



NORTH COUNTRY

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH

MINUTES OF THE BOARD

June 18, 2026 2:30 PM

Holiday Inn Express Conference Room

Mr. Ginop called the meeting to order at 2:31 PM

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING: Annemarie Conway, Bob Baldwin, Dale Eschenburg, Dave White, Dana Wingo, Ed Ginop, Jarris Rubingh, Mike Newman, Ron Iseler, Sarah Bronson, Dan CasaSanta, Aimee Bissonette

BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING VIRTUALLY: Bob Boyd

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ed Belitz

STAFF: Brian Babbitt, Nancy Rhue, Tim Stapp Jr., Kim Rappleyea, Ann Friend, Katie Lorence, Angie Balberde, April Johnson, Brandy Marvin, Kirstie Brady, Meghan Grebe, Tiffany Kiper, Sue Peete- Eubank, Lauren Myers, Jennifer Pewinski, Andrea Rose, Nina Martenson, David Hornibrook

GUESTS: GTI Mancelona, Keri Laporte-Montero, Cindy Evans, Phyllis Priest, Lori Wood, Connie Newlin, Dorothy Felton, Maryanne Huff, Brian Greene, Denise Niswander, Jake Smith, Caroline Loper, Kandyce Alworden, Janie Goodwin, and many unnamed guests.

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: Marianne Huff handed out a statement to the board of directors and paraphrased her statement.

Micah Haven – GTI - read a statement and handed out a flyer about GTI's Community Connections Series.

Deb Niswander read a statement

Amy Carter, Director of Straits Area Services read a statement

Please see attachments for statements

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 ANNEMARIE CONWAY TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA; SUPPORT BY DAVE WHITE:

MOTION CARRIES

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – BOARD ACTION*

Personnel Committee Report: Mr. CasaSanta reviewed the minutes of the June 9, 2026 meeting. Agenda Items included approval of the previous month's minutes and information on the collective bargaining meeting with the union.

MOTION BY RON ISELER TO APPROVE THE WEATHER AND SAFETY POLICY CONTINGENT ON UNION CONTRACT RATIFICATION; SUPPORT BY MIKE NEWMAN:

MOTION CARRIES

Finance Committee Report: Mr. White reviewed the minutes of the June 18, 2026 meeting. Agenda items included Statement of Cash on Deposit and Disbursements through May 31, 2026, Interim Financial Statements as of April 30, 2026, Revenue and Expense by Fund Source, Trending Revenue and Expenses as of April 30, 2026, the NMRE interim financial report, a proposal for wage increase, and renewal of insurance with MMRMA.

MOTION BY DAVID WHITE TO APPROVE THE 3% (THREE PERCENT) WAGE INCREASE PROPOSAL; SUPPORT BY DAN CASASANTA:

Discussion: Mr. Iseler asked the reasons for the nay votes.

Mr. Rubingh and Ms. Wingo stated that they were in favor of two percent instead of three percent and that was why they voted no.

ROLL CALL:

AYE: DAVE WHITE, MIKE NEWMAN, AIMEE BISSONETTE, DAN CASASANTA, ANNEMARIE CONWAY, BOB BALDWIN, SARAH BRONSON, RON ISELER, ED GINOP

NAY: JARRIS RUBINGH, DANA WINGO, DALE ESCHENBURG

NOT VOTING: BOB BOYD

ABSENT: ED BELITZ

MOTION CARRIES

MOTION BY DAVE WHITE TO APPROVE THE MMRMA RENEWAL; SUPPORT BY DANA WINGO:

Discussion: Mr. Rubingh stated that the total cost is \$91,000 for the year and that it is a very good cost for the agency.

MOTION CARRIES

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

PRESENTATION – Clubhouse Success – David Hornibrook- Community Services Coordinator. Mr. Hornibrook explained that a clubhouse is a member driven, collaborative and restorative environment for people living with mental illness. It is an international community of people organized around 37 standards and dedicated to one another's success, and it is an evidence-based model. He explained the clubhouse values; every member has the potential to sufficiently recover from the effects of mental illness to lead a personally satisfying life as an integrated member of society, work and work-mediated relationships are restorative and provide a firm foundation for growth, and normalized social and recreational opportunities are an important part of a person's path to recovery. NCCMH has 2 psychosocial clubhouses, The Petoskey Club in Petoskey, and New Horizons Clubhouse in Rapid City. Three Clubhouse members shared their personal experiences as part of the clubhouse program.

