

**Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority (NeMCMHA)  
Board Meeting – February 8, 2024**

**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: Les Buza, Bob Adrian, Bonnie Cornelius, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Charlotte Helman, Judy Jones, Dana Labar, Eric Lawson, Gary Nowak, Lloyd Peltier, Patricia Przeslawski, Terry Small

Staff & Guests: Carolyn Bruning, Connie Cadarette, Mary Crittenden, Erin Fletcher, Lynne Fredlund, Ruth Hewett, Kingsli Kraft, Brooke Paczkowski, Abbey Podbielski, Nena Sork, Jen Walburn

**III. Pledge of Allegiance**

Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance as a group.

**IV. Appointment of Evaluator**

Terry Small 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 Lynnette Grzeskowiak, supported by Les Buza, to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2024 Board meeting.*** Motion carried.

**VIII. 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, 2023, with 25% of the year elapsed. There are a couple variances in expenses, but nothing unusual. Due to it still being early in the fiscal year and the Agency not yet having received all of their local funds, the change in net position is negative, which is normal. Medicaid is underspent by \$279,469, and Healthy Michigan is underspent \$30,296, for a current total underspent amount of \$309,765.

Connie next discussed audit bids for 2024 – 2026. Bids are collected every three years. The Agency has a financial audit and a compliance audit every year. Board members were in agreement that they would like to keep utilizing a local company for the audits.

***Moved by Bob Adrian, supported by Patricia Przeslawski, to continue using Straley Lamp & Kraenzlein P.C. for the Agency's audits for the next three years.*** Roll Call: Ayes: Bob Adrian, Les Buza, Bonnie Cornelius, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Charlotte Helman, Judy Jones, Dana Labar, Eric Lawson, Gary Nowak, Lloyd Peltier, Patricia Przeslawski, Terry Small; Nays: None; Absent: None. Abstain: None. Motion carried.

**2. Treatment of Individuals Served 01-002**

Ruth Hewett informed the Board the new report is an accumulation of the last three years' Recipient Rights complaints. CARF, the Agency's accrediting body, likes to see the trends, point out areas of improvement, and suggest new areas that need improvement. Pat praised Ruth and her staff for doing a great job.

**3. Staff Treatment 01-003**

Agency wide staff turnover was at 33% for 2023. Nena reported turnover has been high since the COVID-19 pandemic. Dana questioned the turnover for the positions that have a turnover rate of 60% or higher. Nena will ask Human Resources to compile reasons why staff left that were given during exit interviews. She knows on-call was a large reason why many case managers left, and she has been trying to provide education as to why that service is the most important and the one service the Agency is obligated to provide. Eligible staff are on-call one weekend every nine weeks, and

one night during the week every two weeks.

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

**IX. Board Policy Review and Self-Evaluation**

**1. Asset Protection 01-007**

Bob questioned the effectiveness of the policy, noting the purchasing thresholds of \$500 and \$5,000 may not still be appropriate in today's economy. Connie agreed that the numbers seem low. The Board asked that Nena bring numbers back to the Board that may be more appropriate for the current economy.

**2. Board Committee Principles 02-005**

Eric and Pat were in agreement the Board follows this policy and they are not overrun with committees.

**3. Delegation to the Executive Director 03-002**

Eric said the Board sees this policy in action with the monthly monitoring reports. Pat feels the Board tries to accommodate Nena and the Agency's needs.

**X. Linkage Reports**

**1. NMRE Board**

Eric reported the most important discussions at the NMRE, including a closed session, concerned the ongoing struggles of Northern Lakes. Nena reported a news article on UpNorthLive reported that an audit uncovered some concerning practices and the potential for fraud, employee collusion, and false documentation. They are now undergoing a forensic audit. Two employees have been terminated and one has been put on administrative leave. Brian Martinez is the interim Director at Northern Lakes and he has been doing a wonderful job alongside Eric Kurtz, who has been very hands on since their struggles began nearly two years ago.

**2. Advisory Council**

Lloyd attended his first Consumer Advisory Council meeting on Monday. He said it was a nice bunch of people and he enjoyed getting to know everyone. They reviewed the new Agency brochure and discussed the upcoming NMRE Day of Recovery.

**XI. Operations Report**

Mary Crittenden reported on operations for January 2024. The access department was very busy in January with 67 routine contacts, 33 crisis contacts, and 57 prescreens. Outpatient counseling saw 88 individuals. A total of 1,033 individuals were served in the month of January.

**XII. Board Chair's Report**

**1. Board Roster**

Eric asked that Board members verify their information on the new Board roster. Alpena County Commissioners have an interview for a new primary Board member tomorrow.

**2. Recipient Rights Advisory Committee**

Pat would like to stay on the Recipient Rights Advisory Committee as a community volunteer after her Board appointment is complete. A new Board member will need to be assigned to the committee.

**XIII. Executive Director's Report**

**1. Executive Director's Update**

Nena provided a report of her activities for the last month. During the week of January 15, she attended NMRE Operations, the CMHA Members Services Committee and CMHA Contract and Finance Committee, and also the Rural and Frontier Caucus Group. The following week Nena attended the NMRE Board meeting and the CMHA Directors' Forum. Rehmann was also onsite that week conducting staff interviews as a follow-up to the staff survey. Rehmann has since completed their interviews and are compiling a report for the Agency. As of February 1, the new Union contracts have gone into effect.

## 2. Greenhaven

The Blue Horizons Board and staff have been notified of the Agency's plan to terminate their contract with the group home. Greenhaven's licensing work has begun, and the maintenance department was started working on the home. The Board was shown Greenhaven's listing photos. This home will be for ambulatory individuals who are working towards living independently.

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

Lynne Fredlund addressed the Board, announcing that she is retiring on March 8. She thanked the Board for all they do, and stated she has appreciated the time spent training Board members.

Eric said the new CMHA PAC information has been released. They are working to protect Michigan from the privatization of mental health services. Donations can be made online, with Board members typically donating one month's per diem.

### XV. Information and/or Comments for the Good of the Organization

Board members were asked to stop next door before leaving to have new photos taken by Human Resources.

### XVI. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the NeMCMHA Board is scheduled for Thursday, March 14 at 3:00 p.m.

#### 1. March Agenda Items

The proposed March agenda items were reviewed.

### XVII. Meeting Evaluation

Les Buza left the meeting at 4:13 p.m.

Terry thought Board members came prepared to govern and that there is always good input from everybody. There were opportunities for good conversation, and questions were asked of staff and Nena. Terry appreciates the personal touches this Board and organization offer, as he likes seeing people involved in what they are doing.

Nena asked that the Board keep staff in their thoughts. They lost four individuals served last month, and it seems that new tragedies have struck each month. Staff continue to show up and work hard for individuals served.

### XVIII. Adjournment

***Moved by Gary Nowak, supported by Terry Small, to adjourn the meeting.*** Motion carried. This meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

*[signed by Bonnie Cornelius April 11, 2024]*

Bonnie Cornelius, Secretary

Rebekah Duhaime  
Recorder

*[signed by Eric Lawson April 11, 2024]*

Eric Lawson, Chair