

Board Meeting  
Monday, February 24, 2025  
5:00 p.m., St. Vincent's Annex  
MINUTES

**1. CONVENE**

**a. Call to Order**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Wellvance Board of Directors was held on Monday, February 24, 2025, in the St. Vincent's Annex in West Branch. Chairperson D. Jay O'Farrell called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. A virtual option via Microsoft TEAMS was also offered for public attendance.

**b. Roll Call**

**Board members physically present:** D. Jay O'Farrell, Mark Surbrook, Rose Walsh, Chuck Varner, Amy Knepp, and Gary Klacking

**Board members present via video conference:** Debbie Welsch, Bonnie Lixey, and Matt Jordan

**Board members excused:** None

**Board members absent:** None

**Staff present:** Diane Pelts, Teresa Tokarczyk, Tyler Rood, and Joseph Chrivia

**Staff present via video conference:** Jennifer Carr, Trish Otremba, Michon VanWormer, Laura Marentette, and Jennifer Warner.

**Staff absent:** None

**Guests:** None

**Guests via video conference:** None

A quorum was present.

**c. Approval of Board meeting minutes**

It was moved by Mr. Varner and seconded by Mr. Surbrook to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2025 Board meeting as presented. All ayes, motion passed.

**d. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved by Mr. Surbrook and seconded by Mr. Klacking to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes, motion passed.

**e. Correspondence**

Ms. Pelts said the Board packet contains five newsletters: the Agency Quarterly, the Download, the Recipient Rights Newsletter, the Providers' Newsletter, and the Training Newsletter. She briefly discussed each with the Board and commented that the staff who create these newsletters do a fantastic job of sharing useful information with others.

Next, Ms. Pelts said there is an article from MLive entitled *A Broken System* that vilifies Community Mental Health Agencies and the Recipient Rights system. Ms. Pelts highlighted the main complaint of the article and several misconceptions. She said that while no system is perfect, Michigan has one of the best in the country. She reminded the Board that the Recipient Rights system is designed to be independent and is protected from undue influence.

#### **f. Legislative Updates**

Ms. Pelts shared the updated House Committee assignments with the Board. She said this displays what representatives sit on which Committees and Subcommittees in Lansing.

Ms. Pelts shared three issues of *This Week in Lansing* with the Board for their information and pointed out several interesting pieces of interest.

#### **g. CMH PAC**

Ms. Pelts announced the annual CMH PAC has started. She said the goal of CMHAM is to raise \$20,000. The goal can be achieved with the support of 40 Boards and there are 46 CMHs and 10 PIHPs in the State. Ms. Pelts said while Wellvance always participates and reaches the \$500 goal for a CMH, many other Boards do not. From 2017 to present, the CMH PAC has raised \$59,600; during this same period Blue Cross/Blue Shield has raised over \$4.4 million. Because of constant efforts in Lansing to change behavioral health, it is imperative that CMHs are represented.

Ms. Pelts and the Board discussed the CMH PAC as well as the upcoming silent auction. She said planning for the silent auction will begin next month.

**h. Announcements** – Mr. O’Farrell announced the Oscoda Board of Commissioners has reappointed Chuck Varner to the Wellvance Board through March 31, 2028.

**i. Public Comments** – None.

## **2. BOARD EDUCATION**

Ms. Pelts introduced Teresa Tokarczyk, Chief Clinical Officer, to the Board and stated her presentation would be *When to Call for Help*. The presentation covered several points from the Mental Health First Aid curriculum that may help when asked questions.

Ms. Tokarczyk began by stating that not everything is an emergency. An emergency is when someone is at risk of harming themselves or others. She advised to always seek emergency medical help if the person’s life is in immediate danger. If you believe someone is suicidal, call 988 or 911.

Ms. Tokarczyk reviewed different techniques to use in these situations, such as being non-judgmental and to be reassuring. Ms. Tokarczyk explained the difference between 911 and 988 for the Board and provided suggestions for improving mental health.

She said the Agency performed 850 Emergency Screenings last year. She shared Suicide Prevention cards and two examples of a “This is a Cry for Help” card.

Discussion ensued.

