



**Northern Lakes
Community Mental
Health Authority**

**Board of Directors
Packet**

December 21, 2023



Administrative Office, 105 Hall Street, Suite A,
Traverse City, MI 49684

BOARD AGENDA

The Northern Lakes Community Mental Health Authority Board will meet on December 21, 2023, at 2:15 p.m. 105 Hall Street Traverse City, and Virtual Meeting Dial 1-810-258-9588 Conference ID 986 665 315#

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ID #</u>	<u>ITEMS</u>	<u>POLICY #</u>
2:15 p.m.		Confirmation of Quorum Pledge of Allegiance Appoint Timekeeper Consideration of Agenda Conflict of Interest Declaration	
2:20 p.m.		Consent Agenda - Board Consideration of Board Consent Agenda* 1 Board of Directors Minutes – November 16, 2023 – <i>Approve</i> 2 Committee of the Whole Minutes – November 16, 2023 – <i>Approve</i>	
2:30 p.m.		Citizen Comment (May be limited to three minutes by the Board Chairperson)	1.1, 3.1
2:35 p.m.	3	Chief Executive Officer’s Report - Brian Martinus Chief Executive Officer	
2:45 p.m.	4	Chief Financial Officer’s Report - Laura Argle, Deputy Chief Financial Officer	
3:00 p.m.		Northern Michigan Regional Entity Report	3.4
3:05 p.m.		Assurance of Organizational Performance A. Receipt of CEO Monitoring Reports CEO Response to Monitoring Reports 5 2.0 Global Executive Limitations (Internal Inspection) * B. New Operational Worries C. December Monitoring Assignment 6 2.6 Community Resources (Internal Inspection)	3.0, 3.2
3:15 p.m.		Board Means Self-Assessment A. Receipt of Board Monitoring Report	3.2, 4.2

	CEO Response to Monitoring Report	
	7 - 3.2 Governance Style (Direct Inspection)*	
	8 - 3.4 Annual Workplan (Direct Inspection) *	
	B. December Monitoring Assignment	
	9 - 3.1 Board Job Description (Direct Inspection)	
3:25 pm	Governance Policies Discussion and Assessment	3.1
	A. Board Chair Update on Bylaws & Policies	
3:35 p.m.	Citizen Comment (May be limited to three minutes by the Board Chairperson)	1.1, 3.1
3:45 p.m.	Announcements/Board Members Reports/Board Association	
3:50 p.m.	January 18, 2024, Agenda Planning – Cadillac	
3:55 p.m.	Meeting Evaluation/Comments/Adjournment	

NOTICE: If any person with a disability needs accommodations, please call the CEO's Office three days prior to the posted meeting date.

NEXT MEETING: January 18, 2024

* Action Items, ** Action from Committee of the Whole, *** Action Other



Administrative Office, 105 Hall Street, Suite A, Traverse City, MI 49684

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2023

2:30 p.m.

Board Members Present: Ben Townsend, Greg McMorrow, Mary Marois, Al Cambridge, Pam Babcock, Kate Dahlstrom, Ruth Pilon, Tom Bratton, Ty Wessell, Dean Smallegan, Penny Morris, Sherry Powers, Dave Freedman

Absent: Eric Ostergren, Tony Lentych, Carol Blake – all advance notice

Others Present: Brian Martinus, Interim Chief Executive Officer; Stacy Maiville, Executive Secretary; Dean Baldwin, Network Administrator; Darryl Washington, Chief Operations Officer for Northern Health Care Management; Jeremiah Williams; IT Supervisor, Kim Silbor; Operations Manager; Nancy Stevenson, Chief Operations Officer, Mark Crane; Contracts Manager, Neil Rojas; Human Resource Manager, Andy, Justin Reed

Virtual –Curtis Cummins, Jessica Williams, Aimee Horton Johnson, Terri Henderson, Lisa Holmes, Chris Biggar, Amanda Ritchie, Alyssa Heider, Hilary Rappuhn, Melanie Schopieray, Tiffany Fewins, Kari Barker, Lynn Pope, Dan Mauk, Judi Crane, Pam Sparks, Kaitlyn Reinink, Jennifer Hemmes, April Weinwrick, Jessica Hedges, Keven Hartley, anonymous, Andrew White, Mark Draeger, Melissa Bentgen, Kasie Morse, Robe Palmer, Deb Freed, Angie Schroeder, Amy Kotulski, Judy Barrett, Erica Smith, Somer Quinlan, Mardi Link, Kellee Hoag, Kiley Fields, Lisa Jones, Patricia Macintosh, Richard Carpenter, Christina Hasty

Call to Order: Mr. Ben Townsend called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m.

Timekeeper: Sherry Powers

Approval of the Agenda:

Ms. Marois requested to add community response to crisis calls to the agenda.

MOTION:	Approve agenda as amended
RESULT:	ADOPTED. [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	M. Marois
SECONDER	R. Pilon

MOTION:	Approve the consent Agenda
RESULT:	ADOPTED. [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	G. McMorrow
SECONDER	D. Smallegan

Conflict of Interest Declaration: None.

Citizen Comment:

Justin Reed gave a citizen comment. Mr. Reed stated that The CAC is leery about having the Board participate in their meetings. The members of the CAC lack trust in the Board.

He also requested that a link or email be added on the website for the public to contact the secretary if consumers have questions or request items to be added to the agenda.

Mr. Reed acknowledged that Utah has an accessible dashboard for people to help the homeless and would like to see NLCMHA provide more data about the homeless.

Chief Executive Officer's Report:

Mr. Martinus gave the CEO Report. He noted upcoming meeting dates and commented that the six counties had their first MDHHS Community Collaboration Meeting. These will be monthly meetings moving forward.

Mr. Martinus's report also responded to last month's citizen comments. The money recently lost during the GTI issue has been restored to GTI. Final plans for the GTCMW are being drawn up and will be presented in the upcoming months. Plans are on schedule and still within budget. There are shared staffing agreements in place.

Mr. Martinus gave an update about the recent County Administrators' Bylaws for the dispute resolution committee.

Trail/Brickways Contract Discussion – Mark Crane gave an update about the Trail/Brickways contract.

Mr. Crane clarified that NLCMHA offered a contract, and they decided not to renew it.

All CLS workers were offered a \$2.00 pay increase to \$24.50 an hour. Trail/Brickways asked for an increase of \$13.00 per hour to put the minimum pay of CLS at \$35.00 an hour. This is a 94% administration and overhead add-on to their base rate. Most businesses will have an overhead of 10-35%. consumers affected by that are being moved over to other providers.

The monthly contract report was requested to be presented to the board moving forward.

Chief Financial Officer's Report-

Richard Carpenter of the Rehmann Group gave the financial report. He noted that the audit is still ongoing, and more information will come. The financial processes have been reviewed at a 10,000-foot level; however additional review and analysis must be completed before the final year-end FSR and EQI filings can be submitted. The current projection includes a projected lapse of general funds of approximately 800,000. Northern Health Care Management, which primarily includes the MIChoice waiver, is expected to result in a \$100,000 surplus.

The group will need to evaluate the incurred but not reported claims. They plan to discuss some of the recommended changes to the Board's Finance Report moving forward that will more closely align with the end-of-the-year auditing. The estimated amount of Medicaid funds is expected to be under the available funding, of 2.3 million. 1.6 million can be carried forward. Mr. Carpenter will review if that is unrestricted funds.

Northern Michigan Regional Entity Report: Recent NMRE updates were briefly discussed. MDHHS has asked CMHA to stop the guardianship payments. The effectiveness of opioid home health home is

showing excellent results. The NMRE Board Chair approved the motion to assign a CEO search committee.

Assurance Of Organizational Performance:

A. Receipt of Board Monitoring Report & CEO Response to Monitoring Report.

Mr. Townsend noted that he appreciated Mr. Martinus's thorough completion of the policy 2.3 Monitoring Report.

MOTION:	Receive the motion of policy 2.3 Compensation of the Employed Workforce at 78% with the addendum of Mr. Martinus' completion
RESULT:	ADOPTED. [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	A. Cambridge
SECONDER:	M. Marois

It was commented that nine out of the sixteen filling out the monitoring reports is not enough.

MOTION:	Receive the findings of policy 3.0 Global Governance/Process Ownership Linkage at 78% in compliance.
RESULT:	ADOPTED. [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	P.Morris
SECONDER:	R. Pilon

The Board was given the November monitoring assignments; 2.0 Global Executive Limitation, 3.2 Governance Style & 3.4 Annual Workplan.

MOTION	Receive policy 4.0 Global Governance findings at 89% in compliance.
RESULT:	ADOPTED. [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	S. Powers
SECONDER	G. McMorrow

Governance Policies Discussion and Assessment:

A. Board Chair Discussion on Bylaws & Policy

Mr. Townsend asked the Board to set up an ad hoc committee with the attorney to review the proposed Board Bylaws and would like the committee to meet biweekly if possible.

The committee would consist of: Mr. Townsend (Chair), Ms. Morris, and Ms. Marois.

MOTION	Set up an Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee
RESULT:	ADOPTED. 12Y, 1 No – K. Dahlstrom
MOVER:	T. Wessell
SECONDER	D. Smallegan

Mr. Freedman stated that the Board should have standing finance and program committees.

Mr. Cambridge commented that the Board needs to get their act together before the CARF certification.

B. Governance Process/Ownership Linkage:

NLD Minutes & Update: The Board discussed the November 1, 2023, NLD Committee recommendations. Regarding the 2024 calendar and planning:

MOTION Not to move forward with the County Commissioner surveys. In lieu of the survey, have quarterly face to face meetings with the commissioners.
RESULT: ADOPTED. 12 Y, 1 Nay – K. Dahlstrom
MOVER: P. Morris
SECONDER D. Freedman

MOTION Approve the 2024 Board Meeting Schedule & Educational Work Plan
RESULT: ADOPTED. [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: S. Powers
SECONDER T. Wessell

It was commented that the meetings should be shortened, and the Board Education Sessions will be included within the Committee of the Whole Meetings.

MOTION Accept the 2024 Policy Monitoring Schedule for the first three months.
RESULT: ADOPTED. [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: M. Marois
SECONDER G. McMorrow

Ms. Marois expressed her desire for the Board to have a dashboard that would replace the Policy Monitoring Chart.

