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**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER  
BOARD OF MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATIONS**

**BOARD OF MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATIONS  
REGULAR MEETING**

Board Meeting Minutes from  
Thursday, February 1, 2024, at 2:00 p.m.  
921 NE 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73105  
and Via Videoconference

*In conformity with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act, advance notice of this meeting was transmitted to the Oklahoma Secretary of State on December 04, 2023, at 2:54 P.M. and public notice of this meeting, together with the agenda, was posted in prominent public view on the front door of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, 921 NE 23rd Street, Oklahoma City, OK, and 1627 Southwest Blvd., Tulsa, OK 74117.*

Members present: Dr. Harp, Dr. Magguilli, Ms. Marsee, Mr. Stiles, and Dr. Pfeifer.

Members absent: Dr. Beaman, Ms. Spurlock, Mr. Reed, and Dr. Stewart.

Others Present: Dr. Josh Lanter (OCME), Madalynn Martin (OAG), Kari Learned (OCME), Michele Krizan (OCME), Dr. Marc Harrison (OCME), and Elysa Imhoff (OCME).

Dr. Harp called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Roll was called, and a quorum was established.

Dr. Harp motioned to adopt the minutes as written from the November 2, 2023, meeting. Dr. Pfeifer seconded the motion. Roll was called and all were in favor.

•Update from the Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Eric Pfeifer.

~Dr. Pfeifer presented the agency update to the Board.

Dr. Pfeifer announced the overarching priority has been and continues to be the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) reaccreditation. Our strategic plan to move toward the goal of reaccreditation has not changed.

Unlike many other agencies, we have 3 full-time anthropologists on staff. Dr. Pfeifer would like to have one more anthropologist for the Tulsa office. Our agency has requested an incremental increase for a full-time anthropologist from legislature.

Our agency has been corresponding with the Health Department to help facilitate the Death Certificates process. Dr. Miller in Tulsa has been doing outreach work to help educate other

physicians in the community with the process of death certification. In the next few years, Dr. Pfeifer hopes to see this help speed up the process.

#### Physicians-

As mentioned in our last meeting, starting in July 2024, 3 pathologists (this includes our current fellow) will join the Oklahoma City office. With these additions, both Oklahoma City and Tulsa offices will be fully staffed with 20 physicians. Two more forensic pathologists want to join our agency next year.

There is a slight increase in the open cases over 90 days old. Currently, there are 377 open cases over 90 days old. We are working hard to get these cases completed.

#### Fellowship-

Both fellowship positions have been filled for the 2024-2025 academic year. As of right now, there are 8 applicants for 2025-2026.

#### Administration-

We just completed demos for the new case management system (CMS). We received an extension of approximately 2 years to acquire and implement the CMS.

Jerry Thomas was hired as a project manager, in part to help with tasks such as having the autopsy floors in Oklahoma City refurbished and the third-floor build-out. This would involve approximately 10,000 sq ft on the west end of the third floor.

An outside consultant was hired to help prepare us for NAME accreditation. This consultant has a lot of experience in helping agencies obtain NAME accreditation. He will be starting later this month.

#### Investigations-

The average scene response time has been reduced from 1 hour, 24 minutes to 1 hour and 19 minutes this is an average for all 77 counties.

Permit turnaround has also decreased. March 2022, the average was 15 hours 56 minutes. We're now averaging 12 hours and 36 minutes. The goal is 2 business days which we are well within.

Tulsa investigator, Philip Miller has taken the lead on the forensic drone program. The drones are equipped with fluorescent infrared that detects temperature differences. He is also providing mutual aid to other agencies nationwide.

#### Toxicology lab-

The current turnaround time for positive toxicology results is 76 days. We are currently meeting NAME guidelines of 90% completed within 90 days. However, we would like to cut the turnaround time to 90% completed within 60 days. The toxicology laboratory needs additional space for personnel. The expansion to the 3rd floor will also help in this area.

Legislative-

Dr. Pfeifer has not seen any new legislation that directly affects the OCME. Our agency is proposing an administrative rule change for permit fees. This was last reviewed and increased in 2016. We are proposing a \$35 increase for both cremation and out-of-state-transport permits. The agency will first need to get the statute changed to allow for the permit fee increase.

Priority projects-

The priority project for the agency has not changed and will continue to be NAME reaccreditation by early 2025.

We presently have \$9.8M in available cash. Dr. Pfeifer proposed the money be used in the following manner. Reserve \$3M for 2 months payroll expenses. The agency has several diagnostic machines that cost over \$500K each. We would like to reserve \$1M to immediately replace them as they reach the end of life and begin to fail. Dr. Pfeifer would like to allocate \$2M to the toxicology lab and Oklahoma City office expansion. Lastly, Dr. Pfeifer would like to reserve \$1M for the CMS on the chance the project isn't completed within the required timeframe.

- Update from the Deputy Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Josh Lanter

This July, 3 pathologists (this includes our current fellow) will join the Tulsa office. With these additions, both offices will be fully staffed. The next step is regaining NAME accreditation. As a result of Dr. Harp's recommendations, Dr. Lanter has noticed medical students in their first & second year rotate with the agency as opposed to third & fourth-year medical students. Dr. Lanter hopes this will help influence first & second-year medical students in becoming forensic pathologists.

New business-

No new business.

Dr. Harp motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Marsee seconded the motion. Roll was called and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 2:23 pm