

**Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners
Committee of the Whole Meeting
July 25, 2017**

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners was called to order in the Commissioners Room by Chairperson John Wallace at 9:30 a.m.

Roll called and a quorum present.

PRESENT: Commissioners Karen Johnson, Richard Sangster, Michael Newman, Cal Gouine, Roberta Matelski, John Wallace and Robert Bolinger.

ABSENT: None

Commissioner Wallace gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Commissioner Sangster seconded by Commissioner Bolinger to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with 7 yes, 0 no and 0 absent.

CITIZENS COMMENTS - None

SCHEDULED VISITORS/DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Chief Executive Officer Christine Gebhard presented the North Country Community Mental Health 2016 Annual Report. She was replacing Alexis Kaczynski who served as the Director for 27 years. North Country was the mental health agency serving six (6) Counties from the tip of the mitt including Cheboygan County. North Country provided a range of services from community mental health, autism, therapy, case management, residential and inpatient care for adults and children, mental illness and intellectual or developmental disabilities. It was created and governed by State statute and ULCA. The representatives were Mike Newman, Ed Ginop and Robert Boyd. The mental health code specified that the counties provide a local match for the budget of community mental health agency. The 2016 annual report showed a local funding of 1.93% of total funding. The annual six (6) county appropriations was \$657,265, which accounted for only 1.4% of their more than \$46 million budget, which was a great deal for the counties. This was especially true because the local match contribution was capped when North Country became an authority for the Board in 2003. Cheboygan County's annual contribution was \$111,995, which allowed them to draw down the State general purpose funds. Ms. Gebhard thanked the Board. In the annual report, North Country funded more than \$14.3 million in payroll for more than 254 employees in the six (6) counties and paid \$23.3 million on contractual services leading to employment of more than 617 additional people. Several million more were spent on goods and services in the six (6) County areas. North Country was a good business for the counties when you consider the value of human services. North Country's mission was to ensure the provision of behavioral health services that improve the quality of life in

the communities. North Country was 87% Medicaid funded through their community partnerships, and advocacy at the local state and national level. State certification was maintained, national accreditation and they undergo regular reviews by regional and state sources, including an annual financial compliance audit. North Country was also subject to an external quality audit review from the National Source, which was done with the Board of Administration cost of only 6.7%. She stated as always, there was good news and not so good news to report. The threat to the public mental health system continued as the legislature maintains its effort for the privatization of the public mental health system by transferring \$2.5 billion in specialty mental health Medicaid funding to the Medicaid Health Plans that were responsible for the physical health benefit to the mild to moderate behavioral benefit. The advocacy groups have strongly spoken out against this. County governments such as this Board have passed resolutions against it and community mental health boards and/or associations were lobbying against it. Section 298 of the FY 2018 Michigan Budget required the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to facilitate two (2) year pilots that would transfer mental funds away from the regional prepaid inpatient health plans, which would manage the Medicaid budget for these specialty services to the Medicaid health plans with the belief that integration at the funding level would result in an improved outcome in cost savings. It was known that true health care integration coordination, happens at the local level between providers. The pilot themselves would necessitate changes in state statute and an approval from the center for Medicaid and Medicare services. The not so good news was the ongoing difficulty with finding inpatient psychiatric beds for persons in mental health crisis. She stated that this had been especially difficult since the closing of Lockwood McDonald hospital in Petoskey by McLaren Northern Michigan. It could take days to locate a bed for an adult or child, which delays treatment, hardship for the family, burdens hospital emergency departments and quite often law enforcement officers. North Country continues to work with the Sheriff Departments, community hospitals and the Michigan Department of Community Mental Health Services to finding solutions for this community and state wide problem. North Country continues to provide quality continued health services to the people who needed it most. In 2016, NCCMH serviced a total of 429 adults and 166 children from Cheboygan County at a cost of \$4,972,114. Additional high lights in the annual report included a story of recovery by Caroline who was a member of their Board. Caroline's commitment to the success of the New Horizon Clubhouse, which was accredited by Clubhouse International last year. It was the 15 Clubhouse in Michigan to receive accreditation and the second for North Country. In the story, "Giving Voice A Year of Discovery", poetry, art and a spoken word was being used to empower persons with mental illness and developmental disabilities, and reduce stigma in the communities. The first pop-up art show was held at Red Sky Stage in Petoskey with over 20 local artists displaying their work. A second pop-up art show would be taking place in Boyne City at the Create Community Art Studio on July 28 & 29th, 2017. She invited the Board to stop in to see them this weekend. May was mental health month, which was a huge success with numerous family events throughout the six (6) County's including a free movie day at the Cheboygan Kingston and Walk-A-Mile rally in Lansing. For each county that participated, a public statement was made on the steps of the legislature. A Day of education was held for the consumers, and the 20th Annual 5K

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – July 25, 2017

Run/Walk was held with 300 participants at the Petoskey Waterfront. NCCMH also received a three-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities in 2016.