MOTION: Accept the 2024 Annual Planning Calendar
RESULT: ADOPTED. [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: T. Bratton
SECONDER: D. Smallegan

MOTION Accept the October Special Meeting Minutes as amended. (Remove Mr. Smallegan from the attendance and add Mr. Freedman)
RESULT: ADOPTED. [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: M. Marois
SECONDER T. Wessell

Response to Crisis Calls: The Board directed the CEO regarding the replacement of Protocall. Mr. Martinus commented that this will take a lot of planning, time, and patience. If the agency is going to change providers, he wants it to be successful and well thought out. Board members acknowledged that the process would take several months and requested Mr. Martinus to give monthly or bimonthly updates.

MOTION	Request the CEO to work with community partners to create a community response for crisis calls in the six counties area to replace Protocall.
RESULT:	ADOPTED. [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	M. Marois
SECONDER	P. Morris

Citizen Comment:

Justin Reed – Mr. Reed commented about Brickways and stated that it is unfair practice to ask for a 94% increase. Mr. Reed also mentioned that last year a consumer gave a speech in front of the commissioners and the consumer felt bullied by a commissioner in response to their comment. He also requested an after-hour drop box for agency vehicle items.

Announcements/Board Member Reports/Board Association:

Ms. Dahlstrom commented on upcoming legislation issues, Parity supports, bill 4707, and remote virtual participation bill.

Agenda Planning December 21, 2023:

Discussion of combining meetings
CCBHC
CAC presentation by Mr. Reed (in January)

Meeting Evaluation/Comments:

- #1 – We spent our time on the most important governance topics – Satisfactory
- #2 – We encouraged diversity of viewpoints – Satisfactory
- #3 – Our decisions were made collectively – Satisfactory
- #4 – The Board used its time effectively – Satisfactory

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ben Townsend, Chairperson

Sherry Powers, Board Secretary

Stacy Maiville, Executive Secretary



Administrative Office, 105 Hall Street, Suite A, Traverse City, MI 49684

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2023

12:30 PM

Board Members Present: Ben Townsend, Greg McMorrow, Mary Marois, Al Cambridge, Pam Babcock, Kate Dahlstrom, Ruth Pilon, Tom Bratton, Ty Wessell, Dean Smallegan, Penny Morris, Sherry Powers, Dave Freedman

Absent: Eric Ostergren, Tony Lentych, Carol Blake – all advance notice

Others Present: Brian Martinus, Interim Chief Executive Officer; Stacy Maiville, Executive Secretary; Dean Baldwin, Network Administrator; Darryl Washington, Chief Operations Officer for Northern Health Care Management; Jeremiah Williams; IT Supervisor, Kim Silbor; Operations Manager; Nancy Stevenson, Chief Operations Officer, Mark Crane; Contracts Manager, Neil Rojas; Human Resource Manager, Andy

Virtual –Curtis Cummins, Jessica Williams, Aimee Horton Johnson, Terri Henderson, Lisa Holmes, Chris Biggar, Amanda Ritchie, Alyssa Heider, Hilary Rappuhn, Melanie Schopieray, Tiffany Fewins, Kari Barker, Lynn Pope, Dan Mauk, Judi Crane, Pam Sparks, Kaitlyn Reinink, Jennifer Hemmes, April Weinwrick, Jessica Hedges, Keven Hartley, anonymous, Andrew White, Mark Draeger, Melissa Bentgen, Kasie Morse, Robe Palmer, Deb Freed, Angie Schroeder, Amy Kotulski, Judy Barrett, Erica Smith, Somer Quinlan, Mardi Link, Kellee Hoag, Kiley Fields, Lisa Jones, Patricia Macintosh, Richard Carpenter, Christina Hasty

Ben Townsend called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Public Comment:

Nancy Steveson- Ms. Stevenson gave citizen comment. Her comment is pasted below.

"I come to you today as an advocate. I am advocating for our consumers, our staff, and our community stakeholders.

In researching how a healthy board could assist non-profit organizations, I came across this website called Council of Non-profits and here is what I learned: Board members are the fiduciaries who steer the organization towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies, as well as by making sure the nonprofit has adequate resources to advance its mission.

Additional items that caught my attention include the following: 1) duty of care: Take care of the nonprofit by ensuring prudent use of all assets, including, facility, people and good will; 2) duty of loyalty: ensure the nonprofit's activities and transactions are, first and foremost, advancing its mission, recognize and disclose conflicts of interest, make decisions that are in the best interest of the nonprofit corporation-not in the best interest of the individual board member or any other individual for-profit entity, Duty of obedience- ensure the nonprofit obeys applicable laws and regulations and follows its

own bylaws.

From my observation- I feel this board could be more organized, more supportive, more understanding, and more focused on nurturing this agency back to health. Here are some suggestions I have on how this gets achieved. 1) Understand the times we are living in. All human service workers are working far more with significantly less- please stop asking us to take on more. We cannot take on more work and produce a qualitative service delivery. 2) Advocate to the state to lighten the administrative overhead and to be honest and realistic with the resources CMHP's in rural areas have to offer, it also wouldn't hurt to advocate for parity- there continues to be disparity in health insurance and coverage for mental health treatment. 3) Please, if you must continue the CEO search- please consider discussing this in closed sessions- this is unsettling and further underscores the instability of this agency. 4) Keep information discussed in closed sessions between the board members and applicable staff. Last close session resulted in someone contacting the Record Eagle which put all of NLCMHA leadership and staff in an unfair position. 5) Start researching successful CMHP's and see how their boards function- I strongly suspect if NLCMHA has a healthy board, it could be the start of a healthier agency. 6) Be respectful of each other and NLCMHA staff- understand when staff are presenting, they are taking time away from their job to present to each of you. Instead of lodging criticisms – an example of this is the disappointment heard and felt over the time it takes to get someone in- call around and you will quickly see everyone is struggling with getting people in quickly, see how NLCMHA compares- also understand our consumers and anyone living within our catchment have access to NLCMHA's crisis team 7) It also wouldn't hurt to Ask how NLCMHA staff are doing- take an invested interest in their mental health and well being- without them NLCMHA does not exist and last but not least LEARN our programs, service array. As much as I would like to celebrate all of the programs/departments we have and the work we are doing- I feel time could be better spent discussing number of new hires, number of people retiring, number of job openings, productivity, community collaborative efforts, etc. which brings me to this- Myself, I would feel more comfortable with continued NMRE oversight until the health of NLCMHA's board is obvious. Currently, this board is largely viewed as dysfunctional and unsupportive, and I would like this to change. In conclusion, I am committed to supporting our consumers, staff, and community partners. I am committed to forging relationships with all law enforcement agencies within our catchment area. I am committed to engage in solution-focused discussions on improving as a leader and I am asking for this board's assistance on nurturing NLCMHA back to health. I am also encouraging each of you to look within and see where each of you could grow as a board member. I would like to reiterate until the health of this board is restored, visible and evident to NLCMHA and communities we serve- I would like to reiterate the ask for continued NMRE oversight."

Office of Recipient Rights Director's Report:

The ORR Report is included in the packet.

It was mentioned that CARF certification is happening next year between March and May 2024. CARF will ask items of the Board such as Strategic Planning, Board policies, the ends, and more.

Information and Technology:

Jeremiah Williams, IT Supervisor, presented the agency's IT department updates. The report included information and updates on the following:

- Staff support - such as help tickets and staff training.
- Security risk assessment – such as monitoring and mitigating any security risks.
- Bandwidth Upgrades
- Security incidents
- Enhanced Cybersecurity – such as enforcing multi-factor authentication, conditional access policies, and robust antivirus features.

Mr. Williams also commented that the department is looking to update conference room devices and has migrated to Azure Active Directory and all file shares to cloud-based storage. The department has also successfully updated and/or replaced over 100 devices in the past year that could compromise security.

Board Schedules:

The Board discussed the 2024 planning calendars. The calendars are the following:

- Policy Monitoring Chart
- Annual Planning Calendar
- Board Education & Work Plan
- Board Meeting Schedule

It was explained that the NLD recommended approving the first three months of the Policy Monitoring Chart and Annual Planning Calendar. The Board Education & Workplan is flexible and was not discussed much. Regarding the Board Meeting Schedule, the NLD would like to combine the Committee of the Whole and Board of Directors meetings into one Board meeting.

The topic of the county commissioner surveys was brought up and Mr. McMorrow explained that the NLD is recommending that the Board no longer do the surveys.

Protocall -

There was much discussion about the current answering system, Protocall, and if there are alternatives. Mr. Martinus advised the Board that if they choose to change services, they must consider all six counties, their needs, and the details and logistics that support the change.

The Chief Operations Officer, Nancy Stevenson mentioned that there have been talks about social workers partnering with police officers when responding to behavioral crisis situations. The social workers would then ensure that the NLCMH staff follow up on that individual.

Agenda Planning December 21, 2023

- CCBHC

Meeting Evaluation/Comments:

- #1 – We spent our time on the most important governance topics – Satisfactory
- #2 – We encouraged diversity of viewpoints – Satisfactory
- #3 – Our decisions were made collectively – Satisfactory
- #4 – The Board used it's time effectively – Satisfactory

Ways the Board can improve its meetings: More closely follow Roberts Rules. Raise your hand and wait to be recognized. Give others the chance to speak.

The Board members gave Kudos to the IT team for improving the sound.

Other/Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacy Maiville, Executive Secretary

Interim Chief Executive Officer's

Report to the Board

December 20, 2023

Citizen Comment:

Justin Reed gave a citizen comment. Mr. Reed stated that The CAC is leery about having the Board participate in their meetings. The members of the CAC lack trust in the Board.

