Board Meeting
Monday, November 2, 2026
5:00 p.m., Mio Annex
MINUTES

1. CONVENE

a. Call to Order

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Wellvance Board of Directors was held on Monday, November 2, 2026, in the Mio Annex. 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, Matt Jordan, Bonnie Lixey, Chuck Varner, Renee Diener, Debbie Welsch, Amy Knepp, Rose Walsh, Mark Surbrook, and Jeanette Leathorn.
Board members present via video conference: Charles Wiltse.
Board members excused: None
Board members absent: None
Staff present: Trish Otremba, Teresa McGee, Laura Zettel, Casey Carpenter, and Joseph Chrivia
Staff present via video conference: Jennifer Carr, Jennifer Warner, Lori Enos, Jennifer Verbeke, Cheryl Bronson, and Tyler Rood
Staff absent: None
Guests: None
Guests via video conference: Cheryl Kuch, Rehmann

A quorum was present.

c. Approval of Board meeting minutes

It was moved by Ms. Knepp and seconded by Ms. Diener to approve the minutes of September 28, 2026, Board meeting as presented. All ayes, motion passed.

d. Approval of Agenda

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

e. Correspondence

Ms. Otremba shared two newsletters (Training Newsletter and CLS Newsletter). She highlighted key pieces in both and encouraged the Board to sign up for any trainings they may find useful.

Ms. Otremba read the Longevity Spotlight for staff member Elizabeth Harrington. She and the Board complimented Ms. Harrington for her work and dedication to the Agency.

f. Legislative Updates

Ms. Otremba said she would share some election information in her report but otherwise had no updates to share.

g. Announcements

Mr. Surbrook announced he would miss this month's Facilities Committee meeting.

i. Public Comments

None

2. BOARD EDUCATION

Ms. Otremba introduced Cheryl Kuch, Rehmann, to the Board.

Ms. Kuch joined the meeting and shared her presentation with the group. She explained the definitions for engaged, not engaged, and actively disengaged. She said Gallup benchmarks show, 29% engaged, 53% not engaged, and 18% actively disengaged. Ms. Kuch said employee engagement is linked to organizational outcomes such as absenteeism and turnover rates.

Ms. Kuch began by reviewing the survey response rates. 2021: 73%; 2022: 88%; 2023: 80%; 2024: 78%; 2025: 77%; and 2026: 71%. Although the rate for 2026 declined, Ms. Kuch said it is good for a sixth survey.

Next, Ms. Kuch reviewed our numbers over the last six years and showed the current Gallup average.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Gallup
Engaged	34%	42%	43%	39%	42%	39%	29%
Not engaged	54%	45%	48%	53%	52%	52%	53%
Actively disengaged:	12%	13%	9%	8%	6%	9%	18%

While the number of engaged employees decreased and the number of actively disengaged employees increased, both numbers are better than Gallup averages.

Ms. Kuch reviewed these numbers from several viewpoints based on demographics and categories; including longevity, location, and position.

Ms. Kuch reviewed the 12 standard questions that drive the survey numbers then reviewed the additional questions specific for Wellvance. Overall, the Agency ranked in the 34th percentile, down from 41st last year.

Ms. Kuch shared responses from staff based on the custom questions. She said staff know the Agency acts on the survey results. She then gave a summary of comments and shared several individual comments with the team. Ms. Kuch concluded by summarizing survey results. Discussion ensued. Questions were asked and answered.

Ms. Kuch departed.

3. REPORTS

a. Chairperson – None.

b. Board Association

Mr. O'Farrell stated the Fall Conference in Traverse City went exceptionally well.

c. NMRE

Mr. O'Farrell and Mr. Varner explained recent SUD requests that were approved.

d. Chief Executive Officer

Ms. Otremba shared the report discussing the two major candidates for the Governor's election. She shared their stated positions on issues which impact behavioral health and Medicaid funding. Ms. Otremba said she isn't endorsing any candidate but wanted to share their stated opinions and review the differences.

e. Committee

(1) Human Resources – October 5, 2026

Committee chair Amy Knepp read the Committee meeting minutes.

There were no motions that required board action.

(2) Program – October 8, 2026

Committee chair Debbie Welsch read the Committee meeting minutes.

There were no motions that required board action.

(3) Facilities – did not meet

(4) Executive & Finance – October 20, 2026

Committee chair Bonnie Lixey read the Committee meeting minutes.

It was moved by Ms. Lixey and seconded by Ms. Knepp to accept the August Financial reports. All ayes; motion passed.

It was moved by Ms. Lixey and seconded by Mr. Varner to adopt the following motion: The Governing body of AuSable Valley Community Mental Health Authority elects to comply

with the requirements of 2011 Public Act 152, the Publicly Funded Health Insurance Contribution Act, by adopting the annual Exemption option for the medical benefit plan coverage year January 1, 2027, through December 31, 2027. All ayes; motion passed.

It was moved by Ms. Lixey and seconded by Ms. Walsh to approve one new contract (Beacon East Ave, Secured Home), twenty hospital renewals with rate changes (BCA Stonecrest, Cedar Creek, Forest View, Harbor Oaks, Havenwyck, Health Source, McLaren Bay Region, McLaren Flint, McLaren Lapeer, McLaren Macomb, McLaren Northern Michigan, McLaren Oakland, McLaren Port Huron, MyMichigan Alma, MyMichigan Alpena, MyMichigan Midland, MyMichigan Sault, Pine Rest, and Trinity Mercy Health St. Mary's), one hospital renewal without rate change (HFHS Acadia Joint Venture). There were six renewals without rate change (Jessica VanHorn, Ken Werner, Do-All, Encompass Therapy Center, Serenity House, and Mio Annex) and one renewal with rate change (IRIS Telehealth). Additionally, there was one single-case agreement (CentraWellness). All ayes; motion passed.

(5) Recipient Rights Advisory – Did not meet

(6) Recipient Rights Appeals – Did not meet

4. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. O'Farrell reminded the Board that there is still a vacancy from Iosco County. Everyone is encouraged to recommend a candidate and to inform Ms. Otremba.

5. NEW BUSINESS

None

6. COMMENTS

a. Board

None

b. Public

None

7. MEETING DATES

a. Board

(1) Monday, November 23; 5:00 p.m.; St. Vincent's Annex

b. Committees

(1) Human Resources – Monday, November 2; 4:00 p.m.; Mio Annex

(2) Program – Thursday, November 12; 2:00 p.m.; Tawas Office

(3) Facilities – Thursday, November 12; 9:30 a.m.; Tawas Office

(4) Executive & Finance – Tuesday, November 17; 4:00 p.m.; St. Vincent's Annex

(5) Recipient Rights Advisory – Tuesday, November 10; 4:00 p.m.; St. Vincent's Annex

(6) Recipient Rights Appeals – Tuesday, November 10; 4:30 p.m.; St. Vincent's Annex

c. Other

(1) CMHAM Winter Conference: February 8-10, Kalamazoo

8. ADJOURN

It was moved by Ms. Walsh and seconded by Ms. Lixey to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Chrivia

Joseph L. Chrivia
Recording Secretary