### **3. REPORTS**

**a. Chairperson** –None.

**b. Board Association** – None.

**d. NMRE** – Mr. O’Farrell stated they next meet on Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>.

**e. Chief Executive Officer**

Ms. Pelts said the abundance of snow this year has had many people talking about winter. This made her think of the Facilities Department and everything they do to support the Agency. She said several responsibilities that used to be contracted out have now been brought back within the Agency, such as snow removal and lawn care. She said this gives the Agency better control over these tasks and they are done promptly.

Facilities staff are on call at all times and are required to handle numerous things that most don’t realize like EPS and building alarms, all things related to our fleet of vehicles, office supplies, relocation of offices, COH maintenance, and other tasks too extensive to mention.

Ms. Pelts closed by saying, “Thank you to Mike Pallagi, Renee Haney, Art Pirotta, and Mark Dalrick for your tireless work, commitment to our Agency, staff and consumers, and to the safety and well-being of all who come through our doors.”

**e. Committee**

#### **(1) Recipient Rights Advisory – February 11, 2025**

Committee Chair Rose Walsh read the Committee meeting minutes.

It was moved by Ms. Walsh and seconded by Mr. Surbrook to approve update of the Recipient Rights Manual changing AuSable Valley to Wellvance. All ayes; motion passed.

Ms. Pelts stated there were additional changes forwarded to the Committee when it was discovered that a few paragraphs needed to be added or updated to remain compliant with current requirements. It was moved by Ms. Walsh and seconded by Ms. Knepp to approve the additional updates of the Recipient Rights Manual as presented. All ayes; motion passed.

#### **(2) Recipient Rights Appeals – February 11, 2025**

Committee Chair Rose Walsh read the Committee meeting minutes.

There were no motions which required Board action.

**(3) Facilities – February 13, 2025**

Committee Chair Mark Surbrook read the Committee meeting minutes.

There were no motions which required Board action.

**(4) Program – February 13, 2025**

Committee Chair Debbie Welsch read the Committee meeting minutes.

There were no motions which required Board action.

**(5) Executive & Finance – February 18, 2025**

Committee Chair Bonnie Lixey read the Committee meeting minutes.

It was moved by Ms. Lixey and seconded by Ms. Welsch to accept the December financial statements as presented. All ayes; motion passed.

It was moved by Ms. Lixey and seconded by Ms. Walsh to approve the updated Board Policy Manual as presented. All ayes; motion passed.

It was moved by Ms. Lixey and seconded by Mr. Klacking to not accept either offer for the State St and Woodlea properties and to remove “Divesting Agency Ownership of COHs” from the Agency’s Long-term plan. All ayes; motion passed.

It was moved by Ms. Lixey and seconded by Mr. Surbrook to approve three (3) contract amendments (Serenity Homes, BHS California COH, and BHS State St/Alice St COH) and one single-service agreement (Beaumont). All ayes; motion passed.

**(6) Human Resources – Did not meet**

**(7) CEO Search – Did not meet**

**4. OLD BUSINESS** – None.

**5. NEW BUSINESS** – None.

**6. COMMENTS**

**a. Board** – None.

**b. Public** – None.

**7. MEETING DATES**

**a. Board**

(1) Monday, March 24; 5:00 p.m.; St. Vincent’s Annex

**b. Committees**

- (1) Human Resources – Monday, March 3; 4:00 p.m.; Virtual
- (2) Recipient Rights Advisory – No meeting scheduled
- (3) Recipient Rights Appeals – No meeting scheduled
- (4) Facilities – Thursday, March 13; 3:00 p.m.; Virtual
- (5) Program – Thursday, March 13; 4:00 p.m.; Virtual
- (6) Executive & Finance – Tuesday, March 18; 4:00 p.m.; Virtual
- (7) CEO Search – to be determined

**c. Other**

- (1) CMHAM Summer Conference: June 10-11, Traverse City

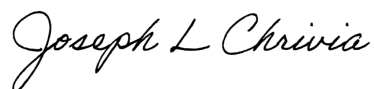
- (2) CMHAM Fall Conference: October 27-28, Traverse City

Reminder: Committee meetings in January, February, and March will be virtual. Board meetings, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, will still require an in-person forum to conduct business.

**8. ADJOURN**

It was moved by Mr. Varner and seconded by Ms. Walsh to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph L. Chrivia  
Recording Secretary