

Board Meeting
Monday, November 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, November 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, Bonnie Lixey, Mark Surbrook, Matt Jordan, Chuck Varner, Amy Knepp, Renee Diener, Charles Wiltse, and Debbie Welsch

Board members present via video conference: None

Board members excused: Rose Walsh and Gary Klacking

Board members absent: None

Staff present: Trish Otremba, Teresa McGee, Casey Carpenter, and Joseph Chrivia

Staff present via video conference: Laura Marentette, Regina Demetrakeas, Cheryl Bronson, Tyler Rood, Jennifer Warner, and Sydney Larsen

Staff absent: None

Guests: Alan Bolter, CMHAM; Amy Eagan, NAMI, Mike Eagan, NAMI, Diane Pelts

Guests via video conference: None

A quorum was present.

c. Approval of Board meeting minutes

It was moved by Mr. Surbrook and seconded by Ms. Lixey to approve the minutes of the November 3, 2025, Board meeting as presented. All ayes, motion passed.

d. Approval of Agenda

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

e. Correspondence

Ms. Otremba shared four newsletters with the Board: Agency Quarterly, IT Download, Training Newsletter, and Recipient Rights Newsletter. She reviewed each and highlighted several articles. She named all staff members who achieved milestones in longevity with the Agency.

f. Legislative Updates

Ms. Otremba shared an edition of *This Week in Lansing* and shared key highlights.



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g. Announcements -- None.

i. Public Comments

Mr. and Mrs. Eagan, members of National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) passed out brochures and spoke about the services NAMI provides. They said they're originally from West Branch but work from the Midland chapter of NAMI but hope to open an office in Ogemaw County. They said they're willing to drive to provide services.

Mr. Wiltse, an Ogemaw County Commissioner, thanked them and shared his contact information. He said he might be able to help them find a venue for their work.

Ms. Otremba and the Board thanked them both for their presentation.

2. BOARD EDUCATION

Alan Bolter, Chief Executive Officer of CMHAM, introduced himself to the Board and gave an update on current events in Lansing. He said the legislature is currently on break and there will be very limited voting days remaining this calendar year. He said this year borders on the least productive year in legislative history in the State. Mr. Bolter explained the Republican controlled legislature and the Democratic Governor have not been able to agree on many bills this year. Additionally, with next year being an election year, as well as the same political divisions, nothing major is expected to pass.

Mr. Bolter said the House Speaker is attempting to pass legislation requiring advocates for spending bills to place their name. He stated this is an accountability initiative designed to add transparency to the spending process.

Mr. Bolter said \$320 million was in the budget for school safety and mental health grants. He said this has been problematic in the past as schools poached staff from CMHs. This year, the grants are conditional on a clause removing immunity from prosecution for the schools if there is a mass casualty incident and the schools fail to act appropriately. Mr. Bolter said schools are against this clause and many are suing. If the clause remains, many schools will not take the grant money.

The "One Big Beautiful Bill" passed in D.C. provides federal grant money for rural health transformation programs. He explained that the state is applying for these funds and will set rules on how to distribute the monies.

Mr. Bolter briefly updated the Board on the PIHP bid-out lawsuit and RFP process. He said he requested information from the State on who submitted bids through a FOIA request and was denied. He said he plans to appeal that decision. He said the lawsuits will be heard on December 8th and 9th. Mr. Bolter gave possible scenarios on what could happen if the process continues as the State requests.

Mr. Bolter answered questions from the Board.

The Board, and Ms. Otremba, thanked Mr. Bolter for his presentation.

Mr. Bolter departed.

3. REPORTS

a. Chairperson – Mr. O’Farrell said he attended a MAC meeting in Lansing last week. He said MAC is a bidder in the PIHP process. He stated they are doing that as a precaution to keep local control.

b. Board Association – None.

c. NMRE – Next meeting on December 3, 2025.

d. Chief Executive Officer

Ms. Otremba said she’s waived her normal report to give Mr. Bolter additional time. However, she shared a few highlights. She stated the Agency conducted a food drive and collected 2,593 items which made 180 food bags. These bags were distributed to those in need. She thanked several staff who played a key role in the process: Trudi Marsh, Amber Hamilton, Laura Sisco, Tina Sisco, Manette Griggs, Kimberlee Keith, Michelle Lovett, Terre Tarnes, Beth Cole, and Lexys Libka. She thanked everyone who donated items.

Ms. Otremba said the Agency has four pending Opioid Settlement Funding requests from Iosco County for approximately \$279,000. She said the award date is February 16, 2026 and she’ll update the Board when she knows more.

She stated she will be attending the hearings on December 8th and 9th that Mr. Bolter mentioned. Additionally, the Agency Team Building Day is December 9th in Hale. She expressed regrets that she would be unable to attend due to the hearing.

e. Committee

(1) Recipient Rights Advisory – October 31, 2025

Committee member Debbie Welsch read the Committee meeting minutes.

It was moved by Ms. Welsch and seconded by Mr. Varner to accept the FY25 Annual Report as submitted. All ayes; motion passed.

(2) Appeals – October 31, 2025

Committee member Debbie Welsch read the Committee meeting minutes.

There were no motions that required Board action.

(3) Executive & Finance – November 18, 2025

Committee Chair Bonnie Lixey read the Committee meeting minutes.

It was moved by Ms. Lixey and seconded by Mr. Surbrook to accept the September Financial reports. All ayes; motion passed.

It was moved by Ms. Lixey and seconded by Mr. Wiltse to approve the following contract: one contract renewals with rate change (Jessica VanHorn). All ayes; motion passed.

(4) Human Resources – Did not meet

(5) Program – Did not meet

(6) Facilities – Did not meet

4. OLD BUSINESS – None.

5. NEW BUSINESS –

Ms. Otremba presented the Long-term Plan to the Board. She thanked the Board for giving her time to better prepare the document before adopting it. She explained the goals for each department: Financial, Operations, Information Technology, Human Resources, and Clinical. She discussed each goal of the department and answered all questions.

The Board concurred with the Long-term Plan as presented.

6. COMMENTS

a. Board –

Mr. Wiltse asked how many positions are currently open in the Agency. Ms. Otremba said there are 22 open positions at this time.

b. Public – None.

7. MEETING DATES

a. Board

(1) Monday, January 26; 5:00 p.m.; St. Vincent's Annex

b. Committees

(1) Human Resources – Monday, January 5; 4:00 p.m.; Microsoft TEAMS

(2) Recipient Rights Advisory – No meeting scheduled

(3) Recipient Rights Appeals – No meeting scheduled

(4) Program – Thursday, January 8; 2:00 p.m.; Microsoft TEAMS

(5) Facilities – Thursday, January 8; 3:00 p.m.; Microsoft TEAMS

(6) Executive & Finance – Tuesday, January 20; 4:00 p.m.; Microsoft TEAMS

c. Other

- (1) CMHAM Winter Conference: February 2-3, Kalamazoo
- (2) CMHAM Summer Conference: June 8-10, Traverse City
- (3) CMHAM Fall Conference: October 26-27, Traverse City

8. ADJOURN

It was moved by Mr. Varner and seconded by Ms. Welsch to adjourn the meeting at 6:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph L. Chrivia
Recording Secretary