

CENTRAL OFFICE
901 N. Stonewall
Oklahoma City, OK 73117
Tel: (405) 239-7141
Fax: (405) 239-2430



EASTERN OFFICE
1115 West 17th St.
Tulsa, OK 74107
Tel: (918) 295-3400
Fax: (918) 585-1549

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

**BOARD OF MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATIONS
REGULAR MEETING**

Board Meeting Minutes from
Thursday, December 4, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.
Location Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
901 N. Stonewall, Oklahoma City, OK 73117, 405-239-7141 and
Via Videoconference at 1115 W. 17th St., Tulsa, OK 74117, 918-582-0985

In conformity with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act, advance notice of this meeting was transmitted to the Oklahoma Secretary of State on December 12 at 4:22 PM 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, 901 N. Stonewall, Oklahoma City, OK and on the front door of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner Eastern Division, 1115 W. 17th, Tulsa at 10:50 am, December 3, 2014.

Members Present: Mr. Charles Curtis, Mr. Chris Ferguson, Mr. Rocky McElvany, Dr. Barbara Bane

Members attended via Videoconference: Dr. Doug Stewart, Dr. Karlis Sloka & Mr. Thomas Mortensen

Members Absent: Dr. Steve Vogel

Others Present: Amy Elliott (OCME), Kari Learned (OCME), Dr. Marc Harrison (OCME), Timothy Dwyer (OCME), Dr. Josh Lanter (OCME) via videoconference, Callie Farrar (OCME) via videoconference, Tiffany Wythe (OAG), Patrick Blair (United Tissue Network), Emily Summars (JRLR) and Cynthia Santos (eCapitol)

Mr. Curtis called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Roll was called and a quorum was established.

Mr. Ferguson motioned to adopt the minutes from the November 6, 2014 meeting. Mr. McElvany seconded the motion. Roll was called, Mr. Curtis abstained, and all others were in favor.

Update from Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Eric Pfeifer

- Financial update: Current available cash in the Agency's accounts is \$4.6M. This amount plus the sale of Bonds will provide enough money to build a new building for the Oklahoma City office. Mr. Ferguson asked if the majority of the \$227K receivables were from permits. Dr. Pfeifer acknowledged that is the previous month's intake from receipts. Mr. Ferguson also asked if this represents approximately 95% of the Agency's revenues. Dr. Pfeifer agreed and added this is approximately 25% of the Agency's budget.

- Priority projects:

~Reduce the backlog of cases: Backlog being defined as, any case that is greater than 90 calendar days old. We are currently at 94 autopsies and 1 viewer greater than 90 days of age. The goal is to get this very close to zero and keep it there. The new National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) standards released in February of this year specifies maintaining 90% of cases completed in less than 60 days to avoid a phase I deficiency. We must complete 90% of cases in less than 90 days to avoid a phase II deficiency. One phase II deficiency will lose the accreditation.

~ Complete the web based permit process. Permits and invoices are transmitted to the funeral home at the same time which avoid redundant keystrokes.

~ Standardize procedures for case sign out. The new process will use elements of the permit system.

Dr. Bane asked Dr. Pfeifer how many external examinations and autopsies the agency is expected to perform this year. Dr. Pfeifer advised approximately 1700 autopsies and well over 3000 external examinations. Dr. Pfeifer expressed concerns that these numbers should be reversed. This will only be accomplished when we have an increase in pathologists.

Chief Administrative Officer, Amy Elliott provided the following update:

- Permit update:

~ Tod Hardin with Discoversoft anticipates the permit system to be ready by the end of the year. Once the system has gone through beta testing we will email the funeral homes their login information and start the new process. This will allow the funeral homes to submit the permit request through the web application. Approximately January 12th we will start working on the RFID (Radio-frequency identification) system.

Discussion regarding the new building for the Central Medical Examiner's Office:

Dr. Pfeifer is comfortable that there is enough money to complete the project as designed by the architects. The funding would be through the real property Master Lease which at the end of the 30 year term would be a cost of \$75M. This would be \$208K to \$215K per month; this does not include building maintenance and utilities.

There has been mention of collaborative spaces being created. The collaborative area would be for histology, teaching, toxicology, anthropology and investigations and potentially health care administration. There is also an auditorium, 2 classrooms and a number of UCO faculty offices. Mr. Curtis expressed concern that the collaborative space currently takes 27% of the building. A portion of this cannot be classified as collaborative as it is designated specifically for UCO offices and a break room. He also mentioned 16% of the square footage is designated for electrical/mechanical and is not useable space. Mr. Curtis feels the remaining space will not be sufficient for OCME. Mrs. Elliott advised her calculations for the anticipated space not being used the ME's office is approximately 14,490sf.

Mrs. Elliott advised the Board that OCME, Ms. Wythe and the Director of Real Estate and Leasing Services, Ms. Milburn reviewed the language in the lease and added their concerns. The lease is currently being reviewed by UCO. We hope to have a final lease agreement by the end of the year, if not then, by the next OCME Board meeting. Mr. McElvany and Mr. Mortensen offered their assistance to Dr. Pfeifer in an effort to move this process along. Dr. Stewart wants to make sure Dr. Pfeifer has everything he needs to move forward and make the necessary decisions.

No action was taken.

Discussion and possible action on the proposed clean up to O.S. 63, section 931-954:

There are minor typographical and grammatical corrections to be made. The proposed language change is in 63, 941a. Currently this section reads, in part, "Within three (3) hours after the death of any person who is at the time of death attended by a licensed physician, the body of the deceased shall be released..." The proposed new language will read; "Upon completion of the OCME examination, the body of the deceased shall be released..." Senator Standridge and Representative Billy have agreed to carry the Bill.

Dr. Lanter advised the American Board of Pathology requires forensic pathologists to fulfill certain requirements every 2 years in order to maintain certification. The forensic pathologists who are not grandfathered into the old plan are required to retake the forensic pathology examination every 10 years. The maintenance of certification recently changed to include surgical pathology, which none of our pathologists practice. Dr. Lanter is concerned with the language in the statute that addresses the qualifications of our physicians. Dr. Pfeifer would like to see how this evolves and suggested we revisit the subject next November.

Mr. Ferguson questioned raising the maximum permit fee to \$300 and acknowledged the actual fee must be increased through the administrative rule process. Having this language in O.S. 63, 948 prior to an increase would make the fee increase less complicated when the rule is changed. Mrs. Elliott advised the Bill would most likely be killed if we were to make this change. Mr. McElvany suggested we find an author for this specific item.

Mr. Ferguson motioned to approve the proposed language changes and present to the Legislators as written. Dr. Bane seconded the motion, roll was called and all were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:46 pm.