

New Castle City Board of Health Meeting
April 22 2025 -- 6 p.m.
1 Municipal Drive, New Castle, DE

Members Present: Tish Gallagher, Chair
Dr. David Bechtel
Susan McLaughlin

Absent: Jamielee Majewski
Jackie Metz, Vice Chair

Also Present: Antonina Tantillo, City Administrator

Ms. Gallagher convened the meeting at 6:04 p.m. Roll call followed and a quorum to conduct business was declared.

Approval of Agenda

A motion to approve the Agenda was made by Ms. McLaughlin. The motion was seconded by Dr. Bechtel and was unanimously carried.

Minutes

The minutes of the February meeting will be reviewed at the July meeting.

Old Business

BOH Update to City Council – Ms. Gallagher reported that she gave the annual BOH report to City Council at the March 2025 meeting. She noted that Councilperson Zubaca has a particular interest in mental health and offered his assistance to the Board if needed.

Articles – Ms. Gallagher noted that she started an article on mental health, and realizing the complexity of the issue, proposed that she complete an introductory article on mental health and that the Board follow-up with articles on specific topics, including:

- Substance Abuse – Ms. McLaughlin
- Emergency Help: When do you call and what to expect – Ms. Majewski
- Substance Abuse / Mental Health Resources

Article II of the City Code – The Board and Ms. Tantillo reviewed the City and State Codes as they relate to municipal Boards of Health and made recommendations to update Article II of the New Castle City Code. During discussion, it was noted that many antiquated topics are addressed in the Code that no longer have relevance to a modern Board of Health.

It was noted that the BOH had no active role during the COVID pandemic and Ms. Gallagher opined that the BOH could have been an educational resource for the community. Ms. Tantillo suggested that the role of the Board during emergency health situations could be more clearly defined in the Code.

The role of the City Code Enforcement Officer was discussed and Ms. Gallagher suggested that the new Code Enforcement Officer come to BOH meetings to report on issues in the city. Ms. Gallagher will reach out to city staff to include a Report from the Code Enforcement Officer on future Agendas.

Ms. Gallagher asked the Board members to review the City and State Codes and bring their recommendations to the July meeting.

CORE Program Presentation – It was noted that the presentation on the CORE program was very good.

Resident Survey – Ms. Gallagher stated that she continues to research health surveys that are available. A discussion of the best way to gather information from the community ensued during which it was suggested that the BOH have a table at National Night Out. The Board members will review online health surveys and bring ideas for 10-15 survey questions to the July meeting. Ms. Tantillo offered her assistance in setting up an online survey.

It was suggested that the Board have a presence at a future Blood Drive to share information and resources on a variety of topics. Ms. Tantillo will reach out to Councilperson Mattaway regarding a future Blood Drive and offered to assist in coordinating vendors to be present. Other events at which to have a presence were also discussed.

New Business

Disease Update – Bird Flu has not been in the news much, although veterinarians are still expressing concern. Ms. Gallagher noted that:

- No human infections of Bird Flu have been reported since December 2024.
- COVID has been very quiet.
- Measles cases continue to go up. As of yesterday (April 21, 2025):
 - The US has 839 reported cases and seven (7) active outbreaks.
 - Mexico has 451 reported cases.
 - Canada has 1,045 reported cases, mostly in Ontario reportedly from a large gathering of several Mennonite communities in New Brunswick.
 - No cases have been reported in Delaware; but Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland have all reported at least one (1) case.
- Spring is a time to be on the lookout for ticks.
- It has been reported that allergy season will be severe this year; potentially caused by the lengthening spring and fall seasons.

Quarterly Disease Update – Ms. Gallagher suggested that a BOH update be published after each meeting. The members concurred and Ms. Gallagher will reach out to The Weekly.

National Night Out – A date has not yet been set for National Night Out or a Health Fair.

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Mental Health Awareness Month – Ms. Gallagher stated that May is Mental Health Awareness Month and suggested that the City put green ribbons up. Ms. Tantillo suggested that the Board reach out to Mayor Leary and request that she present a Proclamation to City Council to recognize May as Mental Health Awareness Month.

Next Meeting – The next scheduled meeting date is July 22, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business to discuss, Ms. Gallagher called for a motion to adjourn.

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. McLaughlin and seconded by Dr. Bechtel. The motion was carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen R. Weirich
City Stenographer