1. Board Support Activities
   a. **Bylaws** – The draft of the Bylaws and Policies provided to the Board during last month’s meeting (and which are slated for review and possible approval at this month’s meeting) have also been sent to our legal counsel, Mr. Andrew Brege. His comments resulted in minor corrections/changes to the Policies as follows:
      i. Section IV. A. (MCL citation changed to 330.180 et seq.)
      ii. Section VII. B. (time limit changed to 5 minutes to avoid uneven treatment)

      I would recommend that you consider these changes minor enough so as to not require another month of consideration. The Bylaws and Policies are now ready for your final approval.
   
   b. **Board Member Recruitment** – Noting that the current or imminent openings on our board provides the County with the opportunity to meet the Mental Health Code requirement for consumer membership, I have been working with our staff and community partners to actively recruit persons with lived experience to apply for board membership. I have met with one person who expressed interest, have received an application from another through our consumer-run drop-in center, and have been in email dialogue with a small number of other potentially interested parties so far. I am meeting with the Parent Advisory Group on 5/22/2017 and hope to include this opportunity/appeal as a part of that conversation. If there is anyone you know who would like more information, please do not hesitate to direct them my way for answers to questions or more information.
   
   c. **Program Committee Recommendation** – Your general support to the direction outlined in my report from last month led to a decision to once again cancel this month’s Program Committee. Finalization of the plan presented (or alternative directives) will allow us to move forward with the new process.
   
   d. **Board Schedule Proposal** – I look forward to your chairperson’s decision on the scheduling of board meetings and committee meetings. Staff are ready to implement whatever schedule you may adopt whether same or different. The chart below is intended merely as a reminder of the idea; it has been revised slightly but is here for your consideration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:30 or 5:00 pm</td>
<td>6:00 or 6:30 pm</td>
<td>“Work Session”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:00 pm</td>
<td>4:30 pm</td>
<td>Recipient Rights Advisory Committee (as desired)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30 pm</td>
<td>5:15 or 5:30 pm</td>
<td>Finance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:15 or 5:30 pm</td>
<td>6:00 or 6:30 pm</td>
<td>Full Board Meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   e. **New Board (or All) Member Orientation** – In addition to the preceding items, we are prepared to work with your chairperson or designee to arrange for orientation of new board members (and those who have not yet been through an orientation) in any manner or process you’d prefer.
2. Recipient Rights
   a. Director of Recipient Rights – Last month, we notified you of the vacant Director of Recipient Rights position, and that our staff member Cathy Haas was appointed as Interim Director of Recipient Rights. We have spent considerable time this month reviewing application and interviewing candidates. Michigan’s Mental Health Code states in rule 330.1757(e) that the Recipient Rights Advisory Committee (RRAC) shall:

   “Recommend candidates for director of the office of recipient rights to the executive director, and consult with the executive director regarding any proposed dismissal of the director of the office of recipient rights.”

   Per our discussion with the RRAC when the position was vacated, my intent is to discuss a final candidate with the RRAC on 5/23/2017.

3. Strategic Plan
   As I mentioned last month, our agency’s strategic plan is due for renewal and I proposed a process to develop a new strategic plan that clearly originates with the vision and policy directions of the board and is responsive to the needs of our community and people we serve. I look forward to working in depth with your chairperson to arrange for this to be done as soon as all of your other committee assignments and meeting schedules fall into place.

4. Budget
   a. Reductions – On May 1, I sent a memo to all staff (see attached) communicating the expense reduction actions we would be taking to deal with our budget shortfalls. I sent the same memo to Mr. DeYoung as board chairperson and left the redistribution to you at his discretion, but stated we would present/discuss it at the May 23, 2017 board meeting as well. This action, while painful on many levels, will reduce expenditures as requested by the LRE for the remainder of this fiscal year and throughout the next.

   The rationale behind laying off any specific individual employee is complex; we relied on agency policies and the employee handbook for guidance which (in part) says this: “the Agency will determine which employees will be affected based upon a number of factors including classification, need, department, qualifications, productivity, attitude, attendance and general performance.”