ACTION ITEMS WITHOUT COMMITTEE REVIEW: None

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT/COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Babbitt referred to several items in his report. On June 8th Mr. Babbitt had a meeting with Bergmann Center. The meeting resulted in an agreement, and the center is working actively to reopen Monday June 22nd. It is a process; there are still a lot of appeals and technical details to work out. Both parties are working on faster and cleaner billing, and Bergmann Center is looking at new billing software. The data team is working on better real-time data for all day programs and residential providers. Both parties are working on closing the information gap and new reports are under development. On June 17th he virtually attended the CMHA Policy & Legislation committee meeting. This meeting focused on the Mental Health Framework. He drew attention to a document that was handed out ahead of the meeting about HB 6022 regarding preadmission screenings. This could essentially have CMHSPs and health plans arguing over who is the payor for the screening. Persons who were never open to services can fall through the cracks, especially if they do not qualify for services with CMH. This bill could have people sitting in the ER while there is a battle over who is going to pay for screening. Sitting in ER while people battle over what entity is responsible for paying for the service. Mr. Babbitt drew attention to another handout regarding HB 5943 regarding Behavioral Health Transportation services. Currently, if it is an involuntary admission, law enforcement must transport the individual to the inpatient facility. This bill would allow other ways of transport. Legislatively, the proposed state budgets do not have a lot of change in the Behavioral Health appropriation bottom line. Speaker Hall has suggested extending the current budget for 4 months to get through the election. This creates more uncertainty for CMHSPs. A new RFP has

not been introduced. NMRE has signed the FY26 contract, but it has not been countersigned by the state.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT UPDATE – None

NORTHERN MICHIGAN REGIONAL ENTITY: Minutes of the April Operations Committee meeting, draft minutes of the May Board of Directors Meeting, and the April Interim Financial Statements were included in the packet.

OLD BUSINESS – HR 1- Mr. Babbitt drew attention to the slide deck in the board packet that explains HR1 and its impact on Medicaid recipients. He states that it is important to note that the community engagement requirement is targeted at the Healthy Michigan population. January of 2027 is when the work/community engagement requirements start. HMP redeterminations will be every 6 months. If you don't meet the requirements for redetermination and lose your HMP coverage you cannot buy coverage on the exchange. This means that they will end up uninsured. If they end up in the ER for a mental health crisis, CMHs will need to use General Funds dollars to screen and hospitalize the individual. Healthy Michigan enrollees account for 7% of our funding, that won't impact the overall budget that much, but it will have an impact on limited General Funds when people lose their coverage.

CMHA PAC - NCCMH collected \$115.00 in donations, which Mr. Babbitt is matching, making a total of \$230.00 for the PAC.

Provider Rate Adjustment Update – Mr. Babbitt stated that he would like to wait until next month to consider a second rate adjustment for in catchment providers. Currently revenue is trending down. The department has said there will be a rate adjustment, but they are not ready to release it, and it is uncertain if it will come down. There is a call with Milliman, the department's actuary firm, on Monday. He states that NCCMH is starting to see the impact of the last rate adjustment. He states that it could be September before we know what the budget projections for PIHPs will be for FY27.

NEW BUSINESS – None

PUBLIC COMMENT –

Micha Haven stated that he was really moved by Clubhouse members saying what clubhouse means to them and how it saved their lives. He stated that the folks GTI supports can't do that but that the work is just as meaningful, and it is important to advocate for those who can and cannot.

Sue states that her sister has gone to Bergmann Center for 28 years and that Bergmann Center means the most to her. She states that when her mom was on dialysis her sister was able to go to Bergman Center instead of the dialysis center with her mom. She states that Bergmann Center as been her stability and not being able to see her friends has hurt her. She states that going to Bergmann center is Julie's way into the community.

A woman stated that at during a meeting Bergmann Center held on Tuesday someone who attended by zoom stated that we have all heard it said that most of what they do is socialize, but

that the socialization they do is a bridge to be able to do that out in the community. It is important to be together with people they are comfortable with so they can gain the ability to socialize in the community.

Brian Greene stated that some parents have had issues with not being able to go back to Bergmann Center on Monday when they plan to reopen. He states that parents are asking what to do and what is the best method for returning to services at Bergmann Center.

Mr. Babbitt explained that there are clients who still have appeals in process and there is an entire process for those who are still in appeal or those whose services have been suspended as there was no appeal started. He stated that NCCMH is working with Bergmann Center's list of who they are ready to bring back. He stated that NCCMH has not denied anyone, and has not told anyone no.

Mr. Greene thanked Mr. Babbitt for explaining the appeals process.

BOARD & STAFF COMMENTS –

Mr. Rubingh stated that he was glad that Mr. Babbitt sat down with Bergmann Center and had the meeting, even though there are still problems and there are still concerns about funding viability. He states Bergmann Center gives parents and care givers a break. He hopes that this can get resolved. He then stated that he was concerned that he had not received any email updates and that if it happened at the county level there would be 5:00 PM debrief emails. He states that communication has improved but asked that Mr. Babbitt keep everyone in the loop.

