



NORTH COUNTRY

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH

MINUTES OF THE BOARD

June 26, 2025 2:30 PM

1420 Plaza Drive, Board Room, Petoskey

Mr. Ginop called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING: Annemarie Conway, Bob Baldwin, Caroline Loper, Edward Ginop, Jarris Rubingh, Karla Sherman, Michael Newman, Ron Iseler arrived at 2:57pm, Ed Belitz, Bob Boyd

BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING VIRTUALLY:

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: David White, Dana Wingo, Daniel CasaSanta

STAFF: Brian Babbitt, Nancy Rhue, Jeff Yoder, Ann Friend, Kim Rappleyea, Joe Balberde, Amy Christie, Amanda Cordova

GUESTS: Ann Steiner, Gretchen Iorio, Dan Kilpatrick, Dave Mania, Betsy Mania, Cindy Evans, Robin Insalato, Joan Forgrave, Angela Adams, Becky Phillips, Renee Gibson, Michael Hockin, Micah Haven, Scott Montgomery

Mr. Ginop welcomed Board members and staff to the meeting. There is a quorum present.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST: No board members expressed a conflict with any agenda item.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Ann Steiner handed out a packet that she had created with letters of support from community members, clients of GTI and photos. She stated that she is the parent of a son who has passed away, but he was a client of GTI. She used to be a board member at GTI as well. She stated that she has heard from 7,307 people who support GTI and in the last couple of weeks she had heard from 1,405 people who are parents, community members, and elected officials including Tristan Cole, John Roth, John Damoose, and Jason Allen. She states that on June 25th that she was stopped by local police who asked her what can be done to "not make GTI close" She stated that the GTI Christmas party she puts on every year in remembrance of her son, is greatly attended by staff, clients, and community members alike, including Honor Society students from Bellaire. She stated that she hopes that the board members will take the time to read the packet she put together, and that NCCMH and GTI can work together so it won't close and that those

who cannot be in the community won't lose the program. She encouraged all the board members to go visit GTI so they would understand what happens there.

Robin Insalaco thanked NCCMH for the support that her family member received when they moved to northern Michigan. She urged the board members not to be so restrictive when they think of what it means for clients to be out in the community, that society is not as homogenous as a lot of people think, and that it is best if clients have intersectionality as much as they want while in the community as a whole and within the GTI community.

Michael Hockin stated that he goes to GTI. He states that he used to work in a restaurant, it was stressful and due to his anxiety, he left that position. He came to GTI to see what it was like. He states that he has been successful in his work at GTI and without GTI that many people won't have their chosen family to work and socialize with. He states that GTI is a community not just a work site and helps people meet their goals and without GTI it could set up members for failure.

Joan Forgrave read the following statement: I have known about the GTI facility in Mancelona for years. It has a tremendous effect on the staff, clients, and the community it serves. Many of the clients have no other place to socialize and interact with others. The staff provides the help that many of the clients need, whether it is with meals, interacting with others, or the skills needed to do jobs.

Working a job gives the clients a true sense of contributing to the community. It makes them feel proud and validated. The clients don't make much money, maybe only a few dollars, but getting that paycheck gives them a sense of self-worth that cannot be measured. The jobs that GTI offers are not the ones that the clients can just apply for in the community or can do at business sites. They require specialized assistance, which occurs only at the GTI facility. The staff members who guide the clients are able to support multiple people at the same time, which would not be the case if the clients were spread out at different business sites. Additionally, I am not aware of any businesses who are preparing to open up these sorts of work opportunities at their locations.

As well as giving people jobs, GTI also provides an opportunity to the community around GTI to see the clients in a different light. Rather than seeing people in need, all of Mancelona sees people who work with dignity according to their abilities. More happens at the GTI facility than work assistance. It is also a place where clients and the greater community participate together in various activities, such as the sports facility and the Christmas party including the honor society students from Bellaire High School. These events provide an opportunity to build empathy and allow all people a chance to interact with someone unlike themselves.

Indeed, GTI Mancelona is an important part of the lives of the clients, their families, and the surrounding community. After hearing from clients, parents, GTI staff and community members I hope that you will reevaluate your proposed cancellation of the GTI facility.

Dave Mania stated that he and his wife, Betsy, have a 42-year-old son who GTI has been very supportive of all along. He is unable to work in the community. If he loses GTI to give him support, he would be devastated as GTI means a lot to him. Mr. Mania also asked Why there was a 2023 and 2024 organization chart on our website but not 2025, and it appears that more positions had been created according to the 2023 and 2024 org charts, but with all of the funding cuts on the state level how does that make sense. He also asked why the restrictions are so drastic this year and why specifically NCCMH is taking drastic cost

containment measures when other CMH offices are not having to go through such drastic measures. He then asked if there were other revenue streams available to continue the services that may need to be restructured at GTI.

Mr. Babbitt responded to Mr. Mania's questions stating that NCCMH is working with 10% less staff right now than at this time in 2024, that it is not only NCCMH that has faced funding issues, and that he is not aware of alternate funding sources available as you cannot use non-Medicaid designated dollars to fund Medicaid services.

Renee Gibson stated that she has been with GTI for 13 years and doesn't want to see it end.

Cindy Evans- Director of GTI said she wanted to thank GTI for 35 years. She stated that the rates for the last couple of years have not been sustainable long term and making the rates sustainable wouldn't be a heavy lift. She states now there is a push to change the model of GTI and a push for clients to be out in the community. She states that the subject matter expert that met with GTI is saying that it would be better to have the clients at volunteer sites, that the work in the building isn't considered important, and that the work done by clients in the building would no longer be funded and those individuals would not be able to earn a paycheck. She states that 40 plus individuals would lose their paycheck and that would affect the economy in Mancelona. She implored all to ask questions and advocate with the state for the program. She states that Mr. Babbitt is alluding to change before the public comment on the proposed policy is even closed and that it constitutes Mr. Babbitt's interpretation not the actual policy. She states that Mr. Hornibrook and Mr. Babbitt's team are pushing for increased integration without any information on who will fund those things.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda includes the agenda overview, minutes of the previous meeting, privileging recommendations and contracts signed in the past month. Items requiring approval will be placed on the meeting agenda.

