

The meeting was called to order at 7:35PM

President Cabuhat stated that notice of this meeting held via Zoom was posted on the Bergenfield Website, sent by e-mail to the Record and Cablevision in compliance with "The Open Public Meetings Act". It was placed on one Bulletin board in the Municipal Building and placed on file in the Borough Clerk's office.

ROLL CALL

- Dr. Cheriyan
- Mrs. Nath
- Mr. Cabuhat
- Ms. Aquino
- Mr. Rivera

Also Present, AnneMarie Delacruz , Jim Fedorko, Liz Cruz (absent), Susan Barker, Ruby Parra (absent) councilman Hernando Rivera was absent.

OPEN HEARINGS

The board meeting began with Mrs. Nath reporting on mental health services for Bergenfield youth, noting that approximately 60 local youth received services within the past year through the Bergen Promise program. Mrs. Nath indicated she would meet separately with the service provider to obtain more detailed data and planned to present this information at a future meeting as an agenda item.

There being no one present who wished to be heard on a motion made by Dr. Cheriyan and Seconded by Mrs. Aquino the time for Open Hearings was closed.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Dr. Cheriyan seconded by Mrs. Aquino and carried that the minutes of the regular meeting of April 2026 be accepted as written.

BILLS TO BE PAID

Mrs. Delacruz stated that on behalf of President Cabuhat, Purchase Orders have been signed by Mrs. Delacruz and submitted. Mrs. Nath discussed the bills for Munidex and the Safe sitter class Mrs. Delacruz explained that Munidex was software upgrades for State Marriage lic program and the safe sitter was for supplies needed for the class.

A motion was made by Dr. Cheriyan and seconded Mrs. Nath and carried that the following bills were reviewed and approved.

Amazon-office supplies	\$ 81.26
Amazon-Giveaways	\$ 67.76
Cooper Pest Control Contract	\$ 1174.08
Health force Training CPR (Nurses)	\$ 261.00
RR Donnelly	\$ 319.50
Nirvani M. Kean-Chong Vet	\$ 450.00 (Rabies Clinic)

REPORTS**Legal and Finance**

“No Report”

Medical

Dr. Cheriyan reported attending a monthly meeting of the New Jersey Department of Health, where cannabidiol (CBD) in food products such as cookies and crackers was discussed at length. He stated that the Governor has issued an executive order directing local authorities to take action on this matter. However, the issue remains under debate. Dr. Cheriyan emphasized that increased attention and monitoring are necessary. Mrs. Nath inquired about any associated health concerns or reported impacts. Dr. Cheriyan addressed her question by explaining the current understanding of potential health risks. Sue Barker noted that until recent conflict between US Federal and State Laws regarding Hemp products and D8 and D9 products was unresolved. NJ has reclarified conflicts and directed the local Health Departments to enforce. The recent changes in NJ Statues have led to NJ DOH directing LHD that all cannabinoid products containing food products (drinks, gummies) are illegal and maybe embargoed. They are considered adulterated food products under NJAC 8:24T. She explained that while federal law permits hemp products, some of these products contain THC compounds (including Delta-8 and Delta-9 THC), leading to inconsistencies between federal and state regulations.

As an example, Sue Barker mentioned that a business in Bergenfield, “Happy Daze,” was found to be carrying such products. She provided additional detail on enforcement considerations and regulatory implications. The issue of CBD and THC-containing food products remains complex due to conflicting regulations. Local health authorities are advised to exercise heightened awareness and consider enforcement actions where appropriate under existing food safety codes.

Personnel

“No Report”

Publicity

The Board of Health meeting was advertised on the Bergenfield Website, The Record and Cablevision.