Mr. Iseler announced that he has a new grandchild and a new great grandchild.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:02 PM by Board Chair Ed Ginop.


Ed Ginop Board Chair



STRAITS AREA SERVICES

Together, Putting Abilities to Work

1320 W. State Street • P.O. Box 6042 • Cheboygan, MI 49721

Phone: 231-627-4319 • Fax: 231-627-6911

Email: info@sastogogether.org • www.SAStogether.org



June 18, 2026

Dear Members of the North Country CMH Board of Directors,

My name is Amy Carter, and I serve as the Director of Straits Area Services in Cheboygan for the past 10 years.

I want to begin by expressing my appreciation for the recent communication and the renewed spirit of collaboration between North Country and its providers. The efforts surrounding the Bergmann Center demonstrate a commitment to partnership and transparency, values I hold in high regard.

In that same spirit of transparency, I have been open with North Country and with the parents and guardians of our SAS members about our projected two-year closure timeline. Last month, I was asked to help craft a message that would reassure families of our continued stability. However, without a concrete solution to the underlying funding issues, any reassurance I offer risks feeling hollow and ultimately eroding trust.

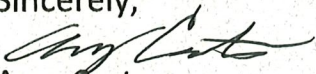
Families see the reality firsthand: empty offices, reduced hours, vehicles for sale, and a building listed for lease. Respectfully, these are not signs of organizational stability.

I understand that a potential rate increase may be under consideration next month. As you deliberate, I ask that you take into account the significant amount of unbillable time, the administrative burden placed on providers, and the true cost of transportation, among other factors. I also encourage you to review the quarterly financial reports we submit to North Country, if you have not already done so.

Finally, I would like to extend an open invitation for each of you to tour our facility and meet the remarkable individuals whose lives are directly shaped by the decisions made at this table.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to strengthening our communities.

Sincerely,



Amy Carter

Deb Niswander

Good afternoon,

First, I wanted to thank CMH for working with BC to be able to open back up next week. I appreciate that everyone has tried to put aside their differences and opinions and work to a common goal of serving the very people your agency and the providers were created to help and care for.

I appreciate the fact that CMH has sat down with the providers to hear their grievances about the rates and the procedures they must abide by to get payment.

I have had the opportunity to look at the rate sheets, the billing statements and the volume of paper work BC has been going through to find the discrepancies between the hours/rates billed and reimbursement by CMH.

I must continue to implore DHS/CMH to find a better way to set rates, to develop procedures for billing and a more efficient way of verifying and paying these claims. I say this for both sides of the aisle, the providers who are doing the billing and your employees having to process the billings. The procedures and process are cumbersome, cause much confusion which in my opinion (which of course might not matter but should since I am a client and a tax payer) allows the tensions to form between the providers and CMH.

Again, I cannot comprehend why with the talents we possess and the desire to help this needy group, the process has to be

so complicated. I encourage and request you put your heads together and make this process less burdensome and more efficient to where other regions and other states will look at this as a model of cooperation and want to use it for themselves.

What a legacy to be a part of it where a government organization and non-profit groups were praised for their ingenuity, cooperation and compassion was highlighted instead of what is presently occurring.

Micah Haven From Grand Traverse Industries Public Comment:

I would first like to thank Ron Iseler and his wife for taking the time to tour our program in Mancelona. Their visit was really meaningful to our team members and their families and helped reassure them that North Country Community Mental Health is listening and genuinely seeking to understand why the services we provide are so important. Ron's willingness to engage directly with the people we serve helped ease some of the anxieties that surfaced following the Bergmann Center closure.

As we continue working together to meet the needs of our mutual clients, I would also like to emphasize the importance of sustainable rates for providers like GTI. To continue delivering high quality supports in a challenging workforce and economic environment, service rates must adequately reflect the true cost of providing that care and support.

I would also like to provide an update regarding GTI's Home and Community-Based Services review following the NMRE audit conducted last September. We submitted our Plan of Correction to North Country on May 22, the same day it was requested. GTI takes compliance really seriously and we have worked diligently to make the changes that the NMRE suggested during their review. We firmly believe our services meet the requirements of the HCBS Settings Rule and continue to provide our team members with meaningful opportunities for community integration, choice, and independence. We look forward to receiving feedback from North Country and continuing our partnership so that we can carry on providing the services your clients want and need.

Finally, I would like to extend an invitation to all Board members and North Country staff to attend our Community Connections Series this July. Thanks to a grant, these events are completely free to the public. Our goal is simple: to bring people together and highlight the inclusive, welcoming communities we are working to build.

Our Music in the Park events in Mancelona will be held throughout the month and are open to everyone. We would love the opportunity to have you join us, meet the folks we support, and see firsthand the positive impact these programs have on individuals, families, and our broader community.

Thank you