He also requested that a link or email be added on the website for the public to contact the secretary if consumers have questions or request items to be added to the agenda. **Response: This has been added to the website on the Board page and under the Leadership Team page.**

Mr. Reed acknowledged that Utah has an accessible dashboard for people to help the homeless and would like to see NLCMHA provide more data about the homeless. **Response: The agency is working towards collecting more data and reaching out to the homeless community in a more comprehensive way. We are also working with Goodwill regarding their apartment projects.**

Citizen Comment:

Justin Reed – Mr. Reed commented about Brickways and stated that it is unfair practice to ask for a 94% increase. Mr. Reed also mentioned that last year a consumer gave a speech in front of the commissioners and the consumer felt bullied by a commissioner in response to their comment. **Response: Last month the contract department gave an update and more information about this issue.**

He also requested an after-hour drop box for agency vehicle items. **Response: The agency is working with facilities to possibly develop something to address this issue.**

Grants of Significant Value: No new grants of significant value.

Contracts: The contract report was emailed to the Board of Directors for review.

Center for Mental Wellness Update: The architect and design team have met and drafted initial plans that will be finalized based on the existing structure of the building. The team is working with state licensing requirements to see if the draft plans fully meet licensing standards before starting the project. The project is still scheduled to be completed by December 2024 target date.

Phase 1 of the project will be completed in January paving the way for Phase 2 to begin.

We are going to be scheduling and conducting interviews for the Center Director – January 2024.

Community Connections/Meetings:

- December 4th, NMRE Operations Committee Meeting
- December 6th, All Staff Holiday Celebration
- December 7th, RRAC Meeting – 1:00-3:30
- December 11th, CMH/DHHS – 6 County Collaborative Meeting
- December 12th, Missaukee County presentation 4:00
- December 13th, NMRE Board Meeting
- December 14th, Staff Christmas Breakfast
- December 14th, Law Enforcement Meeting
- December 20th, Roscommon County presentation - 9:00
- December 20th, Wexford County presentation – 4:00
- December 21, NLCMHA Board Meeting
- December 22, PTO Brian
- December 25th & 26th, Christmas Holiday
- December 29th, PTO Brian
- January 1st & 2nd, New Years Holiday
- January 3rd, NLD Meeting – 10:00-11:30
- January 8th, NMRE SUD Oversight Committee Meeting
- January 16th, NMRE Operations Committee Meeting
- January 17th, Grand Traverse County presentation
- January 18th, NLCMHA Board Meeting
- January 24th, NMRE Board Meeting
- February 1st, RRAC Meeting

NLCMHA Email Blast: In our most recent email blast we shared information on the following topics:

- **Staff anniversaries/changes**
- **RCA Spotlight**
- **Upcoming events**
- **Upcoming meetings**
- **Recent Events**
- **EAP information**
- **Creating a Better Workplace Environment - article by Darryl Washington**
- **Article on a special consumer outing**

Media Coverage: There were some articles in the last month. I am attaching a Word document of that article to this report, and links are included below should you want to access them yourselves:

<https://www.secondwavemedia.com/features/112823youthsuicideprevention.aspx>

<https://www.9and10news.com/2023/12/06/northern-michigans-first-mental-health-crisiscenter-gets-additional-approval-prepares-for-construction/>

<https://www.secondwavemedia.com/features/121223directcareworkforce.aspx>

<https://www.traverseticker.com/news/county-commissioners-approve-5m-mental-health-agreement-perdiem-policy-early-voting-plan/>

https://www.record-eagle.com/news/local_news/grand-traverse-county-5m-mental-health-agreement-up-for-vote/ar;cle_c117f1ae-92ef-11ee-bd6f-2ffa90f6f7eb.html

https://www.record-eagle.com/news/local_news/grand-traverse-county-historic-investment-in-mental-health/ar;cle_8926bee6-9485-11ee-ad7a-1b4cbb1bf534.html

https://www.record-eagle.com/opinion/opinion-mental-health-reform-call-to-action-northern-michiganers/ar;cle_82a74ef6-9079-11ee-8fe0-a311a19fa510.html

Club Cadillac working to restart transitional employment program for members – No link

Tips for taking care of your mental health during the holidays – No link

https://www.cadillacnews.com/news/darkness-and-clouds-can-make-fall-winter-hard-for-some-with-seasonal-affective-disorder/article_c0f18184-848c-11ee-8193-87a12135bd6f.html

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Martinus, Interim CEO

Michigan's community mental health agencies work hard to prevent youth suicide

Monique Bedford | Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Michigan's CMHs understand that asking questions and having conversations about mental health and suicide is a very significant step in prevention.

From 2013 to 2017, suicide was the [second leading cause of death for youth and young adults](#) aged 10–24 years in Michigan. Suicide rates were highest among white and American Indian youth and young adults. While rates [have tapered off somewhat](#), the numbers remain alarming. So, it's no surprise to see that [Washtenaw County Community Mental Health](#) (Washtenaw County CMH), and [Northern Lakes Community Mental Health Authority](#) (Northern Lakes CMHA) are on the move to combat this issue.

Michigan's community mental health agencies (CMHs) and organizations across the state understand that asking questions and having conversations about mental health and suicide is a very significant step in prevention.

"We must have these conversations with our children because these thoughts that they are having and feelings that they are feeling are real," says Stacey Doyle, clinical social worker and interagency coordinator for [Washtenaw Intermediate School District](#) (WISD). "We can't minimize what we believe they are going through and make assumptions."

Doyle works closely with Washtenaw County CMH to coordinate services for students most at risk and in need of mental health support and services. This partnership became possible due to funding from the [State of Michigan](#) and from [Washtenaw County's Public Safety and Mental Health Preservation Millage](#). This has given youth increased access to mental health services in schools. Programs promote awareness and educate youth and adults about suicide and mental health.

"ISDs are now able to implement clinicians inside school buildings," Doyle says. "We utilize the community mental health's crisis service team, which is available 24/7, and there are peer-to-peer programs and anti-stigma campaigns that bring more awareness and open communication about mental health."

One prominent example is the [#wishyouknew](#) mental health campaign, which WISD partners with. Started in 2019, [this campaign](#) uses portraits of a variety of people accompanied by different phrases on billboards, posters, and social media to spark conversations about mental health. It creates a safe space where youth and adults can talk about the difficult truths that

come with mental health and how it is affecting people. It also provides a list of local mental health [resources](#). This campaign confronts the stigma that youth are just “going through a phase or are anti-social or lazy.” They might actually be having problems with their mental health or having suicidal ideations.

“This campaign brings in the awareness that we lack when it comes to our youth’s mental health and suicide. Maybe these kids wish their friends or family knew they were having a hard time, or hurting,” says Doyle. “I cannot stress enough how important it is to have these conversations.”

Another millage-funded program that Washtenaw County CMH utilizes is the [CARES team](#). This team consists of mental health professionals, peer support specialists, nurses, case managers, and psychiatrists. Any Washtenaw resident in need, regardless of insurance status, can call the CARES team 24/7 at 734-544-3050.

“This team works with community members and children. One aspect I believe is very important is peer-to-peer support,” says Doyle. “I feel there’s a lot of evidence that supports the importance of peer-to-peer relationships ... just being boots on the ground more has been the most beneficial thing.”

Northern Michigan: DBT and peer support help prevent suicides

Northern Lakes CMHA serves residents of Crawford, Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Missaukee, Roscommon, and Wexford counties. One way its staff helps clients lead less chaotic and more satisfying life is through [Dialectical Behavioral Therapy \(DBT\)](#), which can teach children, youth, and adults how to tolerate stress, regulate emotions, and improve communications with others.

“All of our offices offer DBT. Suicidal ideation attempts and self-harming are direct targets of that modality of treatment,” says Erika Solomonson, child and family operations manager for Northern Lakes CMHA. “It was initially developed for adults but in the last few years it’s been modified. We’re trained by the state, and it’s a pretty intensive model that involves a group modality, an individual modality, and 24/7 coaching calls.”

In addition, Northern Lakes CMHA’s peer support services pair clients with trained peers who have experienced similar mental health issues.

“Our peer support services are coming more into the spotlight,” says Emily Friske, community coordinator for Northern Lakes CMH. “Our parent support partner has been amazing. She meets with parents and helps advocate as a mentor. She’s also a secondary member on a lot of [FAST \[Family Assessment and Safety Team\]](#) calls so she can help support the parents while the clinician is sorting out the difficulties and struggles with the adolescent.”

Friske also sits on the on the [Crawford Roscommon Suicide Prevention Coalition](#), which promotes mental health and suicide prevention awareness through community events.

“We created a list of all of the trainers within those counties that can provide suicide awareness training,” says Friske. “There's all different kinds of training available, and people don't necessarily know that those are out there.”

During September, [Suicide Prevention Awareness Month](#), the coalition completed a suicide prevention walk in Roscommon County to inspire and raise awareness of how to prevent suicide and be of support to others who are going through a mental struggle or a journey of healing.

Northern Lakes CMHA is also conducting a community survey on suicide prevention and awareness through the [Northwest Michigan Community Health Innovation Region \(CHIR\)](#).

“This is something we're really trying to promote,” says Friske.

The [American Foundation of Suicide Prevention](#) (AFSP) leads suicide prevention efforts across the United States. In [Michigan](#) this year, AFSP has sponsored 16 [Out of the Darkness Walks](#), awarded 34 new research grants, and delivered more than 50 education programs. Northern Lakes CMH [free suicide prevention program](#) is one of the many programs that Michigan agencies, schools, and organizations do in collaboration with AFSP.

During May 2023, mental health awareness month, the AFSP Michigan chapter launched an initiative called a [Program a Day in May](#). This initiative included its [Talk Saves Lives](#), [It's Real](#), and More than Sad [programs](#) to help youth from kindergarten through high school as well as college students. The programs educate students, parents, and educators on warning signs — and share how to help or get help if those signs are present.

“Talk Saves Lives is our standard, most requested program. It talks about what suicide is, the complex causes of suicide, and how to have this conversation with people in your life — to ask whether they are struggling and how to connect them to help,” says Reid Depowski-Knowles, the President of Michigan Board for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

It's Real focuses primarily on college students and gets candid about college life and mental health.

“I think this is the most impactful program for our youth,” says [Tay Ford](#), AFSP volunteer and board member and Metro Detroit Out of the Darkness Walk chair. “That peer-to-peer support helps students to have this conversation because a lot of students don't know who to trust with these feelings and they feel more inclined to share when they meet someone who can relate to them.”

Out of the Darkness walks held across in September and October connect people that have any sort of experience with suicide to fundraise for more resources and programs.

