

**NORTHEAST TEXAS PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
July 30, 2026**

A regular meeting of the Northeast Texas Public Health District Board of Directors was held on July 30, 2026, at 5:00 p.m., The Genecov Room, Tyler, Texas with the following present:

Board Members:	Laura Newsome, Chair	
	Jessica Bowen, MSN, R.N.	absent
	Kent Boozer, D.D.S., Sec.	absent
	Jeremy Butler	absent
	Cynthia Ball, D.O.	
	Scott Williams	absent
	Nancy Rangel	
	Pam Cunningham	
	Mike McCrady	

Chief Executive Officer:	George T. Roberts, Jr.	
Smith County Health Authority:	Jose Serpa Alvarez, M.D.	
Chief Financial Officer:	Lawanda Owens	
Public Health Emergency Preparedness Director:	Dusty Gonzalez	
Immunizations/TB Program Director:	Sylvia Warren	absent
Environmental Health Director:	Ginger Points	
Community Outreach Director:	Terrence Ates	
Vital Statistics Director:	Rosie Meza	
Human Resources Director:	Dawn Strickland	
Interim Laboratory Director:	Amanda Catlin	
WIC Director:	Tecora Smith	absent
Legal:	Gary Landers	
Recorder:	Janie Jolly	absent
Guests:	Charlotte Coultas	
	Vernora Jones	
	Matthew Anderson, MD	
	Jason Phung, MD	
	Drew Blake, MD	
	Kharl Wright, MD	
	Alex de Ravel	

The meeting was called to order by Laura Newsome, Chair, at 5:05 p.m.

INVOCATION- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the invocation was given by George Roberts.

VISION/MISSION

The Vision and Mission of the Northeast Texas Public Health District was recited by all in attendance.

HEALTH AUTHORITY REPORT by JOSE SERPA, MD

Dr. Serpa gave the Health Authority Report to the Board and reported on the following:

1. NET Health Disease Surveillance Report for June 2026 - the 3 diseases with the greatest number of cases were: Campylobacter with 28 cases reported; Salmonella with 14 cases reported; and Hepatitis C with 13 cases reported.
2. Texas Respiratory Illness Dashboard shows a decline in cases of RSV, Influenza, and Covid-19 for June and July. The hospitalization rates are reporting the same decline.
3. The CDC reports that there is an outbreak of Cyclosporiasis linked to iceberg lettuce in 9 states and E. coli linked to frozen blueberries in 2 states. There have been 1,947 cases of Cyclosporiasis confirmed with 98 hospitalizations and 0 deaths reported. There have been 12 cases of E. coli confirmed with 4 hospitalizations and 0 deaths reported.
4. Cyclosporiasis is an intestinal illness caused by a microscopic parasite. People become infected by swallowing the parasite in food or water contaminated with the parasite. Cyclosporiasis is not spread person-to-person. This year, 2026 is the largest U.S. Cyclosporiasis outbreak on record with 4,173 confirmed cases across 41 states, including Texas. When diagnosed with specific testing, a 7–10-day treatment (TMP-SMX), is available. Wash and cook produce and report cases to Texas DSHS within one week to help stop outbreaks at the source.

The Board thanked Dr. Serpa for his report.

MINUTES

Motion made by Mike McCrady to approve the minutes of June 24, 2026, regular meeting; seconded by Nancy Rangel; motion carried; approved as presented.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

For the month of June 2026, we had revenues of \$1,135,713 which was \$114,877 over budget. Expenses were \$1,120,440 which was \$53,571 over budget. Our net income for the month of June 2026 was \$15,273, which was \$61,306 over budget.

For FY 2026 YTD, we have revenues of \$10,171,112 which was \$227,606 over budget. Expenses were \$9,758,495 which was \$126,326 over budget. Our net income for the first 9 months of FY 2026 was \$412,617, which was \$101,280 over budget.

Motion by Cynthia Ball to approve the June 2026 financials; seconded by Mike McCrady; motion carried; approved as presented.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW NORTHEAST TEXAS PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT BOARD MEMBER

The NET Health Nominations Committee is recommending Mrs. Vernora Jones to serve on the Board of Directors beginning October 1, 2026. Mrs. Jones would replace Mrs. Laura Newsome as one of two City of Tyler appointees to the NET Health Board of Directors. Mrs. Newsome's term is expiring and since she has now served 3 two-year terms on the Board, she is no longer eligible to serve due to term limits.

For background, Mrs. Vernora Jones is a native of Tyler. She left Tyler to attend college and then worked for the Marshall Independent School District for over 9 years. She then moved back to Tyler in 1994 to work for the Tyler Independent School District, first as a Campus Administrator and then in several Leadership positions for 30 years.

She has previously served on the Board of Directors for the East Texas Crisis Center. She is currently active with the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and in her church, North Star Missionary Baptist Church.

Motion by Cynthia Ball to approve the appointment of Vernora Jones as a new NET Health Board member and seconded by Mike McCrady; motion carried; approved as presented.

INTERLOCAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES BETWEEN NET HEALTH AND RUSK COUNTY

Rusk County leadership has requested NET Health's assistance with the public swimming pools and spa permitting program for public swimming pools and spas because Rusk County does not have the specialized experience needed to properly permit aquatic facilities.

Proposed services: NET Health's Environmental Health department would:

1. Permit public swimming pools and spas in Rusk County
2. Conduct inspections
3. Perform plan reviews for pools and spas

Motion by Cynthia Ball to approve the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between NET Health and Rusk County and seconded by Nancy Rangel; motion carried; approved as presented.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

Mr. Roberts gave his report to the Board. He mentioned the following:

1. Mr. Roberts welcomed the new Preventive Medicine Residents, Matthew Anderson, MD, and Drew Blake, MD. They will begin their rotation with NET Health during the 2026-2027 Academic Year.
2. Mr. Roberts gave an update on the status of the Blue Zone project for Tyler. The Blue Zones organization has completed their readiness assessment for Tyler. On a five (5) point scale, Tyler was ranked at 4.5, indicating it is ready to proceed with the Blue Zone work. The plan is for this to be a six-year 102project, and will include the hiring of an Executive Director, and three individuals to work in the areas of People, Places, and Policies. This is being funded by the Health Foundation of East Texas.
3. Mr. Roberts also reported that the FY 2027 budgeting process has begun. Department leaders are currently developing their budgets. They will then be an internal review of the budgets followed by a presentation to the Board at the September 2026 Board Meeting.
4. Finally, Mr. Roberts shared a video that has been produced to encourage the community to get immunized against vaccine preventable diseases. This video was produced at the request of the Immunization Coalition. It was felt that if trusted members of the medical community offered their comments on the value of immunizations, perhaps this would be an encouragement for children to get immunized.

The regular meeting of the Northeast Texas Public Health District Board of Directors adjourned at 5:58pm, and Laura Newsome, Chair, stated the Board would immediately convene in Executive Session. Any vote or action taken will be made when the Board returns to open session.

The Board reconvened in open session at 6:03pm, and Ms. Newsome stated that no action was taken in Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:03pm.

THE NEXT NET HEALTH BOARD MEETING IS THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2026.



Jamie Jolly
Administrative Assistant



Kent Boozer, Secretary,
by Laura Newsome, Chair,
NET Health Board of Directors