   Once the decisions were made, I met with each of the affected employees face-to-face along with their supervisors during the week prior to the all staff memo in an effort to convey the level of personal respect and dignity they deserve.

   We have had two unexpected resignations announced since the memo was sent; in one case we were able to rescind one layoff (for Cindy Johnston) and at the time of this writing we are considering how to respond to the other resignation.

5. Staff
   a. Director of Clinical Services – We have selected and announced the appointment of Dr. Geniene Gersh as our new Director of Clinical Services. She begins on May 15, 2017 and by the time of our next Board meeting some of you will have had the opportunity to meet her at the MACMHB conference. We will do a more formal and complete introduction at our May 23, 2017 Board meeting.

   b. Rights Director – As noted above.
c. **Organizational Structure** – The memo that announced Dr. Gersh’s selection as clinical director also identified a realignment of agency organizational structure. The goal of the change was to restore a clinical services reporting structure under the new clinical director and to align several administrative functions to reduce the number of reporting relationships managed at the executive level. This structural change should serve the organization well for the future regardless of where the executive search process leads.

Two changes to note within this move, which are also effective May 15, 2017:

i. Patrick Thebert-Wright will become the Director of Innovation and Best Practices Development. He will report to Deb Trout, Director of Quality Improvement. In this role, Patrick will work across the agency to promote, establish, and support the enhancements, redesign, and growth – and evidence-based services.

ii. Gary Smith will become the Director of Administrative Services and resume his role as head of the finance/business office functions with the additional responsibilities of overseeing the work of purchase of service contracts and Information Technology. Jason Wilkey, will report to Gary.

The structure is depicted below:

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6. **Lakeshore Regional Entity**

a. **Operations Council (CMH CEOs)** – We meet (or met) on May 11 to continue discussions on financial matters with the CMH CFO’s. I will report verbally on anything specifically helpful or relevant. The work on proposed changes to the Responsibilities Grid which defines what PIHP and CMHSP each do under our regional arrangement appears to be moving to a lower priority. The proposal to alter the timeline of planned funding changes in the region continues to be discussed.
7. Networking/Collaboration – I attended an Allegan County Community Foundation event on 4/20/2017 to receive our grant award with staff member Teddie Buchner, and participated with other staff and Board members in the 4/21/2017 fundraiser for Safe Harbor. Other than that, there is nothing to report as my efforts this month have been largely consumed with internal financial and operational/structural change management.

8. MACMHB
   a. Walk a Mile – It was my privilege and delight to join Board member Dick Wiley and Cathy Haas, our Interim Director of Recipient Rights/Customer Services staff member at the annual Walk A Mile rally in Lansing on May 10. I will leave the details of the event to her report, but encourage more to take advantage of this opportunity in future years!
   b. Advocacy – This is probably as good a point as any to note that our advocacy agenda as an agency depends on the perspective and support of the Board. Recent public policy matters at both state (Section 298, DHHS Budget) and federal (ACA/ACHA) levels have been the subject of lively debate in both professional and media circles. As is evident from the updates and materials from MACMHB, our trade association, and the National Council on Behavioral Healthcare, our national organization through MACMHB, there is a need to weigh in with our legislators on these issues because of what they represent to our agency’s funding situation and, as a result, to the individuals we serve and the larger community. I would note that the board (and your director) would benefit from a clarification of the Board’s position on these important and relevant issues so that action in support of those positions can be made with the strength of what some refer to as “one voice”.

9. Priorities – In closing, I will restate the list of priorities I have for the time I serve as your interim executive director. I am working to help Allegan CMH to:
   - Be a more RESPONSIVE agency by (a) supporting and improving the good work we do for people in Allegan and (b) maintaining or building community connections for everyone’s benefit.
   - Be a more EFFECTIVE agency by (a) assisting the board through its transitions, decision points, and key issues, (b) strengthening agency leadership structure, accountability, confidence, and (c) supporting the need for resolution wherever is needed in the organization.
   - Be a more ACCOUNTABLE agency by (a) moving forward and working to overcome whatever challenges come our way in a spirit of openness and collaboration, and (b) using the resources entrusted to us for the greatest good of the people we serve.

Submitted by
Mark A. Witte, MSW, LMSW
Interim Executive Director