“It's always so powerful to see people walk ... because it shows people that they are not alone,

that there is hope, and that they can talk to someone,” says Ford. “We should be careful with our words. When someone is lost to suicide, refrain from saying ‘commit suicide.’ It’s not a crime. It’s a choice. If [suicide is] attempted, don’t say it was an ‘unsuccessful’ or ‘failed attempt.’ We should be empowering with our words not adding to the stigma.”



Emily Friske, community coordinator for Northern Lakes CMH.



Erika Solomonson, child and family operations manager for Northern Lakes CMHA.

<https://www.9and10news.com/2023/12/06/northern-michigans-first-mental-health-crisis-center-gets-additional-approval-prepares-for-construction/>

Northern Michigan's first mental health crisis center gets additional approval, prepares for construction

[Zachariah Wheaton](#)

12/07/2023 7:00 AM EST

TRAVERSE CITY — On Wednesday, Grand Traverse County commissioners approved additional plans and made Munson the fiduciary for the new Grand Traverse Mental Health and Wellness Center.

The additional approval comes one year after commissioners approved \$5 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds to create the center.

Munson's chief operating officer, Laura Glenn, along with Northern Lakes Community Mental Health Authority and community partners have spent the past few years coming up with the plan.

"We're trying to establish a location where they can go to our non-emergency department where they can receive the focused behavioral health care that they need and in an environment that's a little bit more welcoming and calming," Glenn said.

She said they are continuing to see an increase in people visiting the ER seeking mental health services.

"We hope that if we're able to effectively handle and address patients that are in a behavioral health crisis that then we can reduce the need for inpatient psychiatric admissions," Glenn said.

Munson laid out the timeline to county commissioners at Wednesday's meeting. Phases one and two will renovate the current behavioral health center, bring all of Munson's crisis services under one roof and create 24/7 access. Phase three will create crisis residential units for both children and adults.

"We're the hub for the region, we hold a lot of the services that people in surrounding counties count on," county commissioner Rob Hentschel said. "So, this gives between five and 13 counties, depending on how you draw the circles, an opportunity to stay closer to home when they have these mental health issues."

Construction on phase one and two is set to begin in January and wrap up by the end of next year, with the completion of phase three expected sometime in 2025.

“Once the center opens, we’ll have a place where you don’t have to send families out of the area to get the services they need,” Hentschel said.

<https://www.secondwavemedia.com/features/121223directcareworkforce.aspx>

Recruiting direct care workers a challenge for Michigan's adult foster care homes

Rylee Barnsdale | Tuesday, December 12, 2023

“There are good things happening despite the challenges. Employees have a voice, and we are listening to it.” Tracey Hamlet, executive director, MOKA

Since 2020 and the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, just about every industry has been struggling with a worker shortage. The mental health industry is no exception to this, although recent state and nationwide mandates improving wages for direct care workers — nursing assistants, personal care aides, and anyone who provides home care services according to the US Department of Labor — are beginning to close the gap when it comes to finding more workers ready to take on the challenging yet rewarding job of direct care.

The [Community Mental Health Association of Michigan published in 2021](#) that the direct care workforce is facing “competitive pressure” from various retail employers in Michigan offering comparable or sometimes higher wages than direct care positions, and that current direct care work employers are “struggling to recruit and maintain workers in part due to higher wages in alternative occupations.” CMHAM data also shows that some direct care workers are able to make a living wage, but others — especially those with children — are finding it difficult to make ends meet.

Local community mental health organizations in Northern and Western Michigan are taking it into their own hands to improve the work environments and cultures of their direct care workers in order to hang on to the employees who are already passionate about the work and want to stick with it, as well as find more workers to avoid a potential negative impact on care due to burnout.

Direct care workers can work directly with patients or clients in their homes or in residential homes such as adult foster care (AFC) homes. They provide services such as meal preparation, personal grooming or hygiene assistance, and distributing medication. [OnPoint](#), a community mental health agency (CMH) serving Allegan County, relies on the West Michigan nonprofit [MOKA](#) to ensure [adult foster care homes in the county](#) are properly staffed.

If you ask Tracey Hamlet, MOKA’s executive director, the most important service a direct care worker provides to their patients is building relationships. The primary populations that MOKA focuses on are adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities as well as those with severe mental health diagnoses.

“Our society doesn’t always know or understand the life people can have with the right support,” says Hamlet. “It takes relationship development and a significant amount of both hard and soft skills to help a person get from one place to another place.”

Hamlet notes that the work that goes into building relationships with patients or clients is “very difficult,” and, though wages for direct care workers have increased over the past three years, workers are still not being compensated adequately for the work that they do. Because of this, Hamlet and her team at MOKA are working on additional benefit programs for their workers, including developing and offering credentialing programs through partnerships with [Grand Rapids Community College](#) and [Impart Alliance](#).

“We’ve been really involved in this movement to support stronger education for the position and higher wages that are competitive but compensate for the skills required,” says Hamlet. “It’s definitely not a thankless job. It’s very rewarding, but it should be reimbursed properly.”

While the fight for higher wages continues, Hamlet says that she and the rest of the staff at MOKA have been trying to provide additional support to direct care workers to ensure that they feel appreciated and hopefully prevent employee burnout. She says that upholding a workplace culture that is supportive and caring of the staff is critical to not only retaining current employees, but also keeping new hires in positions for longer than 90 days. Quarterly meetings to discuss challenges and successes in MOKA homes and an annual appreciation dinner for all employees are two more examples of how MOKA supports its workers.

“There’s a wide range that we do to support retention,” she says. “We listen to workers. We try to respond to their needs and their challenges. We support them to advocate for the people they serve.”

Hamlet and her team at MOKA aren’t the only folks working to improve working conditions for direct care workers. At [Northern Lakes Community Mental Health Authority](#) (NLCMHA), residential services administrator Dave Simpson has been working to ensure that the seven residential service sites NLCMHA operates are “happy homes.”

“Happy homes are where people feel safe, patients are satisfied with their care, staff are satisfied with their job, families feel comfortable having their loved ones there, and they’re cost effective and compliant,” Simpson explains. “Our staff loves it. Our guardians love it. My supervisors love being able to say when people visit, our goal is to have a happy home.”

Simpson says that in order to build happy homes, he continuously meets with residential home staff in order to determine issues before they become larger problems. He promotes a client-focused atmosphere in every site he overlooks, providing multiple opportunities for upward mobility and, overall, assuring employees that their work and presence is anything but disposable.

“We include our direct care workers in everything we do so they don’t get the feeling that they aren’t appreciated,” he says. “Honoring the workforce and giving them a career path has made a huge difference in our average length of employment, which keeps rising every year.”

While Simpson seems to have found a sweet-spot in ensuring that his staff is equipped with conflict resolution skills and supervisors and administrators have open-door policies, he does agree with Hamlet that workers in this field are underpaid. NLCMHA has been fortunate to be able to provide additional benefits to employees such as referral bonuses and developing additional positions with higher hourly rates, but underpayment remains one of the top reasons the field sees such a profound shortage of workers.

“When you compensate properly, people are loyal,” says Simpson. “I want to meet the needs by whatever means necessary. Staff can reach out to me directly. We make that part of the transparency of what we do.”

Both Hamlet and Simpson hope that the current and upcoming programs being developed at MOKA and NLCMHA lead not only to higher retention rates, but also higher quality care in the facilities that they operate.

“The biggest thing with operating homes like this is keeping the operation centered around the health, safety, and welfare of the client,” says Simpson. “When that is your center, it influences everything around it in the best possible way.”

“There are good things happening despite the challenges,” Hamlet concludes. “Employees have a voice, and we are listening to it.”

<https://www.traverseticker.com/news/county-commissioners-approve-5m-mental-health-agreement-per-diem-policy-early-voting-plan/>

County Commissioners Approve \$5M Mental Health Agreement, Per Diem Policy, Early Voting Plan

By Beth Milligan

Grand Traverse County commissioners Wednesday approved a \$5 million funding agreement with Munson Healthcare for a new regional mental health center, adopted a new per diem policy meant to address past spending controversy and increase public transparency, and approved an early in-person voting plan for Grand Traverse County.

Munson ARPA Agreement

County commissioners voted unanimously to make Munson Healthcare the fiduciary for \$5 million in county American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for a [new regional mental wellness center](#), replacing Northern Lakes Community Mental Health Authority (NLCMHA) as the project fiduciary.

NLCMHA still remains involved in the project with Munson, along with the Northern Michigan Regional Entity, Northwest Michigan Community Health Innovation Region (CHIR), Grand Traverse County, and United Way of Northwest Michigan. The mental wellness center is planned to be located at 410 Brook Street, a Munson Medical Center building now housing outpatient behavioral health services (pictured). Those services are being relocated to Copper Ridge, with Munson Healthcare Chief Operating Officer Laura Glenn estimating the move will be complete by mid-January. Renovations will then start at Brook Street for the mental wellness center, with services to be provided by both Munson and NLCMHA.

Glenn told commissioners the first two phases of services should be operational by the end of 2024. Phase one includes bringing existing access and crisis services under one roof and adding outpatient therapy, peer support services, and care coordination with 24-7 access. Phase two will add nursing and psychiatric assessments. Glenn said the goal is then to roll out phase three – adding crisis residential beds for youth and adults – in 2025. In addition to the \$5 million in ARPA funding, Munson secured \$5 million in state funding to expand pediatric services at both the center and within the Munson system. NLCMHA received a \$1.8 million federal appropriation to support phase three and another \$3 million state appropriation for adult and youth crisis stabilization units. NLCMHA is in the process of hiring a director for the new mental wellness center, according to Munson.

Per Diem

Commissioners voted 8-1 Wednesday to adopt a new per diem policy for county commissioners, with Chair Rob Hentschel opposed. The policy change was [driven by questions raised earlier this year](#) about rising costs for per diem payments, public transparency around payments, and whether commissioners were following the rules of the per diem policy.

Commissioners Ashlea Walter, Brad Jewett, and Scott Sieffert met five times as an ad hoc committee to review the policy and then bring back proposed changes to commissioners. The new policy now refers to “meeting” instead of “per diem” compensation to reflect the fact commissioners can be paid for multiple meetings in the same day. Compensation is set at \$65 for meetings under four hours or \$110 for meetings over four hours.

