities for staff incentives. She reported she would like to award a \$250 incentive for those individuals who received a COVID vaccination. This would be strictly voluntary and the employee would be requested to provide proof of vaccination to get this incentive, equal compensation would be made to those staff that report they were not vaccinated due to medical or religious reasons.

Moved by Gary Nowak supported by Pat Przeslawski to approve the recommendations made for staff retention, recruitment and reinvestment and the purchases of wheelchair vans and home renovations as discussed. Roll call: Ayes: Robert Adrian, Les Buza, Bonnie Cornelius, Roger Frye, Lynnette Greskowiak, Judy Jones, Terry Larson, Eric Lawson, Gary Nowak, Pat Przeslawski; Nays: Geyer Balog, Terry Small; Absent: None.

Nena Sork reported the employee recognition will be held on June 24th. Board members are to call Kay Keller if they wish to attend. This will be held at the Fletcher Street Office outdoors.

2. QI Council Update

The minutes from the last QI Council meeting were distributed to Board members. There was no discussion or questions.

XVII. Information and/or Comments from the Public

There was no information or comments presented.

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

There was no information or comments for the Good of the Board.

XIX. Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting of Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority Board will be held Thursday, June 10, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

1. Set June Agenda

The June agenda items were reviewed. Strategic Planning continues with Part II focusing on progress towards current "Ends."

XX. Evaluation of Meeting

Geyer Balog reported everyone participated in discussions and the meeting was a good meeting. Geyer Balog reported this board runs smoother than any of the other boards he is a member of.

XXI. Adjournment

Moved by Pat Przeslawski, supported by Gary Nowak, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. This meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

[signed by Bonnie Cornelius on 06/10/21]

Bonnie Cornelius, Secretary

[signed by Eric Lawson on 06/10/21]

Eric Lawson, Chair

Diane Hayka
Recorder