



NORTH COUNTRY

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH

MINUTES OF THE BOARD

July 17, 2025 2:30 PM

**North Country Community Mental Health
1420 Plaza Drive, Petoskey, Board Room**

Mr. Ginop called the meeting to order at 2:33 PM

ROLL CALL:

BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Michael Newman, Ron Iseler, Jarris Rubingh, Edward Ginop, David White, Caroline Loper, Daniel CasaSanta, Annemarie Conway, Bob Boyd, Dana Wingo, Karla Sherman

MEMBERS ATTENDING VIRTUALLY: None

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ed Belitz, Bob Baldwin

STAFF: Brian Babbitt, Nancy Rhue, Tim Stapp Jr., Kim Rappleyea, Amy Christie, Emily Ramirez, Ann Friend, Kirstie Brady

GUESTS: Micah Haven, Austin Darga - Team member GTI, Becky Phillips Mancelona GTI, Dave Mania, Keri Laporte-Montero

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: Austin Darga stated that he is a Traverse City native and has been with GTI in Traverse City for years. He states that GTI encourages and empowers the clients to make choices to follow their own path. He states that the proposed changes are upsetting and appalling and will affect community members with disabilities, specifically limiting their right to make the decision about who provides their services, where they get them, and what the services look like.

Micah Haven Read a poem.

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 ROBERT BOYD TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA; SUPPORT BY CAROLINE:

MOTION CARRIED

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – BOARD ACTION*: None

Personnel Committee: The Personnel committee met on July 1, 2025 agenda items included approval of previous minutes and the results of the CEO evaluation.

MOTION BY KARLA SHERMAN TO APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF THE CEO CONTRACT FOR 3 YEARS; SUPPORT BY CAROLINE LOPER:

DISCUSSION: Mr. Rubingh asked if there was any discussion regarding wage increase.

Ms. Sherman explained that it was not discussed.

Mr. Newman asked about Mr. Babbitt's current pay and when he had an increase last, stating that he felt it was important to compensate Mr. Babbitt appropriately.

Mr. Babbitt stated that he received an increase when the new wage grid for all employees was implemented. He stated that he would like to change his contract to so adjustments to his compensation happen at the same time as adjustments for all employees.

Ms. Conway wanted it on record that compared to other executives in the area Mr. Babbitt makes is underpaid.

Mr. Rubingh stated that he thinks adjusting the CEO compensation when employees receive increases is appropriate.

Mr. Iseler stated that he appreciated the points made by Mr. Rubingh, Mr. Newman, and Mr. Babbitt regarding an increase to the CEO wage. He stated that with all the increased work that the agency will face he does believe that an increase in compensation is warranted. He states that he would hate to lose Mr. Babbitt as the CEO and wants it to be known that his efforts are appreciated.

MOTION CARRIES

Finance Committee Report: Mr. White reviewed the Statement of Cash on Deposit and Disbursements through June 30, 2025; Interim Financial Statements as of May 31, 2025 Revenue and Expense by Fund Source; Trending Revenue and Expenses as of May 31, 2025, the NMRE interim financial report, a proposal to renew the barracuda total email protection software, and proposal to contract with RPC for auditing services for FY25, 26, and 27.

MOTION BY DAVE WHITE TO APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF BARRACUDA TOTAL EMAIL PROTECTION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$36,076.80 (THIRTY-SIX THOUSAND SEVENTY-SIX DOLLARS AND EIGHTY CENTS) FOR 2025 AND 2026; SUPPORT BY JARRIS RUBINGH:

MOTION CARRIES

MOTION BY DAVE WHITE TO APPROVE CONTRACTING WITH RPC FOR AUDITING SERVICES IN FISCAL YEARS 25-27 WITH COSTS NOT TO EXCEED \$26,550.00 (TWENTY-SIX THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS) FOR FY25, \$27,200.00 (TWENTY-SEVEN THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS) FOR FY26, AND \$27,850.00 (TWENTY-SEVEN THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS) FOR FY27; SUPPORT BY KARLA SHERMAN:

MOTION CARRIES

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

PRESENTATION – Self Determination Annual Report – Emily Ramirez- Ms. Ramirez explained that SD arrangements offer a way for clients to have control over how and by whom their authorized services are provided. Needs, goals, and objectives are identified as part of the person-centered planning process and at that point a Self Determination Budget is developed to ensure the funding is identified that will help pay for the services approved in the Plan of Service. SD arrangements are driven by four principles; freedom, authority, support, and responsibility. The clients plan their lives with the support they need, control the funding for the support they receive, arrange resources and supports both formal and informal to live in and connect with their community, and agree to use public dollars wisely. With SD arrangements, clients can live independently with support from Medicaid providers, build small businesses, maintain employment, and learn how to earn income, maintain residence in family homes, and choose how to live, who to hire, when to have support, how to pay for their supports and ensure they have opportunities to connect with their community. The total cost of SD services for FY24 was \$2,460,733 with most dollars spent on Community Living Supports. There are 110 arrangements supported by SD with thirteen starting in FY24. The average length of stay in SD arrangement is 6 years. Training compliance, one on one Supports Coordinator training, SD arrangement reviews and increased utilization are parts of the continued progress for the SD program.

ACTION ITEMS WITHOUT COMMITTEE REVIEW: None

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT/COMMUNICATIONS: Mr. Babbitt referred to several items in his report. On July 2nd he met with Millie Shepherd of MDHHS regarding Home and Community Based Services. He noted that he has a meeting with GTI and MDHHS on July 18th as well. On July 9th he attended a McLaren Foundation Event for an update on the hospital, BHU, and what the impending Medicaid cuts will mean for the local hospital. He noted that based on proposed timelines he does not expect there will be a direct impact for NCCMH until FY27. Starting December 1, 2026 notices about community engagement for those individuals who are part of the Medicaid expansion will be sent out and on October 1, 2027 consumers will need to demonstrate community engagement and begin redetermination every 6 months. These requirements are targeted to the Healthy Michigan expansion population. Healthy Michigan enrollees are not the primary users of NCCMH services but about 10% of our revenue last fiscal year was based on Healthy Michigan enrollees. If people lose their Medicaid, it will negatively impact our state general fund expenditure as uninsured hospitalizations remain a CMH responsibility. Mr. Babbitt met with Senator Damoose on July 15th and discussed Home and

Community Based Services, Day programs, the impact of the Medicaid cuts, and the MDHHS PIHP Procurement. Mr. Babbitt drew attention to the executive team quarterly reports noting that the first round of MDHHS audits were completed and the corrective action plan has been submitted for review, Doxy telehealth has been implemented for our jail liaisons replacing Zoom, and Arctic Wolf managed detection and response system has been implemented, the vendor noted that NCCMH's rollout was one of the most effective they have seen with the NCCMH IT team executing installation quickly and effectively.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT UPDATE – None

NORTHERN MICHIGAN REGIONAL ENTITY- The minutes of the May Operations Committee meeting, and May interim financial report were included in the packet. The draft minutes of the June Board of Directors Meeting were handed out ahead of the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS – None

BOARD & STAFF COMMENTS – Mr. Iseler suggested that someone in jail diversion come present to the board.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:37 PM by Board Chair Edward Ginop


Ed Ginop, Board Chair