The new policy removes previous language that said the commission “defers the judgment of per diem qualification to the individual commissioners,” which created a gray area that allowed commissioners to decide for themselves whether their meetings qualified for compensation even if the policy stated they did not. Commissioners will be eligible for compensation for attending meetings of local units of government, special county board meetings/study sessions/committee meetings, and other meetings and seminars of “an informational or educational nature.” They are not permitted to receive compensation for attending regular board meetings, ribbon cuttings, grand openings, or one-on-one meetings with constituents. However, the new policy still appears to leave the door open to commissioners being compensated for other one-on-one meetings, such as with the county administrator or other commissioners – a past point of contention.

One provision of the new policy initially stated that commissioners would have up to 183 days to file their compensation requests – a significant increase from the policy’s current 90-day limit. Walter objected to that language as an ad hoc committee member, saying it was “way more than necessary and goes against our desire for increased transparency.” Other commissioners agreed it was too long, effectively keeping receipts out of the public eye for over half a year after meetings took place. Such a delayed filing time could impact the finance department and county books, according to staff, who noted most county employees must file reimbursement requests within 30 days. Commissioners agreed to lower the filing deadline to 93 days (essentially three months, accounting for some months having 31 days). Under the new rules, all meeting compensations will be required to be publicly posted on the county’s website within 30 days of payment effective January 1. “It’s not perfect, but it is better than it was before,” Walter said of the updated policy.

Early Voting & Elected Officials’ Salaries

Commissioners approved a resolution of support Wednesday for the county’s plan to handle [early in-person voting starting in 2024](#). Under a 2022 constitutional amendment in Michigan, voters have the right – starting with the February presidential primary – to cast their votes early and in person at least nine days before all state and federal elections at a designated early voting site (some local elections will also offer early voting).

Several townships in Grand Traverse County will be partnering to offer a joint early voting site, according to a plan presented by County Clerk Bonnie Scheele. East Bay, Acme, Peninsula, Union, and Whitewater townships will all use East Bay Township Hall as their early voting site (with hours of 8am-4pm). Green Lake, Long Lake, Grant, and Mayfield townships will all use Green Lake Township Hall (9am-5pm). Paradise and Fife Lake townships will use Paradise Township Hall (8am-4pm). Blair Township and Garfield Township will each hold their own early in-person sites at their own respective township halls (Blair: 8:30am-4:30pm, Garfield: 8am-4pm), while the City of Traverse City [will host its site](#) at the Governmental Center (8am-4pm).

Staff and commissioners agreed voter education should be prioritized to ensure residents understand the rules and rights of early in-person voting. Commissioner TJ Andrews pointed out it might not be “intuitive” for Peninsula Township residents, for example, to know they’re supposed to go to East Bay Township Hall for early voting. Scheele said mailers would be going out to inform voters about early voting procedures. [Michigan.gov/vote](#) also allows voters to put in their information to confirm their polling location and view a sample ballot.

Also related to elections, commissioners discussed adopting a policy recommended by legal counsel that outlines how compensation will be set for elected officials and chief deputies. Michigan law requires county commissioners to set the salaries of county officers no later than November 1 each year (which then go into effect in January). However, the deadline to set those salaries can be earlier than November if desired. Multiple commissioners felt it'd be ideal to set the deadline toward the beginning of the year – such as February 1 – before filing deadlines for races so that candidates know the salaries of the positions they'll be running for prior to committing to an election. That early deadline would also prevent “shenanigans,” Andrews noted, such as some commissioners losing an August primary race and deciding to lower the salary for the next board in retaliation. Commissioners asked for some additional clarification on the policy from legal counsel and will take it up again at their December 20 meeting.

https://www.record-eagle.com/news/local_news/grand-traverse-county-5m-mental-health-agreement-up-for-vote/article_c117f1ae-92ef-11ee-bd6f-2ffa90f6f7eb.html

GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY: \$5M mental health agreement up for vote

- [By Peter Kobs pkobs@record-eagle.com](mailto:pkobs@record-eagle.com)
- Dec 5, 2023

TRAVERSE CITY — The Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners is expected to approve a \$5 million funding agreement with Munson Healthcare.

The agreement will make Munson the fiduciary for the new Grand Traverse Center for Mental Wellness project, replacing the previous fiduciary relationship with Northern Lakes Community Mental Health Authority.

Northern Lakes has been embroiled in an array of internal operating issues during recent years, including significant financial losses, employee complaints, cyber attacks, audits, patient neglect, and leadership turmoil. County officials noted that Northern Lakes “is no longer able” to serve as a fiduciary for the project.

Grand Traverse County commissioners had earlier sought to sever its enabling agreement with Northern Lakes after what they called decades of poor service to some of the area’s most vulnerable residents. Instead, a six-county dispute resolution committee was launched in early November to address ongoing issues at Northern Lakes.

On Wednesday, the board is expected to appoint Grand Traverse County Administrator Nate Alger and Deputy Administrator Chris Forsyth to that committee.

With Munson as the fiduciary lead, the new Center for Mental Wellness project is expected to proceed in earnest.

The \$5 million earmarked for that project comes from the American Rescue Plan Act, a federal program started in 2021. Grand Traverse County received a total of \$18 million of those funds. Other grant money also will be used for the center.

When completed, the Center for Wellness will occupy a fully renovated building at 410 Brook St. on the Munson Medical Center Campus. Renovations are expected to be completed in late 2024.

Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m. Wednesday in the second-floor commission chambers at 400 Boardman Ave.

In other agenda items, the county board is expected to:

- Amend the per diem policy for attending county government meetings. County commissioners will be entitled to \$65 per special meeting lasting less than four hours, and \$110 per special meeting for those lasting more than four hours. Per diem payments do not apply to regular meetings of the county commission. Similar per diem provisions for appointees and members of various county authorities are also a part of the proposal.
- Adopt a recommended policy regarding salaries for elected officials and chief deputies.
- Discuss a new written policy that would provide certain tax exemptions for developers who build lower-than-market-rate rental housing for eligible families.
- Review the Grand Traverse County strategic plan.
- Approve a countywide plan for early voting in elections.
- Accept a \$41,500 state grant for track improvements at the Civic Center Park.
- Approve various 2023 budget amendments.
- Appoint Traverse City Commissioner Heather Shaw to the county's Brownfield Development Authority.

A dispute between certain county commissioners and the Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) board also may be discussed Wednesday.

At an ad hoc county board meeting Thursday, Nov. 30, commissioners interviewed candidates for various boards and authorities. One motion in particular is raising concern among current BATA board members and administrators:

County commission Chair Rob Hentschel recommended the appointment of Commissioner Brad Jewett to the BATA board for a three-year term ending in September 2026, as a "citizen appointee."

The same motion appointed Commissioner Scott Sieffert as the county's ex-officio member to the BATA board. The motion passed.

BATA officials said this motion violates an agreement from last summer that would limit BATA board membership to one government representative each from Leelanau and Grand Traverse counties. They also said Jewett's appointment to the BATA board violates the Michigan Incompatible Offices Act.

https://www.record-eagle.com/news/local_news/grand-traverse-county-historic-investment-in-mental-health/article_8926bee6-9485-11ee-ad7a-1b4cbb1bf534.html

GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY: 'Historic' investment in mental health

- [By Peter Kobs pkobs@record-eagle.com](mailto:Pkobs@record-eagle.com)

TRAVERSE CITY — Creating in-patient beds for people in a mental health crisis is critical, said mental health advocate Kate Dahlstrom.

“We’ve simply got to make this a priority,” Dahlstrom said. “Right now, a behavior health crisis is the second most common reason for a visit to the emergency department. We are desperately lacking in psychiatric care beds here in northern Michigan, particularly for youth. How many people spend overnight in the emergency department because of this shortage? Far too many!”

Dahlstrom, a retired CPA by profession, addressed Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners on Wednesday when the board unanimously passed a long-anticipated \$5 million funding package for a new Grand Traverse Center for Mental Wellness.

“We’re very excited this is all coming together,” said Laura Glenn, chief operating officer for Munson Healthcare. “There’s definitely a need in our area for expanded mental healthcare services and we are moving quickly to get it done.”

Munson is part of a collaborative focused on providing more comprehensive mental health services in the area. Other members of the collaborative include: the Northern Lakes Community Mental Health Authority, the Northern Michigan Regional Entity, Northwest Michigan Community Health Innovation Region, Grand Traverse County and United Way of Northwest Michigan

The center’s new director, yet to be named, will be a Northern Lakes employee. A community advisory group formed during the design phase will continue to provide input directly to CMH leaders, Glenn said, adding that the new center will emphasize financial and operational transparency.

County money allocated for the center comes from funds provided by the American Rescue Plan Act, a federal grant program signed in 2021. In addition, Munson has received a separate \$5 million grant to expand mental health services to youth in crisis, including the provision of in-patient residential beds.

For its part, Northern Lakes received a \$1.8 million federal appropriation to support their Adult Crisis Residential Unit planned for Phase 3 and an additional \$3 million state appropriation for Adult Crisis Stabilization and Youth Crisis Stabilization units.

All sources combined, this may be the biggest investment in mental health in the area's history, county officials said.

Phase I of the project, a temporary relocation of existing services to the Copper Ridge medical complex, has already begun. Subsequent phases include a major renovation at 401 Brook Street on the campus of Munson Medical Center in Traverse City.

When completed in late 2024, this will bring mental health, substance use disorder and crisis services under a single roof, said Munson officials. "This coordinated approach represents best practices in caring for children, families, seniors, and citizens of all ages, regardless of insurance or ability to pay."

While Munson is serving as the fiduciary for the ARPA funds, Glenn emphasized that Northern Lakes will provide the majority of the mental health services at the new center.

