



# **NORTH COUNTRY**

## **COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH**

### **MINUTES OF THE BOARD**

**October 16, 2025 2:30 PM**

**1420 Plaza Drive, Board Room, Petoskey**

Mr. Ginop called the meeting to order at 2:29 PM

### **ROLL CALL**

**BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING:** Caroline Loper, Edward Ginop, Jarris Rubingh, Michael Newman, David White, Daniel CasaSanta, Bob Baldwin, Annemarie Conway, Dana Wingo,

**BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING VIRTUALLY:** Bob Boyd

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ron Iseler, Ed Belitz

**STAFF:** Brian Babbitt, Nancy Rhue, Tim Stapp Jr., Ann Friend, Kim Rappleyea, Amy Christie, Carole Doherty

**GUESTS:** Micah Haven- GTI

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

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Micah Haven read the following statement: Good afternoon, I wanted to provide and update on the recent site assessments GTI received from the NMRE. As you know, North Country leadership has expressed doubts as to whether or Mancelona program meets HCBS standard for community integration. I am very pleased to report that our Mancelona program received a 96.67% compliance score, with only partial findings related to the level of natural community interaction within the facility. The NMRE auditor recommended that we work with North Country to develop a remediation plan to address those findings. We know we can meet the expectations when we are adequately funded as evidenced by our 100% compliance and praise the NMRE gave our Traverse City program. During the review, we shared documentation showing that GTI had already submitted a plan back in June to increase community integration to levels consistent with where we were pre-COVID. WE also shared that North Country had rejected this plan calling our strategies "reverse integration". The NMRE auditor clarified that North Country's interpretation of what constitutes reverse integration is incorrect and confirmed that our

proposed strategies for bringing community members into our facility are valid, appropriate, and consistent with HCBS expectations. She also affirmed that the work our clients do within our facility remains allowable under HCBS guidelines. After completing the assessment, the NMRE auditor candidly remarked “you don’t have a compliance problem, you have a relationship problem” I think she’s right. GTI remains open to dialogue about how we can continue improving our services- but we will not be strong-armed into sweeping and harmful changes, such as moving 100% of our services outside of our client’s chosen community at our facility. GTI remains fully committed to the autonomy, stability, and wellbeing of the 56 people entrusted to our care. We are eager to work collaboratively with this organization toward that shared goal- maintain compliance while honoring the choice and dignity of the people we serve. Thank you

### **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 DAVID WHITE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA; SUPPORT BY CAROLINE LOPER:**

**MOTION CARRIES**

### **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – BOARD ACTION\***

**Recipient Rights Advisory Committee:** Mr. Babbitt reviewed the minutes of the September 11, 2025 RRAC Meeting.

**Program Committee:** Mr. Ginop reviewed the minutes of September 25, 2025. Agenda items included approval of the previous meeting minutes, the customer satisfaction survey, and a preview of the videos being made with the technology-based recovery grant.

**Personnel Committee:** Mr. CasaSanta reviewed the minutes of the October 7, 2025 meeting where agenda items included approval of the previous meeting minutes and a proposal for a wage grid adjustment

**MOTION BY DAN CASASANTA TO APPROVE THE 2.5% ADJUSTMENT TO THE COMPENSATION GRID AND A 2.5% INCREASE TO CEO COMPENSATION EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2025; SUPPORT BY ANNEMARIE CONWAY:**

**MOTION CARRIES**

**Finance Committee Report:** Mr. White reviewed the minutes of the October 16, 2025 meeting. Agenda items included Statement of Cash on Deposit and Disbursements through September 30, 2025; Interim Financial Statements as of August 31, 2025, Revenue and Expense by Fund Source; Trending Revenue and Expenses as of August 31, 2025, the NMRE financial report, updated Control of Cash Policy, CFR 200 – Allowable Costs Policy, a proposal for repair and interior painting of the Charlevoix office, and a proposal for the renewal of the Microsoft Office 365 licenses

