

TOWNSHIP OF COLTS NECK
BOARD OF HEALTH
June 3, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Jim Schatzle called the Colts Neck Board of Health meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. and read the following statement: "As Chairman and Presiding Officer of this meeting of the Colts Neck Board of Health, I hereby declare that the notice requirements of the New Jersey public meetings law have been satisfied by noticing the Asbury Park Press and the Two River Times on February 26, 2025 stating that a regular meeting of the Colts Neck Township Board of Health would be held on June 3, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at the Colts Neck Town Hall Annex, 3 Veterans Way, Colts Neck. A copy is on file in the Office of the Township Clerk. I further order that this public announcement be placed in the minutes of this meeting."

ROLL CALL INDICATED:

PRESENT: Jim Schatzle, Pam Sokoler, Annemarie Delle Donne, Liz Iacono and Jeff Reisinger

ABSENT: Dr. Boak, Dr. Singh, Dr. McCollum and Linda Stagliano

ALSO PRESENT: Tom Frank, Mayor Tara Torchia Buss and Christine Eschert

Meeting Minutes – Jim Schatzle made a motion to approve the January 7, 2025 meeting minutes, as well as the Health Officer's Summary dated May 1, 2025, and this motion was approved by Liz Iacono, seconded by Pam Sokoler and unanimously carried.

Discussion Items – Posting of Retail Food Inspection Ratings

- As a follow up to the Board's request that Mr. Frank research whether other Health Depts. post retail food establishment ratings for public view, and if this is something that would be viable to pursue, Mr. Frank shared that it appears that only a handful of health departments in Monmouth County post ratings. Also, if they do post ratings, they only post conditionally satisfactory or unsatisfactory ratings on their website.
- The Board agreed to move forward with posting conditional and unsatisfactory ratings on our website in 2026 but felt it would be fair to give the retail food establishments advance notice that this would be occurring. It was decided that a statement be placed in our 2026 annual license renewal letter regarding this new initiative.

Old Business – There was no old business to discuss.

New Business – Health Officer's Report:

- Health Department coverage regarding day-to-day operations has been running smoothly due to the assistance of 2 NJ licensed health professionals, Dana Scotto and Greg Hawriluk. They have assisted in performing plan reviews, conducting food inspections, communicable disease

investigations, septic system and water well field inspections, addressing animal control issues, as well as any other health related situations. They both have been in regular contact with Tom Frank throughout his leave of absence.

- Current federal budget cuts have already had an impact on state and local health department grants and services. Currently, staff have been cut at the State Dept. of Health in the communicable disease division and there has been a major reduction with the State Lab courier service for specimen testing of animals for rabies. Health departments are not quite sure of the total impact this will have on local health services at this point, but we are currently doing our best to ensure that essential services are being maintained within our communities.
- All required Right to Know chemical surveys have been completed for our public facilities, and the necessary data and information have been uploaded to the State website. Hard copies and flash drive versions of the chemical surveys will be sent to each facility over the next 7-10 days.
- The process of updating our Health Emergency Plans (Point of Distribution Plans) is underway. This project will include the County and local OEM teams, as well as all health departments in Monmouth County. The plan is to ultimately conduct a countywide exercise down the road that will help ensure we are prepared to address any local or larger scale health related emergency. The first Zoom meeting was held on May 27th and the next meeting is scheduled for June 26th. The Health Officer will keep the Board apprised of any notable developments during this process.
- The entire State is still under a Drought Warning according to the *NJDEP Drinking Water Supply Indicator Weekly Report* as of the end of May. Although recent soaking rains have helped the situation, the State still continues to highly recommend water conservation practices whenever and wherever possible.
- Avian/Bird Flu/aka H5N1 “virus” update: There are no reported human cases of infection from the virus in NJ as of May 13, 2025. The risk to humans is still low, but the virus can cause severe disease and death in domestic poultry such as chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese. Cases of the virus have been reported in wild birds, mammals and other domestic companion animals, such as cats. The food supply is considered safe so far for the virus. For example, the commercial milk supply is safe due to the pasteurization process, as well as poultry if cooked to proper temperatures.

If the public observes sick or dead wild birds, they are asked to contact the NJDEP Fish and Wildlife Division.

If the public observes sick or dead poultry, they are asked to contact the NJ Dept. of Agriculture’s Division of Animal Health.

- There has been an up-tick in measles cases in the United States. As of May 29, 2025, a total of 1,088 cases have been confirmed in the U.S. this year. Interestingly, measles was declared eliminated from the United States in the year 2000 due to a very high percentage of people being vaccinated. Of the individuals infected in the U.S. so far, 96% of them have been found to be

unvaccinated or of unknown status. Latest statistics are now indicating that the percentage of U.S. kindergarteners being vaccinated is below the 95% coverage target considered needed to maintain what is called “herd immunity” or community immunity. Thankfully, there is no ongoing community spread in NJ at this point.

The biggest takeaway for NJ residents is to make sure they keep up to date on the MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine, especially before travel, particularly outside of the country where infection rates are continuing to rise globally.

Liaison Report – There have been some issues with the new Town Hall building. We are working with Hall Construction to get them remediated. They are replacing a section of the sewer line located approximately 2 ft. underground. Early voting has started, and the Colts Neck Sounds of Summer Concert Series is starting on Thursday, June 5th at Town Hall by the pond. The Mayor will be hosting a local 1st grader as “Mayor for a Day” and that student will be opening one of the upcoming township committee meetings. There will be a Planning Board meeting on June 9th and starting in July they will address the fourth-round spending plan for Affordable Housing.

Public Comment - None

A motion to adjourn was made by Jim Schatzle at 7:54 p.m. and unanimously carried. The next scheduled meeting is July 1, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Eschert - Secretary