Year-end business

In a year-end rush Wednesday, Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners approved a raft of changes and funding requests, including:

- A \$97,000 outlay for a new electronic policy system from Lexipol Solutions to be used by the Sheriff's Office. The annual maintenance fee starting in 2025 will be about \$31,000;
- \$50,000 for a new digital camera monitoring system for a portion of the county jail that does not currently have camera coverage. They deferred action on a proposed \$370,000 upgrade to the overall jail camera system, which would provide much higher resolution video footage;
- And a 2023 payment of \$51,000 for new food preparation equipment in the jail's kitchen. Some of the current equipment is more than 22 years old and finding replacement parts is almost impossible, Jail Administrator Chris Barsheff said.
- The board went into a closed session at noon to discuss collective bargaining issues, then reconvened to discuss the Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) board.
- Commissioners have scheduled a special meeting at 9 a.m. next Wednesday to finalize the 2024 budget.

https://www.record-eagle.com/opinion/opinion-mental-health-reform-call-to-action-northern-michiganders/article_82a74ef6-9079-11ee-8fe0-a311a19fa510.html

Opinion: MENTAL HEALTH REFORM Call to action, northern Michiganders

by kate dahlstrom

State legislators are home on recess. They need to hear from us! There are currently several very important bills that legislators will have an opportunity to vote on when they return to Lansing in January.

These bills will result in many more available treatments for persons with mental illness and/or substance use disorder:

HB4707: Parity

House Bill 4707 will help close the gap that people with commercial insurance have in accessing mental health and substance use disorder services.

There are roughly 2 million people in Michigan impacted with mental illness/substance use disorder. The public mental health system serves roughly 300,000 to 350,000 people a year, which leaves the majority with commercial/employer-based insurance coverage.

HB4707 is a comprehensive mental health/substance use disorder parity approach that would provide comparable treatments for physical and mental health disorders for those with commercial insurance. A few important components include:

- Require coverage decisions to be consistent with “generally accepted standards of care.”
- Prohibit limiting coverage to short-term symptom reduction for chronic conditions, which leads to cycles of relapse and costly emergency department visits and hospitalizations.
- Close gaps in the continuum of care by ensuring parity with physical health for intermediate behavioral health levels of care (such as residential behavioral health services or intensive outpatient therapy) and emergency services.
- Makes critical changes to the problem of out-of-network and in-network availability of services by providing parity in cost to insured.

This important policy step will level the playing field and provide certainty for health plans while providing necessary services for individuals and families who struggle with mental health and substance use conditions.

Other states have already acted; Michigan should follow suit.

HB5184-5185: Workforce

House Bills 5184 and 5185 will link Michigan's social work licensure to the quality and length of social work practice and remove the barrier of an exam that has been shown to not link to clinical competence and is biased against clinicians of color and poor test-takers.

The practice-driven approach of these bills will improve the ability of the state's behavioral health care systems to recruit and retain critical social work talent while also bringing into the field a great number of Michiganders with strong higher education backgrounds, proven social work practice competence and diversity.

Some social work agencies in our area are seeing vacancies lasting more than 700 days. Multiple states have revised their social worker licensing rules to eliminate the artificial barrier that the Association of Social Work Boards test poses.

In summary, these bills would:

- Tie Michigan's social work licensure to the variables most directly tied to the quality of social work practice: meeting rigorous national higher education standards and the completion of thousands of hours of hands-on supervised practice (5,000 hours for a Master of Social Work).
- Increase the number of experienced licensed social workers in Michigan, helping to close Michigan's deep and prolonged behavioral health workforce gap.
- Bring Michigan's social worker licensure requirements in line with other states with whom Michigan competes for social work talent.

Please tell your state legislator to vote "yes" on HB4707 and HB5184-5185.

Lives are depending on it.

About the author: Kate Dahlstrom is a local mental health care advocate. She is currently on the boards of National Alliance on Mental Illness – Grand Traverse; Northern Lakes Community Mental Health and Before, During and After Incarceration.

Club Cadillac working to restart transitional employment program for members

- [By Rick Charmoli Cadillac News](#)
- Dec 5, 2023 Updated Dec 5, 2023



Club Cadillac member Michael Goslyn works the snack bar at the clubhouse in this Cadillac News file photo. The clubhouse's transitional employment program became one of the casualties of the COVID-19 pandemic, but with things back to the way they were pre-pandemic, the plan is to seek partners in the community to resurrect the program.
[Rick Charmoli | Cadillac News file photo](#)

CADILLAC – For years, Club Cadillac has worked to get its members jobs through various partnerships with local businesses.

Through these partnerships, the clubhouse members gain work experience, build their confidence and establish current references all of which help put the member in a better place to fully rejoin society through paid work despite the mental health issues they face.

For those who don't know, a clubhouse like Club Cadillac is a supportive community of members who help each other to find work, go back to school, live independently and to move forward with their lives as part of their recovery from mental illness.

While this vital goal was part of the clubhouse's transitional employment program, it became one of the casualties of the COVID-19 pandemic. With things back to the way they were pre-pandemic, Club Cadillac Director Amy Kotulski said she is now seeking partners in the community to resurrect the program.

"Basically, all of our transitional employment jobs were wiped out. They couldn't sustain their current employees and this program," Kotulski said. "We are starting again from the ground up."

Kotulski said placements usually last from six to nine months, at which point the working member moves on to a new transitional employment job or school and another clubhouse member then is trained for that job. She also said if a business decides to partner with the clubhouse to offer one of these positions, Kotulski said they are guaranteed absence coverage. That is accomplished with the help of clubhouse members who previously worked the job or, if necessary, by clubhouse staff.

As part of the clubhouse's accreditation, Kotulski said they have to have 20% of average daily attendance in transitional employment, which means that they need to have roughly five partnerships. When it comes to the types of jobs they are looking for members, she said they are hoping for diverse offerings. This could be clerical, reception, retail, hospitality/restaurant and possibly physical labor.

There also is one other option for the potential positions, according to Kotulski.

“What needs are not being met and how can a position be created to meet those needs? That way we are helping to support other staff and helping the members,” she said. “Job carving is what we call it.”

The only requirements from the clubhouse side are the position has to be between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. and the clubhouse members have to be paid at least minimum wage. The position also should be for 12 to 20 hours a week. She said the ideal situation is to have one of these jobs in place by the New Year and the remaining four to five other spots by next summer.

If a business is interested in learning more about this program or wants to partner, they can call Kotulski at (231) 775-5638.

rcharmoli@cadillacnews.com

https://www.cadillacnews.com/news/club-cadillac-working-to-restart-transitional-employment-program-for-members/article_49a099cc-8fbc-11ee-9121-c366dfcc2369.html

Tips for taking care of your mental health during the holidays

- [By Ricardo Martin Cadillac News](#)

Nov 30, 2023

1 of 3



A group of senior citizens take a Tai Chi class at the Cadillac Senior Center. Physical activity is one way people can boost their mental health as it gets them moving their bodies around.

- Ricardo Martin | Cadillac News



A pair of Lake City students have a conversation in their school's community center. Students are encouraged to find people they're comfortable with talking to stay connected and create a support system during the holidays.

- Ricardo Martin | Cadillac News



Margaret Briggs plays play Wii Sports Bowling while spending time with friends at the Cadillac Senior Center. Spending time with others while doing a activity to help boost an individual's mental health and avoid isolating themselves during the holidays.

- Ricardo Martin | Cadillac News

CADILLAC – With the holiday season upon us, many people will be handing out gifts and spending time with family and friends.

However, the holidays can also be a stressful time for those who are struggling financially or those who live far away from family. Such circumstances can put a strain on people's mental health.

As the holidays roll around, here are ways you can take care of your mental health during this time of the year.

Isolation is one of the main things Club Cadillac Director Amy Kotulski said they have started to see an increase in at their mental health services organization. She said people

tend to stay home more due to the winter weather and find it harder to get out and socialize.

“It’s harder for people to get around so they just stay home,” Kotulski said. “By being inside and not talking with anybody and then the shorter days, we see an increase in depression as well.”

The holidays can also bring up bad memories for people struggling with their mental health, Kotulski said. While some people are enjoying time with their families, she said others may not be connected with theirs or have a broken family relationship.

Despite the cold weather, Kotulski said people should still try and get outside as much as they can. She said physical exercise is good because moving your body helps produce natural endorphins.

Endorphins are the chemical hormones in your body that make you happy.

Another activity Kotulski recommended is taking care of a plant. She said caring for a plant helps people feel like they are nurturing something. It also gets people to open up with their curtains for natural light to come in, which helps with seasonal depression she said.

Attending community events or shopping locally can also help you avoid isolation. Kotulski said such activities provide opportunities for you to meet new people and build relationships within the community.

“Relationships are so important in people’s personal lives,” she said. “It keeps us connected and it keeps us caring about each other.”

Wexford County Council on Aging Supervisor of Health Care Services Erin Brotherton recommended joining a community group as such a book club or forming your own group.

She said this is helpful for many of the senior citizens she works with who have lost loved ones over the years. Places like churches, senior centers, libraries and more provide opportunities to interact with people while doing an activity, Brotherton said.

“Make family out of friends, neighbors, church family,” she said. “It doesn’t necessarily have to be blood relatives. It’s people you love and who love you.”

Strong support systems can help senior citizens struggling with their mental health. Brotherton said if you noticed a senior citizen is acting in ways they didn’t used to, it may be a good idea to have them go see a physician.

“Get tested for depression because it can be treated,” she said. “Medication can be life-saving as well as talk therapy.”

Keeping up with your nutrition is also important because our diet goes hand and hand with mental health, Kotulski said. This can be a challenge though because of limited access to healthy foods like fresh fruits and vegetables during the winter months.

Economic stressors can also start to amp up during the holidays. Kotulski said many people want to give gifts but can’t because of financial limitations.

This may trigger depression symptoms because they feel sad about being able to give something to people they care about.

Housing and increasing living expenses are other challenges that pop up around the holidays. Kotulski said these expenses on top of holiday spending can worsen a person’s stress or depression.

When it comes to maintaining stress or depression, Kotulski said they encourage people to seek help before things get worse.

“We’re very vigilant at Club Cadillac of that and connecting people to resources and making sure they’re getting help before those symptoms become a crisis situation,” she

said. "I know our crisis line is utilized a lot more during this time of year because of all these triggers."

The holidays can also be stressful for children. Lake City Middle and High School Social Worker Cara Strom said some students have family issues and are worried about having to go home for an extended break.

