

**NORTHEAST TEXAS PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
December 3, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Northeast Texas Public Health District Board of Directors was held on December 3, 2025, at 5:00 p.m., 315 North Broadway, 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.	
	Jeremy Butler	
	Cynthia Ball, D.O.	absent
	Scott Williams	
	Nancy Rangel	absent
	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, R.N.
Environmental Health Director:	Ginger Points, R.S.
Community Outreach Director:	Terrence Ates
Vital Statistics Director:	Rosie Meza
Human Resources Director:	Dawn Strickland
Interim Laboratory Director:	Amanda Catlin
WIC Director:	Tecora Smith
Legal:	Sharon Roberts
Recorder:	Janie Jolly

Guests:	Dr. Liz Villalobos
	Jason Phung, MD
	Gold Uzochukwu, MD
	Alex de Ravel

The meeting was called to order by Laura Newsome, Chair, at 5:04 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. He began by going over the Net Health October 2025 monthly disease numbers. There were 388 total reports in October with 99 disease cases investigated. Out of the 99 cases investigated he spoke directly about Campylobacter with 28 reported cases and Salmonella with 22 reported cases. The instances of Respiratory Illness in our region are inching upwards for Influenza and RSV. The spikes in these illnesses typically rise in November, December, and January. However, at this time, hospitalization rates are not increasing.

Dr. Serpa stated that Texas has reported over 3,500 pertussis cases for 2025, mostly in children, which is about 4 times higher than the same period last year. This marks the second consecutive year of significant year-over-year increases in reported cases. Parents should ensure children are up to date on pertussis vaccinations. Pregnant women and others around newborns should get a booster dose. Pertussis (Whooping Cough) is highly contagious, and early symptoms resemble the common cold. Then severe coughing fits may develop. Approximately 1/3 of infants under 12 months with pertussis require hospital treatment. Early recognition, effective treatment, prophylaxis, and vaccination are vital to limit the spread.

Dr. Serpa discussed Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI's), namely Syphilis, Gonorrhea and Chlamydia. There were more than 2.2 million reported STI cases in 2024. In comparison to a decade ago, overall cases are 13% higher. Some good news is the total number of STI's declined 9% in 2024 compared with 2023. In 2024 there were 186,301 cases of syphilis reported in the United States. Depending on the clinical stage, syphilis can cause genital ulcers, skin rash, and Lymphadenopathies. It can also spread to the brain, Neurosyphilis. Dr. Serpa spoke about Syphilis prevention and ended his report by stating the treatments for Syphilis and reminding everyone that Syphilis is a curable infection.

The Board thanked Dr. Serpa for his report.

MINUTES

Motion made by Kent Boozer to approve the minutes of the October 30, 2025, regular meeting; seconded by Scott Williams; motion carried; approved as presented.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

For the month of October 2025, NET Health had revenues of \$1,259,487 which was \$28,891 over budget. Expenses were \$1,065,523 which was \$44,374 over budget. The net income for the first month of Fiscal Year 2026 was \$193,964, which was \$15,483 under budget.

Motion by Jeremy Butler to approve the October 2025 financial report; seconded by Scott Williams; motion carried; approved as presented.

NET HEALTH RECORD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM RECORD RETENTION & DESTRUCTION POLICY

The Northeast Texas Public Health District's Personnel Manual is periodically reviewed by management for any necessary revisions and or additions to be approved by the Board. The following policy addition is proposed: **Master Policy HR-Property -12 Record Management Program – Record Retention and Destruction Policy.**

The Texas Local Government Records Act (LGRA) requires local governments to establish and maintain a records management program to control the creation, use, maintenance, retention, and disposal of public records. The purpose of this Records Retention & Destruction Policy is to ensure that NET Health complies with the Texas Local Government Records Act and the retention schedules established by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC). It provides a legally required framework for how all NET Health records—regardless of format—must be created, maintained, stored, and securely destroyed.

The policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers and officials of NET Health, and protects the organization by promoting accountability, transparency, and consistent records management practices across all departments. It also safeguards sensitive and confidential public health information by requiring secure handling and appropriate destruction methods.

Adopting and following this policy reduces the risk of civil or criminal penalties for improper recordkeeping, strengthens organizational efficiency, and ensures that NET Health's records are managed responsibly from creation through final disposition. It further clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the Records Management Officer, departmental liaisons, and all employees, helping ensure agency-wide compliance and readiness for audits, investigations, legal holds, or public information requests.

Motion by Jeremy Butler to approve the addition of the Record Retention and Destruction Policy to the Northeast Texas Public Health District Personnel Manual; seconded by Kent Boozer;

motion carried; approved as presented.

Motion by Jeremy Butler to approve HR Director, Dawn Strickland to serve as Records Management Officer, (RMO) for the Northeast Texas Public Health District; seconded by Kent Boozer; motion carried; approved as presented.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

Mr. Roberts gave his report to the Board. Mr. Roberts thanked everyone for attending tonight's Board meeting and especially thanked the Board for their participation this year. Mr. Roberts reminded the Board of the upcoming Christmas Luncheon on Friday, December 12th. He encouraged all to attend.

Mr. Roberts informed the Board of the Sustainable Food grant of \$75,000 and the Fisch Foundation grant of \$55,000 that were both awarded. He thanked Terrence Ates for his work in helping to secure these grants.

Mr. Roberts stated that he attended a very interesting and important meeting at the UT Tyler School of Medicine. The meeting, Texas Partnership Health Access is an effort to gain attention of elected officials, the American Heart Association, and the Cancer Society regarding the health status of Smith County.

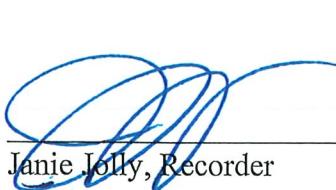
Mr. Roberts stated that he attended the American College of Healthcare Executives East Texas Chapter annual meeting on November 12, 2025, and he had the opportunity to serve as the moderator for a fascinating panel with Dr. Julie Philley, President of UT Tyler, Dr. John English, chief Executive Officer Bethesda Health Clinic, Mr. Donald Baker, Market President UT Health East Texas, and Mr. Chris Glenney, Senior Vice President Christus Health.

Mr. Roberts concluded his report by again thanking everyone and wishing all a very happy holiday season.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

THE NEXT NET HEALTH BOARD MEETING IS THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2026.



Janie Jolly, Recorder



Kent Boozer, Secretary
NET Health Board of Directors