Commissioner Gouine stated that as much as North Country does, it seems that it was never enough. He kept hearing about people that couldn't get in to see their doctors in less than three (3) weeks and they couldn't get their medications changed. What would the Board need to do or was it part of the funding? Ms. Gebhard stated that funding was a big issue both locally and at the State of Michigan level because of what was happening with Section 298 along with Medicaid. Nationally the threat to Medicaid at the federal level was what concerned them the most. She hoped that legislators would separate these two (2) issues of the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid, and not put them together so that they would protect these very special funds. The Healthy MI Plan expansion that occurred in Michigan has helped numerous people receive behavioral health services that never had access to them before. The Medicaid Health Plans that were responsible for the physical health benefit were also responsible for what was called the Mild to Moderate Mental Health Benefit. People who were suffering from some mild depression or just having difficulties in their lives and it didn't elevate to the level of a mental illness were responsible for that mild to moderate benefit. She stated these people do not have providers because the fee screen was so low for Medicaid. It was a complicated situation. North Country serves approximately 4,000 people per year and 2,200 of those were long term clients. These were people who have intellectual developmental disabilities and may be with them the rest of their lives. Or people with a very serious illness that will probably with them for 15 to 20 years. Funding was very crucial to them. The general funds that your local dollars help draw down when Medicaid expansion occurred with Healthy Michigan. The Governor took \$200 million out of the CMH budget in order to set it aside for the match they had to make to the Federal Government in another year. North Country went from having a \$4.5 million general fund to a \$1.9 million general fund, which was used to serve people without insurance, lost their Medicaid, went to jail or went into the hospital. North Country had very few dollars that they could use to serve these people.

Commissioner Gouine stated that the Sheriff could verify that there were a lot of inmates in the jail that really should be taken care of for mental health problems versus being lodged in the jail. Ms. Gebhard stated that people who commit crimes sometimes do have mental health issues, but they were still criminals and needed to be treated for their mental illness. There was a jail divergent program and a gentleman by the name of Rob Griffin was the Jail Liaison and he worked very closely with all the County Sheriffs to help divert people out of the justice system or who needed treatment.

Commissioner Newman stated that Ms. Gebhard had addressed this ongoing problem that Cheboygan County had in a presentation years ago. Now being on the Board, he had a better understanding of the amount of beds that were available compared to the number of patients who needed help. Ms. Gebhard stated that the staff sometimes was up all night working to find a bed for somebody in a crisis and then if they couldn't come into work the next day, appointments had to be cancelled. It was a difficult

situation. One of her objectives was to meet with each County Sheriff, Prosecutor, Probate Judge and Hospital Administrators to figure out how they could work together to minimize the burden because they were not going to get rid of it completely. Commissioner Newman stated that it was a wonderful idea and welcomed by all of the parties involved.

Commissioner Wallace questioned if North Country was in sync with the talk about a new hospital being built in the northern region. Ms. Gebhard stated that she heard it was being built at Caro, but has not had confirmation. She had spoken in length with State Representative Sue Allor about it. She also had talked with McLaren Northern Michigan Hospital administrators about converting a portion of the former Cheboygan hospital into bed space for mental health patients. With no State mental hospital nearby, northern Michigan residents needing mental health care must travel or be transported downstate, which creates expense and hardship for law enforcement departments and for family members.

Sheriff Clarmont thanked her for Rob Griffin who has been doing an outstanding job. He totally agreed that the critical issue was lack of bed space. At any time there might be 10% of the jail population that need to be treated for mental issues.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Lawson reported that Community Development staff would be providing an update on zoning and enforcement activity related to the special events being held in Mentor Township at the August 22nd, 2017 Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Administrator Lawson reported that BCBS was sponsoring a Win by Losing event to encourage employee wellness and physical fitness within organizations. Staff would be surveying departments to see if they can develop a team to enter the competition to promote wellness.