She said this can lead to some behavioral problems at school as students struggle to regulate their emotions. This can impact their ability to learn and overall academic performance.

Like adults, Strom said they encourage students to get outside or find a hobby they like to separate themselves from a rough family environment. She said they also tell students to find friends they're comfortable talking to about any struggles they're dealing with.

Lake City High School counselor Jim Snyder also encourages families to find ways to spend time with their children such as through family dinners. He said this provides everyone an opportunity to connect with each other face-to-face.

If life is busy, even spending a few minutes with your child can go a long way. Strom said simply asking your child how their day has been showing them they can get a parent's undivided attention to talk about how things are going.

Snyder said parents should also take time to listen to their children if they notice something's wrong. He said a lot of times, parents try to fix one thing when it's something else their child is struggling with.

"Seek first to understand," he said. "Sometimes we just want to come at them and say this is what you got to do, but you should listen."

"Everything else is normal and it's one thing that is out of whack. Listen to what they got to say and then that's the one thing you can fix."

Snyder said some students may be dealing with split families during the holidays and want to spend time with both parents. This is where spending intentional time with a child can take any pressure they may feel off of them, he said.

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https://www.cadillacnews.com/news/tips-for-taking-care-of-your-mental-health-during-the-holidays/article_b24d4434-8ed6-11ee-a99d-d7d109d5789a.html

https://www.cadillacnews.com/news/darkness-and-clouds-can-make-fall-winter-hard-for-some-with-seasonal-affective-disorder/article_c0f18184-848c-11ee-8193-87a12135bd6f.html

Darkness and clouds can make fall, winter hard for some with seasonal affective disorder

- [By Rick Charmoli Cadillac News](#)
- Nov 17, 2023

Next week is Thanksgiving, Black Friday and the kick-off to the holiday season, but for some it also can be the start of one of the hardest times of the year.

For some, “The Most Wonderful Time of the Year” can be the exact opposite for a myriad of reasons. Maybe they don’t have the means to provide what they feel they should for their loved ones. Maybe they are struggling with depression, anxiety, loneliness or the loss of a loved one. Maybe it is very personal to the individual and not something that is easily explained, but the sadness is there regardless.

Couple that with the feeling that darkness is shrouding everything as we head toward the winter solstice and you have a pretty potent cocktail that is not easily let go. What is important to remember is as terrible as these feelings are, you are not alone.

One part of this can be related to seasonal affective disorder, or SAD.

SAD is a type of depression that happens during a certain season of the year — most often in fall and winter. There is no clear cause of SAD. Less sunlight and shorter days are thought to be linked to a chemical change in the brain and may be part of the cause of seasonal affective disorder, according to Johns Hopkins Medicine.

SAD usually starts during adulthood and Johns Hopkins Medicine said the risk of SAD increases with age. It is, however, rare in people under age 20 and women are affected more often than men, according to Johns Hopkins.

When it comes to what causes SAD, Johns Hopkins said less sunlight and shorter days are thought to be linked to a chemical change in the brain and may be part of the cause of SAD. Melatonin, a sleep-related hormone, also has been linked to SAD. The body naturally makes more melatonin when it’s dark and when the days are shorter and darker, more melatonin is made, according to Johns Hopkins.

There also are two types of SAD, fall-onset and spring onset. Fall-onset, also called “winter depression,” begins in the late fall to early winter months and eases during the summer months,

while spring-onset, also called “summer depression,” begins in late spring to early summer. Spring-onset is much less common, according to Johns Hopkins.

Symptoms include but are not limited to increased sleep and daytime drowsiness, loss of interest and pleasure in activities formerly enjoyed, social withdrawal and increased sensitivity to rejection, irritability and anxiety, feelings of guilt and hopelessness, and fatigue or low energy level.

Nancy Stevenson is the chief operations officer for Northern Lakes Community Mental Health Authority, which encompasses six counties, including Missaukee and Wexford. She said SAD can be just part of a person’s issues with mental health or the only issue a person deals with. Regardless of that, however, Stevenson said the world we live in doesn’t help with people’s mental health.

“The times we are living in certainly don’t help the situation. COVID has exacerbated things that people can tolerate,” she said. “The impact of the lack of light during the day impacts people’s energy and motivation and I think Michigan is prone to SAD.”

While Michiganders may be prone to SAD, Stevenson said it typically doesn’t start to hit its stride until after the start of the New Year and then can last through the start of spring. While she believes part of the reason is the distraction the holidays present, she also said the holidays can be a trigger for some people.

She said there are many emotions people feel connected to the holidays and they are not always positive but when you take away the natural light it can then bring those feelings to a head.

When it comes to what people can do, Stevenson said exercise is always a good thing even if it is just a short walk outside. Eating a balanced and healthy diet also is something that can help. She also said limiting your time on the internet and, in particular, social media also could be wise.

“Start trying to have some self-awareness on how much time you spend on social media. Check in with how you feel. Do you feel better or worse about yourself?” she said.

As for what leads to the darkness, National Weather Service meteorologist Patrick Bak said the amount of sunlight we get in the Northwest Lower Peninsula is the same every year. It doesn’t change.

He said the sunrise and sunset table for a location, whether it is Cadillac, Lake City or London, England, will be the same every year. He also said no specific listing or chart shows what side or part of the state is considered the darkest.

What he could say, however, is that a lot of the Lower Peninsula has cloudy days during the fall and winter. He said that is due to being downwind from Lakes Michigan and Superior. While that is what is the main cause for lake effect snow, Bak said that doesn’t always create snow, but sometimes it is just clouds.

“We will have more cloudy days than say Wisconsin because they (Wisconsin) are not getting the wind off the lake as much as we do,” he said. “The prevailing winds are westerly or northwesterly and that is how we get the extra cloud cover in the winter.”

For example, Bak said Green Bay, Wisconsin has the same latitude as Gaylord, but the Wisconsin city has more sunny days because its prevailing winds are coming off the land and not the Great Lakes. He also said for places that are similarly as far north as Michigan, and in particular Northern Michigan, there isn't as much moisture.

Michigan has a local moisture source, i.e. the Great Lakes, that makes the Wolverine State more cloudy than the Upper Midwest or the Great Plains, Bak said. Some people may not like snow, but places like Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota have some very cold days that Michigan doesn't have.

“The clouds save us from the bitter arctic plunges from Canada. They go around the Great Lakes as they are a relative source of warmth,” Bak said. “Not warm but warmer, so we don't get the below-zero days that they do. We get more snow and clouds, so that is the trade-off.”

**Northern Lakes CMH
December 2023 Board Communication**

- (1) The Board Monitoring Report 2.10 Administrative Cost Internal Inspection that has been completed in previous years is an outdated policy. The report is no longer required to be prepared and submitted to MDHHS and has been replaced with the Standard Cost Allocation process.
- (2) Consistent with the practices of most CMH's and PIHP's, there is no October year to date financial or budget to actual report. Given that the prior year has not yet been fully closed out and only one month of activity has occurred, the data tends not to represent a financial picture whereby any useful trends can be obtained.
- (3) The following represents the future board meeting for each upcoming month end.
January - YTD November Results
February – YTD December (1st Qtr.) Results
March – YTD January Results
April – YTD February Results and anticipating the 2023 Audit will be presented as well

Laura Argyle
Deputy CFO

**CEO Response to November 16, 2023 Board Monitoring Report Evaluation
December 21, 2023**

Policy 2.0 – Global Executive Limitations – Internal Inspection

Ten (10) Board Members completed and submitted the monitoring report. There are sixteen Board Members.

Question 1 - Was this report submitted when due?- 10 Yes

Question 2 - Did the report lay out the CEO’s interpretation of the request? – 8 Yes, 2 unanswered.

Question 3 - Was I convinced that the interpretation is justified and reasonable? – 8 Yes, 2 unanswered.

Question 4 - Did the interpretation address all aspects of the subject? -8 Yes, 2 unanswered.
Comments: “Hard to tell.”

Question 5 - Does the information show compliance with the Board's direction/policy?- 9 Yes, 1 unanswered.

Question 6 – Other Comment:

1. “Can we please use commonly understood English. What does “Global Executive Limitations” mean to the average person?”
2. “ Our CEO is appropriately utilizing resources of Board monitoring, Leadership team, legal counsel & risk, management, to prevent harm to consumers & NLCMHA

CEO Response 2023:

I appreciate the Board’s assessment that we are in 90% compliance with this policy.

Question 6, comment 1 – The policies define the Executive Limitations as “The Chief Executive Officer shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance which is either unlawful, imprudent or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics.” Comment 2 – Consumers are our number one mission at Northern Lakes. As Interim CEO, I will continue to utilize any means available to best serve our communities and family members within the six counties.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brain Martinus
Interim CEO

ASSURANCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE
Board Policy Monitoring – 2.6 COMMUNITY RESOURCES
INTERNAL INSPECTION
DECEMBER 21, 2023

2.6 Community Resources

The provision of services to people with a mental illness, people with an intellectual and developmental disability, or people with a substance use disorder, and veterans is not the exclusive responsibility of the Authority. The Board deems collaboration and cooperation with other public and private entities serving the same population to be critical to seamless service delivery. By example and not by way of limitation, the CEO shall not:

- 2.6.1 Fail to leverage relevant community resources to assist in accomplishing the Board's Ends Policies.
- 2.6.2 Fail to take appropriate advantage of collaboration, partnerships, and innovative relationships with relevant public and private entities.

CEO Interpretation December 2023:

We have continued our collaboration with the Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region (NMCHIR); the Northern Lower Area Health Education Center (AHEC); the Northern Michigan Health Coalition (NMHC); the Grand Traverse Community Collaborative (GTCC); Wexford Missaukee Human Services Leadership Council (HSLC); Munson Health Care, and the Health Care Partner group covering Missaukee, Wexford and Crawford counties. We continue our participation in Community Collaboratives in Leelanau, Roscommon, and Crawford counties. We are currently engaging our community partners to collaborate with us on the development of the Grand Traverse Center for Mental Wellness. Through these relationships, we look to leverage resources and create synergy with other community organizations to meet our Ends. Our annual public hearing held in July and any follow-up meetings raise our awareness of areas for improved collaboration. This year's public hearing was significantly influenced by issues related to ABA services, community outreach, and improving communications between community partners.