MOTION BY CAROLINE LOPER TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA; SUPPORT BY KARLA SHERMAN:

MOTION CARRIES

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – BOARD ACTION*

Program Committee: Mr. Iseler reviewed the minutes of the May 22, 2025 meeting where Ms. Rappleyea reviewed the Administrative Services Annual Report.

Personnel Committee: Ms. Sherman reviewed the minutes of the June 3, 2025 meeting where agenda items included the updated Code of Conduct policy and updated Employee Referral Policy.

MOTION BY KARLA SHERMAN TO APPROVE THE UPDATED CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY AND UPDATED EMPLOYEE REFERRAL POLICY; SUPPORT BY RON ISELER:

MOTION CARRIES

Finance Committee Report: Mr. Rubingh reviewed the minutes of the June 26, 2025 meeting. Agenda items included Statement of Cash on Deposit and Disbursements through May 31, 2025; Interim Financial Statements as of April 30, 2025, Revenue and Expense by Fund Source; Trending Revenue and Expenses as of April 30, 2025, and the NMRE financial report.

Mr. Ginop requested the financial reports be placed on file for audit.

PRESENTATIONS – IT Security Assessment- Digital Elevation- Scott Montgomery-

Mr. Montgomery went over the security assessment that Digital Elevation performed on May 1, 2025. The scope of the assessment included internal vulnerability scanning from both unauthenticated and authenticated standpoints, external vulnerability scanning against a registered range of public IP addresses, and network penetration testing. 2253 network devices were comprehensively scanned and the team determined that 16 high/critical vulnerabilities exist within the NCCMH network environment. The exploitability of the network has been rated low and a vulnerability index of 0.006 was assigned to the organization and a final security rating of 7.5. Mr. Montgomery stated that with the implementation of the Arctic Wolf MDR that he believes the agency's next network assessment will be even more impressive than this one. When the original report was given to the executive team it was stated that NCCMH's network was one of the cleanest they had seen.

ACTION ITEMS WITHOUT COMMITTEE REVIEW: Resolution opposing the MDHHS plan to implement a competitive procurement process for Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans. Mr. Babbitt brought forward a resolution for approval from the board formally opposing the proposed competitive procurement process for PIHPs. This resolution will be signed by Mr. Babbitt and board chair Mr. Ginop.

Mr. Iseler read the resolution to the board.

Discussion: Ms. Sherman stated that this push for privatization comes roughly every 10 years, and those who have private health insurance know that behavioral health tends to be pushed to the side. The privatization of the mental health system will be devastating to our public mental health system.

Mr. Baldwin stated that he appreciates the people who have come out today to support GTI. He states that one of his main concerns is the way the money is appropriated and those who often need the most support receive the least. Those who need the most support need to be prioritized.

Mr. Belitz stated that people were zip tied and arrested in the Capitol Rotunda who were advocating against the Medicaid cuts yesterday. He stated that when he and his wife were living in the Detroit area, he and his wife were receiving very little assistance, and at his monthly appointments he noticed that there was much more disparity.

Mr. Rubingh asked that page 71 from the board packet be sent to the counties along with the county resolution.

**MOTION BY KARLA SHERMAN TO APPROVE SIGNING THE RESOLUTION
OPPOSING MDHHS'S COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT PROCESS FOR PREPAID
INPATIENT HEALTH PLANS; SUPPORT BY EDWARD BELITZ:**

ROLL CALL:

**AYE: MICHAEL NEWMAN, CAROLINE LOPER, JARRIS RUBINGH, ANNEMARIE
CONWAY, BOB BALDWIN, KARLA SHERMAN, EDWARD BELITZ, RON ISELER,
ROBERT BOYD, EDWARD GINOP**

NAY: NONE

NOT VOTING: NONE

ABSENT: DANA WINGO, DAVID WHITE, DANIEL CASASANTA

MOTION CARRIES

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT/COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Babbitt referred to several items in his report. Mr. Babbitt stated that he met with GTI on May 16th and that he has also met with Crossroads and Straights Area Services regarding their respective day programs, and he stated that he has another meeting with GTI on June 27th. He stated that the 25th annual Splash of Color Run on May 31st that was the capstone of May is Mental Health Month Awareness month was a great success with many people attending and registering the day of the run. On the 18th of May he attended the CMHA Policy & Legislation meeting where the MDHHS PIHP procurement bid proposal and the Michigan Mental Health Framework were discussed. He drew attention to 2 documents included in his report that gave more information on the Mental Health Framework. Mr. Babbitt then drew attention to a document from the CMHAM that outlines concerns regarding the MDHHS PIHP Contract Procurement proposal. Mr. Babbitt drew attention to the CMHA PAC campaign letter in the packet. He let the board members know that he would match individual donations from board members up to \$50.00 again. He then drew attention to a shout out from the Gaylord Area Chamber of Commerce about North Country CMH.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT UPDATE – None

NORTHERN MICHIGAN REGIONAL ENTITY: The Draft Minutes of the May Board Meeting, April Operations committee minutes, and Interim Financial Report are included in the packet.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS – None

BOARD & STAFF COMMENTS – Mr. Iseler said that nearly everyone has had the experience of contributing to a PAC fund and he encourages everyone on the board to contribute to the CMHA PAC.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 PM by Board Chair Ed Ginop.


Ed Ginop, Board Chair