

**Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority (NeMCMHA)
Board Meeting – August 10, 2023**

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, Les Buza, Bonnie Cornelius, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Charlotte Helman, Judy Jones, Eric Lawson, Gary Nowak, Lloyd Peltier, Terry Small

Absent: Terry Larson, Patricia Przeslawski

Staff & Guests: Renee Ballard, Carolyn Bruning, Mary Crittenden, Ruth Hewett, Larry Patterson, Abbey Podbielski, Nena Sork, Jen Walburn

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance as a group.

IV. Appointment of Evaluator

Bob Adrian was appointed as evaluator of the meeting.

V. Acknowledgement of Conflict of Interest

Eric Lawson addressed the Board regarding conduct during public comment. He refreshed Board members on what the Chairperson's Role policy says regarding public comment: "He/She shall then state his/her reason for addressing the Board and may be limited in their remarks to three minutes on matters within jurisdiction of the Board..." Eric reiterated that it is not a time for a question and answer session between the public and the Board. Board members may open themselves up to potential liability if they try and get too involved in what should be the Executive Director's job. Public comment is a time for the Board to hear from individuals and take what they say under advisement, but that the issues should be addressed later as an agenda item, if warranted. Eric wants the Board to be responsive, but they cannot impede on the Executive Director's role. Board members may not have all the facts due to what can and cannot be said during a public Board meeting. They must trust that the Executive Director follows the Agency's policies and procedures. The September agenda will have a section under the Chair's report dedicated to review of any policies that refer to public comment.

VI. Information and/or Comments from the Public

Renee Ballard further discussed what she feels was her wrongful termination. Eric let her know when her three minutes of public comment were completed, and that there would be a second chance for public comment at the end of the meeting.

VII. Approval of Minutes

Charlotte Helman pointed out two necessary revisions to the draft minutes – Mary Crittenden will be added to the list of staff attendees, and a correction will be made to the phrasing under section IX.

Moved by Gary Nowak, supported by Terry Small, to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2023 Board meeting, as amended. Motion carried.

VIII. August Monitoring Reports

1. Treatment of Individuals Served 01-002

Ruth Hewett stated everything on the quarterly and six-month Recipient Rights reports looked good. She clarified that "left before finished" means the staff member resigned before completion of the investigation. If that investigation is completed and the complaint is found to be substantiated, it would be placed in their personnel file and remediation would have to be completed before their possible re-hire.

2. Staff Treatment 01-003

Eric stated the 18% total turnover rate for 2023 is lower than past years. Nena reported a lot of children's staff have been lost to schools, and the CRS program has lost staff to remote positions.

3. Budgeting 01-004

Larry Patterson reviewed the Statement of Revenue and Expense for the month ending June 30. The current overspent amount is \$1.7 million of the \$2.3 million the NMRE is asking for. The large increase was due to June having three pay periods and the staff retention payment. General Funds are underspent by \$326,870, as redeterminations/spenddowns have not yet occurred. The total of General Funds that can be carried forward is \$43,168. With 75% of the year elapsed, 78.2% of expenses have been used.

4. Financial Condition 01-005

The Agency's total current assets are at \$9,134,508, with a total liability of \$6,015,409. The net position as of June 30 is \$6,722,149, which equals 36 days of cash on hand. Nena stated employee retirement savings plans are fully funded.

Moved by Charlotte Helman, supported by Lloyd Peltier, to approve the August Monitoring Reports. Motion carried.

IX. Board Policies Review and Self-Evaluation

1. Chairperson's Role 02-004

Gary Nowak feels Eric is doing an excellent job as Chair. Terry Small appreciated that Eric evaluated himself and the Board at the start of the meeting, and thinks the policy looks good.

2. Board Members' Per Diem 02-009

Bonnie Cornelius stated the increased per diem from last year put them in a good place. Board members agreed that the lodging reimbursement rate should be raised to the current government rate. To keep the policy current, the language will be changed from a specific dollar amount to, "Not to exceed the current State government rate."

Moved by Bob Adrian, supported by Gary Nowak, to approve the revision to the Board Members' Per Diem Policy. Motion carried.

3. Board Self-Evaluation 02-012

Eric doesn't think the Board has ever had a situation that warranted a work plan as mentioned in the policy. Gary said the Board routinely does self-evaluation when each meeting is evaluated by a Board member. Board members were pleased with the policy as written, and feel they are following it.

X. Linkage Reports

1. NMRE Board Meeting – July 26

Gary stated they received a good financial report, and the NMRE is continuing to work on their three-year SUD plan.