We continue to collaborate with the judicial system, law enforcement, and corrections to develop unified approaches to create jail diversion and reduce recidivism. We strive to create a community approach to behavioral health and criminal justice diversion. We continue to use technology, such as iPads, with law enforcement to improve our joint response to individuals in crisis.

We continue to collaborate with MDHHS and the Veterans Administration to make services more available for those who served our country.

In our efforts to be a consumer-informed organization, the Consumer Advisory Council meets and arranges presentations on a variety of community resources.

For children and youth, we have collaborated with groups such as the Great Start Collaborative, ISDs, and the local systems of care on issues related to early development, trauma, and child abuse prevention.

NLCMHA remains committed to working with our colleagues in our six counties to attempt to maximize resources for prevention and treatment and better address the social determinants of physical and behavioral health.

Our Annual Review Reports demonstrate the work of staff in community collaboration.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Martinus
Interim CEO

Policy being monitored:

2.6 Community Resources

December 15, 2022

1. Was this report submitted when due?
Yes No (requires comment)

Comment:

2. Did the report lay out the CEO's interpretation of the request?
Yes No (requires comment)

Comment:

3. Was I convinced that the interpretation is justified and reasonable?
Yes No (requires comment)

Comment:

4. Did the interpretation address all aspects of the subject?
Yes No (requires comment)

Comment:

5. Does the information show compliance with board direction/policy?
Yes No (requires comment)

Comment:

6. Other Comment: _____

CEO Response to November 16, 2023 Board Means Monitoring Report Evaluation

December 21, 2023

Policy 3.2 Governance Style – Direct Inspection

Fourteen (14) Board Members completed and submitted the monitoring report. There are sixteen Board Members.

Question One - Do you believe we are in strict compliance with the policy as stated for each provision?

– 5 Yes. 6 No. 3 Unanswered.

Question Two – If you indicated that the Board is not in full compliance with the policy as stated, please indicate what areas and what you notice that gives evidence that we are not in compliance.

Comments:

1. “I think we are in strict compliance, but there are Board members who want to find a different governance model”. **CEO Response - Not all Board members will agree on a governance model, but we have to find what works for the agency.**
2. “We are in disarray. We have Board concerns that we need to change our Governance style, but we need action; the Chair needs to appoint a committee to move us forward.” **CEO Response: At the November 16, 2023 meeting, NLCMH Chair appointed members to look at the governance style and bylaws with the attorney in a committee.**
3. “The Board needs to look at this and work on a number of issues, like the Strategic Plan, culture, and group responsibility”. **CEO Response- The Board needs to set the agenda for the strategic plan. They also need to work on changing the culture of the Board in order to become more functioning and cohesive working together on behalf of consumers, not personal agendas.**
4. “ The Board often falls into gaps that are not policy and are operations.” **CEO Response – Board members must stay out of the operations of the agency.**
5. “No strategic plan or approved by the Board. No assurance of full consideration of views of diverse stakeholders.” **CEO Response Northern Lakes does have a strategic plan that ends in October 2024. This strategic plan has been presented to the Board and approved to the board, prior to the Interim CEO taking the position.**
6. We need a strategic plan 3.2.2. Board members are sometimes micromanaging 3.2.8. **CEO Response - Board members do try to micromanage the agency with their own personal agenda items.**
7. 3.2.2, 3.2.8
8. “To difficult to interpret”. **CEO Response – If having difficulties understanding the governance model, I will work with the Board Chair to bring in training to make this more understandable if requested.**

Question Three – How do you think we could improve our process to be in full compliance?

Comments:

1. “We need to resolve our differences about governance style.” **CEO Response – I agree that the Board needs to be unified working on behalf of consumers and if the governance style will**

help the Board come to cohesion to better serve the community, they must set aside their differences of opinions in models to find what will unite the Board to be consumer driven.

2. "I believe most Board members want to continue with a policy governance style, but not Carver. We need to agree or disagree on this to move forward. The Oakland County model can be a guide, but we are not Oakland County and need to adapt to our own situation". **CEO Response- I do believe that the Board wants to continue with the governance policy style model. The Board needs to agree on a governance model to move forward as an agency.**
3. "I believe we are slowly getting some addressed."
4. "Stay within the areas that are policy." **CEO Response - The Board should stay within the policy and not get into operations.**
5. "Change Governance Policy."
6. Make a strategic plan. Have a clear definition of responsibilities. **CEO Response- I agree that the Board needs to set the guidelines for a strategic plan.**
7. Develop a strategy. Do not, as a board micromanage administrative matters. **CEO Response – The Board should not be involved in day-to-day operations.**
8. "Adopt policies that are widely used by respected CMHs in our state and that are easy for the public and new board members to understand and use. **CEO Response -Board policies are not one size fits all; what works for one agency, may not work for others. What works is board members getting along, communicating effectively with others, putting aside agendas, and working towards bettering the agency and the consumers we serve.**

Policy 3.2 Continued...

Question Four – What do we need to learn or discuss in order to live by this policy more completely? –
Comments:

1. "What exactly is the problem with the current governance model and what do they want in a governance model." **CEO Response – Governance model is set by a Board consensus.**
2. "Boundaries." **CEO Response – There are some Board members that do not have boundaries with staff and consumers.**
3. "Issues related to NLCMH"
4. "Once we get new governance models in place, commit to the following policies". **CEO Response – Right now we have a governance model in place. You need to commit to following those policies until it is replaced with a new one, then, you would follow those policies. If you can't follow the policy now, what makes you think you will follow the new policy? You must commit to something that you are a part of until it changes.**
5. Define the board's scope and allow the CEO to attend to all other organizational tasks including personnel." **CEO Response – I agree that the CEO should do his work of attending day-to-day operations and community outreach. The Board should do their work of functioning as one and putting the consumers we serve above personal projects and personal agendas.**
6. Board members remember you are for your constituents of your counties – it is not all about your personal needs. **CEO Response – 100% agree with the person who wrote this. I agree it is not about your personal needs or agendas. It is about the community's needs and the consumers we serve.**

Question Five - Does this policy remain in compliance with the Policy Governance model in terms of content and format? 7 Yes. 3 No. 3 Unanswered. 1- "I think so"

Comments:

1. "See above"
2. "Hard to tell"
3. "It's not in compliance"
4. "But needs revision"
5. "For the Carver Model"

CEO Response 2023:

I appreciate the Board's assessment that we are in 36% compliance with this policy. The Board needs to look at themselves, come together as a whole, and decide to put the agency and people we serve above their own personal agendas. See answers above.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Martinus
Interim CEO

CEO Response to November 16, 2023 Board Means Monitoring Report Evaluation

December 21, 2023

Policy 3.4 Annual Work Plan – Direct Inspection

Eleven (11) Board Members completed and submitted the monitoring report. There are sixteen Board Members.

Question One - Do you believe we are in strict compliance with the policy as stated for each provision? – 9 Yes. 2 No.

Question Two – If you indicated that the Board is not in full compliance with the policy as stated, please indicate what areas and what you notice that gives evidence that we are not in compliance.

Comments:

1. “Not at this time. Due to the 3-month plan to accommodate uncertain policy future.”
2. “Then annual workplan definition lists a number of education methods that can be used to provide Board members with the greatest possible insight into Board governance policy options. The current plan is limited to listening to presentations about NLCMH programs”.

Question Three – How do you think we could improve our process to be in full compliance? Comments:

1. Focus on how to get more insight into Board governance policy options.
2. Work in Progress

Question Four – What do we need to learn or discuss in order to live by this policy more completely? –

Comments:

1. “Learn more & find a way to get more Board members to speak their mind.”

Question Five - Does this policy remain in compliance with the Policy Governance model in terms of content and format? 10 Yes. 1 Unanswered.

Comments:

1. “Minimum compliance with the 3-month plans.”

CEO Response 2023:

I appreciate the Board’s assessment that we are in 73% compliance with this policy.

Question 2, comment 1. The Board voted on the 3-month plan per the NLDs’ recommendation. Comment 2: The Board can choose to fill their educational time with whatever topics they identify as important.

Question 3, comment 1: I encourage the Board to research their options and choose what they feel is best for the agency. Comment 2: The Board is a work in progress with new members coming on and long-term members. The Board’s focus needs to always be on the consumers we serve and supporting the staff fully who are working with our consumers.

Question 4, comment 1: Board members are always encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings constructively, in accordance to Roberts Rules of Orders.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian Martinus, Interim CEO

**BOARD MEANS SELF-ASSESSMENT
POLICY 3.1 BOARD JOB DESCRIPTION
DIRECT INSPECTION
December 21, 2023**

3.1 Board Job Description

The Board acts as the informed agent of the public and is responsible for assuring appropriate organizational performance. Accordingly, the Board has direct responsibility to create:

The link between the Public and the Organization; and Board Governance Policies that address the broadest levels of all organizational decisions and situations, including:

- 3.1.1 Ends: Organizational products, impacts, benefits, outcomes, eligible recipients, and their relative worth).
- 3.1.2 Executive Limitations: Constraints on executive authority that establish the prudence and ethics boundaries within which all executive activity and decisions must take place.
- 3.1.3 Governance Process: Specification of how the Board conceives, carries out and monitors its own task.
- 3.1.4 Board-Chief Executive Officer Linkage: How power is delegated, and its proper use monitored; the Chief Executive Officer role, authority and accountability.
- 3.1.5 Assurance of successful Chief Executive Officer performance.

Submitted by,

Brian Martinus
Interim CEO

Board Means Policy Being Monitored:

3.1 Board Job Description

December 21, 2023

Review all sections of the policy listed and evaluate our compliance with policy.

1. Do you believe we are in strict compliance with the policy as stated for each provision?

Yes No (requires comment)

2. If you indicated that the Board is not in full compliance with the policy as stated, please indicate what areas and what you notice that gives evidence that we are *not* in compliance?

3. How do you think we could improve our process to be in full compliance?

4. What do we need to learn or discuss in order to live by this policy more completely?

5. Does this policy remain in compliance with the Policy Governance model in terms of content and format? Yes No (requires comment)