**MOTION BY DAVID WHITE TO APPROVE THE UPDATED CONTROL OF CASH POLICY; SUPPORT BY JARRIS RUBINGH:**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**MOTION BY DAVID WHITE TO APPROVE THE CFR 200 - ALLOWABLE COSTS POLICY; SUPPORT BY BOB BALDWIN:**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**MOTION BY DAVID WHITE TO APPROVE CONTRACTING WITH J. ARNOLD PAINTING TO REPAIR AND PAINT THE INTERIOR WALLS IN THE CHARLEVOIX OFFICE FOR A TOTAL OF \$11,700.00 (ELEVEN THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED DOLLARS); SUPPORT BY ANNEMARIE CONWAY:**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**MOTION BY DAVID WHITE TO APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF THE MICROSOFT OFFICE 365 LICENSES FOR A TOTAL OF \$163,413.30 (ONE HUNDRED SIXTY-THREE THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED THIRTEEN DOLLARS AND THIRTY CENTS); SUPPORT BY CAROLINE LOPER:**

**MOTION CARRIED**

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

**PRESENTATIONS – Jail Diversion – Carole Doherty-** Ms. Doherty explained that Stepping Up/Jail diversion is an initiative through Wayne State University in collaboration

with the courts and the State of Michigan. Memorandums of understanding are created with all counties to collaborate on determination of needs. There is a Jail walkthrough and data collection using the Kessler-6 questionnaire/ Sequential intercept model maps out opportunities for possible diversion and includes a variety of community stakeholders. A review of the findings is presented and an opportunity for counties to develop models and plans unique to their needs. Jail diversion initiatives are in place in all counties with varied levels of county investment due to the unique qualities of each county. Jail liaison services are active in all 6 jails, including the ability to provide a brief assessment which leads to either NCCMH services and treatment, or resources and recommendations for other community partners. Jail rosters are reviewed daily for five jails. Next steps include working with county prosecuting attorneys to create pathways for incorporating mental health recommendations into probation orders and notifying courts of AOT (Assisted Outpatient Treatment) determinations. Juvenile Justice collaborative meetings will continue as scheduled with all counties with NCCMH facilitating.

**ACTION ITEMS WITHOUT COMMITTEE REVIEW:** None

#### **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT/COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Babbitt referred to several items in his report. He stated that on October 9th he watched the Court of Claims hearing on the request for a preliminary injunction halting the MDHHS PIHP RFP. On October 13th he met with the Union in Bellaire for the wage opener discussion. Mr. Babbitt referenced the executive team quarterly summaries. One of the highlights is the continued building of a functional contract database and process for provider credentialing and document management. Mr. Babbitt drew attention to the multiple audits that happened this year and mentioned that the agency's CARF accreditation review is next week. The clinical team has been working on identifying individuals who qualify and would like to apply for HAB support waivers. 22 new HSW packets were submitted and approved during FY25 and thus far 4 have been approved in FY26 with 9 more in different levels of submission. NCCMH currently holds 183 of the regions Habilitative Support Waivers. There are currently 97 individuals enrolled in the HATCH program with 14 new individuals who are in the process of enrolling.

**QUALITY IMPROVEMENT UPDATE** – None

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

**OLD BUSINESS** – Mr. Babbitt referred to documents handed out in the board members folders that referenced the Court of Claims injunction hearing for the PIHP RFP. The state's summary disposition motion determined that MDHHS has the legal authority to shift to a competitive procurement system and reduce the number of regions but also held that there is an issue of fact on whether the RFP violates Michigan law. The court appears most concerned about the RFP assigning PIHPs functions that belong to the CMHPs under the

Michigan Mental Health Code, and that Medicaid funds are essential to CMHSPs carrying out their responsibilities and that the RFP does not require a PIHP to provide funds the CMHSPs to carry out their responsibilities. On the Same day that the PIHP request for injunction was submitted, a suit was also filed on behalf of regional CMHSPs, this has not yet been heard.

**NEW BUSINESS – None**

**BOARD & STAFF COMMENTS –**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:41 PM by Board Chair Ed Ginop.

  
Ed Ginop Board Chair