2. Advisory Council – August 7

Les Buza reported they discussed strategic planning and Bay View's search for a new Director. They also discussed attending the Day of Recovery and Walk a Mile in My Shoes, both of which are in September.

XI. Operations Report

Mary Crittenden reported on operations for July 2023. There were 64 routine request services and no emergent or urgent requests. Case management has had a high amount of staff turnover, but the teams are working well together to get individuals seen. Older Adult Services saw 98 individuals, MI Adult saw 18, ACT saw 42, Home-Based saw 27, MI Children's Services saw 82, and I/DD, which is the most staffed, saw 144. Overall, 1,014 individuals were served during the month of July.

XII. Chair's Report

1. Review Strategic Plan Revisions

Board members reviewed their requested revisions to the FY24 Strategic Plan. They reviewed two options for revision of the trauma-informed community goal. Advisory Council had preferred the second option during their meeting, which Board members agreed with, as it was shorter and more direct.

Moved by Gary Nowak, supported by Terry Small, to approve the revisions to the FY Strategic Plan. Roll Call: Ayes: Robert Adrian, Les Buza, Bonnie Cornelius, Lynnette Grzeskowiak, Charlotte Helman, Judy Jones, Eric Lawson, Gary Nowak, Lloyd Peltier, Terry Small; Nays: None; Absent: Terry Larson, Pat Przeslawski. Motion carried.

2. Begin Board Self-Evaluation

Eric requested Board members return their completed self-evaluations to Rebekah Duhaime to be compiled.

3. Executive Director's Evaluation

Terry and Eric were in agreement that Nena is going a good job. Eric stated he is impressed with how she has handled various issues. Charlotte appreciates Nena's input and how she relates things back to the impact it will have on the communities the Agency serves. Bob Adrian feels the meetings run well and that Nena is prepared to present information quickly and concisely. Nena praised her staff for how dedicated they are to those they serve. Lynnette Grzeskowiak stated Nena makes the job look easy, though she knows that isn't the case.

Moved by Terry Small, supported by Gary Nowak, to give Executive Director, Nena Sork, a satisfactory evaluation for August 2022 to July 2023. Motion carried.

XIII. Executive Director's Report

Nena reported the Agency is transitioning to their new payroll system, as the old system was sold to a different company. The transition will be completed by October 1. Nena attended the Directors Forum during the week of July 17, stating it was extremely positive for the rural and frontier exemption they are seeking. CMH Directors are meeting in Petoskey later in the month to further plan and discuss this topic. Rehmann launched the NeMCMHA annual staff survey on July 31, and it will be open until August 14. So far, 48% of staff have completed the survey, with an end goal of 80%. Nena has been providing her annual reports to county commissioners, and only has Alcona County remaining. During the week of July 31, employee recognition and annual staff training both happened at the APlex and Nena also attended the CMHA Board meeting. She is currently on the Steering Committee, and has been invited to another advisory group. She attended Advisory Council, the NMRE Finance Committee meeting, and did an interview with The Alpena News so far this week. The article was in Tuesday's newspaper. Nena is hoping to have figures for the Municipal Consulting Services salary survey to the Board next month, though they won't be on their schedule until February. The Agency will be sponsoring the August Feed the Need Pop-Up Pantry and providing volunteers for distribution. The Agency will also be sponsoring suicide prevention walks in Alpena and Rogers City.

XIV. Information and/or Comments from the Public

Renee Ballard spoke again, stating many people don't know about all the programs the Agency offers, and she also touched on her termination once more.

Eric reminder her and all attendees that public comment may be limited to three minutes, and must regarding a matter within the Board's jurisdiction.

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

Eric informed the Board he had spoken with Lisa Anderson, Human Resources Manager, and he is satisfied with the Agency's decision concerning the recent public comment concerns.

XVI. Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the NeMCMHA Board will be on Thursday, September 14 at 3:00 p.m.

1. Set September Agenda

The proposed September agenda items were reviewed.

XVII. Meeting Evaluation

Bob said the meeting started on time, and they had a good discussion regarding decorum and etiquette. Everyone participated and had their say during the meeting. He thinks there needs to be more

differentiation between the Board's role/rules and their individual desires to get involved in issues. The Board needs to stay within its role and effect the changes they want to see through policy development.

XVIII. Adjournment

Moved by Bob Adrian, supported by Terry Small, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. This meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

[signed by Bonnie Cornelius October 12, 2023]

Bonnie Cornelius, Secretary

Rebekah Duhaime
Recorder

[signed by Eric Lawson September 14, 2023]

Eric Lawson, Chair