



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

## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

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January 15, 2026

1:00 p.m.

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**Board Members Present:** Christal Frost Anderson, Ruth Pilon, Mark Nyman, Dean Smallegan, Ben Townsend, Penny Morris, Ty Wessell, Dave Freedman, Tony Lentych, Mary Marois, Al Cambridge, Greg McMorrow

**Others Present:** Kim Silbor, Jeremiah Williams, Melissa Bentgen, Neil Rojas, Marsha Brown, Ashley Cross, Josh Emery, April Weinrick, Jennifer Colvin, Caleb Gomez, Joe Barkman, Brian Newcomb, Alexandra Coon, Hilary Rappuhn

**Virtual Attendees:** Daniel Mauk, Linnzi Hubble, Heather Sleight, Jennifer Edwards, Jennifer Huffman, Aimee Horton Johnson, Terri Henderson, Kirstie Maier, Amanda Ritchies, Becky Brown, Victoria McDonald, Erin Barbus, Vince Cornellier, Kaitlin Merritt, Lori Stendel, Tiffany Fewins, Kari Barker, Gina Schlegel, Rob Palmer, Lisa Jones, Ann Ketchum, Kellee Hoag, 2 unknown

**Call to Order:** 1:00 p.m.

**Conflict of Interest:** None

**Timekeeper:** Tony Lentych

**Approval of Agenda:** Yes, no changes requested.

**MOTION: Approval of Consent Agenda (Minutes)**

**RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**

**MOVER: T. Wessell**

**SECONDER: M.Marois**

**Public Comment:** None.

**Celebrate Northern Lakes:** The Board of Directors and the Leadership team at Northern Lakes CMHA recognized the excellent work of their AFC homes staff as well as the Human Resources Coordinator of Traverse City.

## **Report of Officers:**

**Recipient Rights Report:** Brian Newcomb, Director of the Office of Recipient Rights, presented his report to the Board. The report can be found in the board packet. Mr. Newcomb shared that his department is 100% compliant and has welcomed two new staff members, bringing the team to full capacity. Mr. Newcomb commented that out of all of the providers that the recipient rights team visits, the Northern Lakes CMH AFC homes should be the standard for how homes are run as they do an excellent job. Mr. Newcomb will be providing recipient rights training to all Board members in the second half of the year.

**Chief Executive Officer's Report:** Lynda Zeller, Chief Executive Officer of Northern Lakes, presented her report to the Board. Ms. Zeller thanked the Board members for facilitating lunch for these meetings using their personal funds. The final draft of the 2026 annual work plan was presented to the Board and was included in the packet. Ms. Zeller shared there will be a community needs assessment sent to all stakeholders.

Those results will be shared with the Board members along with the State. Northern Lakes will come up with their top five needs to present to the State. Ms. Zeller mentioned that the Agency will start to see a positive trend this year due to the re-engineering of the utilization management committee and thanked the teams working on that project. Northern Lakes CMHA received an L letter about children living in CCI's and have informed the families that the Agency will work with the State to see what options are available outside of moving the children. Ms. Zellar requested that the Board provide input on KPI metrics; examples from other CMHs will be provided.

**Chief Financial Officer's Report:** Melissa Bentgen, Interim Chief Financial Officer, presented an update regarding the current and future reports to the Board. Ms. Bentgen presented a high-level overview of the Agency's October and November financials. Once the new templates are in place, the financial reports will be presented as usual.

## **Committee Reports:**

### **NMRE:**

Ms. Pilon shared that there was no NMRE committee meeting this month.

### **Executive:**

Mr. McMorrow, the Chairperson of the Board, thanked the Board members who facilitated lunch and alerted the Board to his upcoming planned absence from the February Board meeting. Ms. Morris will lead the February Board meeting in Mr. McMorrow's absence. Mr. McMorrow shared that there will be an Ad Hoc committee appointed to choose the slate of officers presented to the Board to vote on in May. Board orientation will also be set up for the newest Board members to attend, in the near future.

**Finance:** Mr. Cambridge presented a reconciliation policy to the Board for review which will be acted on at the next Board meeting in February. The finance committee has a rolling agenda with on-going open issues that are reviewed at each meeting. There are no new contracts this month. Mr. Cambridge spoke about cash flow, cost containment and the gratitude felt by the committee for the help they have received from five different CMHs. The Board will draft a thank you letter to those entities.

**Policy:** Mr. Freedman shared that Ms. Zeller recently met with staff to review the new system of policy review and approval. The policy committee will meet PRN (as necessary) until the new system is up and running.

**Personnel:** Ms. Pilon shared that the personnel committee will meet next on February 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Community Engagement:** Ms. Frost Anderson shared that the community engagement committee is deciding over the next two weeks when to meet.

**Unfinished Business:** The 2026 Annual Workplan was presented for approval. The by laws were presented and will be voted on at the February Board meeting. CMHAM Winter Conference Board attendance was taken.

**MOTION: Accept 2026 work plan with the addition of a column for those responsible for each task as well as placing each task in monthly order.**

**RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**

**MOVER: G. McMorrow**

**SECONDER: T. Lentych**

**Public Comment:** Marsha Brown, a Home Supervisor for Northern Lakes, shared a letter from one of Northern Lakes' consumers and praised her staff for listening to and being there for the consumers.

**Announcements/ Board Member Reports/ Board Association:** Mr. Cambridge shared a story about his sons' positive experience as a former direct care worker. Mr. Freedman shared that the SAMHSA 988 hotline is being defunded and urged everyone to contact their legislators. Ms. Zeller shared that 2,000 nonprofits received notice of immediate termination of funding recently which led to a large amount of community feedback and asked the Board to see what others are being told as the terms were not clear. Any new information on this will be shared with the Board.

**Next Meeting:** February 19, 2026 – Grayling

**Adjournment:** 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexandra Coon, Interim Executive Administrator

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Greg McMorrow, Board Chairperson

Lynn Pope, Secretary

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