Liaison To Mayor & Council

“No Report”

Legislature & Regulatory

“No Report”

WRITTEN REPORTS OF THE DEPARTMENT

Sue reported on two significant incidents: a food establishment closure due to refrigeration issues and a rabies case involving a raccoon that fought with a dog, resulting in three people receiving post-exposure prophylaxis. Sue discussed both in detail. First, a food establishment was closed due to lack of refrigeration for perishable foods but reopened two days later after making necessary repairs. Second, a rabid raccoon attacked a dog, leading to post-exposure prophylaxis for three people who were potentially exposed to the rabid animal's saliva. The raccoon was later caught and tested positive for rabies at the lab, the affected dog was vaccinated and required 45 days of confinement. Sue stated that the Bergenfield Police Department provided helpful assistance by identifying approximately 20 people who may have had contact with the infected animal, resulting in three people being advised to receive PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis) due to potential exposure.

Mr. Fedorko discussed his report and recent data on pertussis cases in Bergenfield, showing a significant increase in 2024 with 40 confirmed cases compared to 15 in 2025. The board discussed the need to update the massage parlor ordinance after discovering an unlicensed establishment operating in the town, with plans to review Closter's ordinance as a model and consult with the borough attorney on appropriate amendments.

Mrs. Nath shared information about Bergen's Promise, a mental health program serving 68 Bergenfield youth, and agreed to gather more data and discuss potential collaboration opportunities at the next meeting.

A motion was made by Dr. Cheriyan and seconded by Mrs. Aquino and carried that the written reports for **April 2026** be accepted as written.

CORRESPONDENCE

“No Report”

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Delacruz briefly discussed the Massage parlor ordinance proposing to use Closter's ordinance as a reference. The board determined that while the state does not license massage establishments directly, towns have the option to do so locally. They agreed that they need to consult with the borough attorney to determine whether to amend the existing ordinance or create a new one, particularly regarding proper codification and handling of fees under the health department.

Sue stated that currently Bergenfield has 1 massage parlor in town. She clarified that while the business had received a license to operate in 2022 for \$100, this was not from the Department of Health as required. Sue stated that New Jersey municipalities have varying requirements, with some not requiring licenses for massage parlors. The conversation also spoke of other municipalities like Closter handle massage parlor regulations through police review and sanitary inspections.

The Board discussed the need to codify health department sanitary codes, particularly regarding hand washing facilities at massage parlors. Dr. Cheriyan and Sue agreed to develop an ordinance based on Closter's existing code, with Mrs. Delacruz offering to draft the initial version for review before the next meeting in May.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

"No Report"

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

The mayor's wellness initiative was discussed, with Dr. Cheriyan and Mrs. Nath emphasized the importance of using volunteers rather than taxpayer funds for nursing services, and requesting that Liz coordinate volunteer recruitment. Mrs. Aquino asked what duties the volunteers would perform, and Mrs. dela Cruz explained that volunteers would assist with taking weights and blood pressure readings. The group discussed organizing volunteers for health-related activities, particularly for measuring vitals like blood pressure and weight. Mrs. Nath offered to recruit 2-3 Bergenfield High School students interested in nursing fields to assist with BMI readings. Dr. Cheriyan noted that, in the past, Nurse Pat August had provided volunteer support. He asked Mrs. Delacruz to connect Liz with Mrs. Nath so that volunteer arrangements could be coordinated. Mrs. Nath also asked Mrs. Delacruz to have Liz connect with her for additional support and discussed rotating volunteers across different programs including Zumba, line dancing, and basketball classes. Mr. Fedorko commented that this was a good idea. Mrs. Delacruz reviewed the activities for which volunteers would be needed. Mrs. Nath confirmed that she would like to recruit nursing students as volunteers to assist with the health-related needs of the program.

Mrs. Nath discussed Bergen's Promise, a mental health program serving 68 youth from Bergenfield, she reported that the program serves both children and adults, with various referral sources including schools, families, and community providers. The board discussed potential ways to support the program, including offering clinic space and exploring resource needs. They agreed to gather more information about the program's expectations and next steps before presenting at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being nothing further to come before the Board, on a motion by Dr. Cheriyan seconded by Mrs. Aquino and carried, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:35pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Annemarie DelaCruz
Registrar of Vital Statistics*