BKC Insurance in conjunction with BCBS was donating a free six-month fitness membership for a raffle to be won by an employee who completes their BCBS online health assessment between January 1st and February 1st, 2018.

Administrator Lawson reported that staff would be meeting with the Architect and Sheriff on July 26, 2017 to begin the development of construction drawings for the project. Staff would also be contacting an environmental firm to complete an environmental assessment in the area to be remodeled as well as be working with Granger Engineering to complete a site survey for the improvement area. The project would also require soil boring information. Commissioner Gouine commented on the possibility of an existing basement that was filled in with sand and asked Mr. Lawson to look into it.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Johnson questioned if there was an update on the Solid Waste Management Plan. Administrator Lawson stated that the full Board was going to have to have a discussion on it with a time to be determined. Commissioner Gouine asked if they have moved to the new site. Administrator Lawson stated that they have approval, but didn't think they had moved yet. He would have to check with the Community Development Director.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Gouine stated that he had been contacted by a couple citizens who noticed the salt damage on the columns in front of the County Building and asked if there was the possibility of having the columns repaired.

BOARD MEMBER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

Commissioner Wallace commented on per diems and the pay that they should receive from two separate meetings in different counties or out of state on the same day. Right now, the Board was only being able to charge for one meeting per day. He proposed to have the staff take a look at that and report back to the Board.

Commissioner Newman asked how many times the Board gets appointed to the Committees. Commissioner Wallace stated that it would be every two years. Commissioner Newman questioned the Committees assigned to the new Commissioners. Commissioner Wallace stated that he discussed the new schedule with Commissioner Johnson and attempted to fit her into the schedule. Commissioner Newman commented that with as many of the Commissioners on the Board, he wouldn't want anyone driving from one end of the state to the other or side by side.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Carl Muscott commented that he appreciated the NCCMH 2016 annual report. If any of the Board of Commissioners who had attended the Heritage Cove Planning hearings would be aware of the stigma that was attached to the mental health issues. Sheriff Clarmont has addressed the issues regarding a certain percentage of the jail inmates that have mental health issues that were not being resolved. He was aware of an individual here in the county that was ok when he was on his meds, but when he was off, he was a hazard to the community. He commented on the Planning Session of April 25, 2017 where Commissioners Matelski and Johnson were not present and the Solid Waste Management Plan was discussed. There was some good discussion and he suggested reading the minutes. On the Triple D application, he didn't think that there was anything done on the site and it was not moving along.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – July 25, 2017

Scott Swanson commented that Christine Gebhard had problems getting into the building through the security door today. He stated that this continues to be an issue. They ended up going to the Sheriff Department to get in. As he approached the door, there was a pair of work boots sitting beside the door outside, which told him someone was walking around the inside of the building with their socks because they couldn't get in. Administrator Lawson commented that this was part of the jail project and the architecture would be doing a review of the lay out of that. Previous discussion with the manufacturer was to set up a pod.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Commissioner Wallace commented on the handouts of the Cheboygan County Commissioner/Board Job Description adopted on April 10, 2007, Michigan's Freedom of Information Act and Open Meetings Act and asked that the Board look at them to refresh your memory.

Commissioner Johnson asked that she would like to be excused from the August 8th Finance/Business meeting as she had a prior commitment.

Sheriff Clarmont gave an open invitation to any of the Board of Commissioners and audience to have a tour of the jail to see what he was talking about with the expansion and the reasons for it. He stated that Administrator Lawson did an excellent job on the article advertising the jail expansion.

Commissioner Gouine commented that if the dollar amounts come in higher than expected, did the Sheriff have a plan. Sheriff Clarmont stated that priority was putting the kitchen back into the jail and adding the extra beds. Administrator Lawson stated that the storage unit would be a separate phase.

Commissioner Wallace stated that the CCE 911 Director Bob Bradley's retirement party was scheduled for Monday, July 31, 2017 from 12:00 P.M. to 2:00 P.M. at the center in Petoskey. He was retiring after 20+ years of service.

Motion by Commissioner Wallace to adjourn to the call of the chairperson. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

Karen L. Brewster
Cheboygan County Clerk/Register

John B. Wallace
Chairperson Board of Commissioners