

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, January 7, 2016 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 November 18, 2015, at 2:57 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.

Members Present: Mr. Charlie Curtis, Mr. Rocky McElvany, Dr. Roy Zhang, Dr. Steve Vogel, Dr. Eric Pfeifer, and via videoconference, Dr. Karlis Sloka and Dr. Doug Stewart.

Members absent: Mr. Chris Ferguson and Mr. Glen Huff

Others Present: Amy Elliott (OCME), Dr. Byron Curtis (OCME), Kari Learned (OCME), Lori Shively (OCME), Jesse Kemp (OCME), Tiffany Wythe (OAG), Alyssa Harrison (United Tissue Network), Cynthia Santos (eCapitol) via videoconference, Dr. Josh Lanter (OCME) and Mary Wilson (OCME) and Dr. Ross Miller (OCME).

Mr. Curtis called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. Roll was called and a quorum was established.

Mr. McElvany motioned to adopt the minutes from the December 3, 2015 meeting. Dr. Vogel seconded the motion. Roll was called, and all were in favor.

Update from Chief Medical Examiner – Eric Pfeifer, M.D.

● Financial snapshot –

~ Expenditures were slightly down from the previous month. Receipts from cremation and out of state transport permits were fairly robust for the month. The amount of available cash is currently \$5.6M.

Expenses are beginning to stabilize, in part, the staff is starting to reach the 7 year progressive salary tier system introduced a few years ago. The agency currently has 88 employees, of which, all but 16 have been here 7 years or greater. Means: 72 employees have reached the present target salary.

The consequences of the general revenue failure are such, if it remains uncorrected, this will result in a 6% reduction in appropriations to the OCME (Office of the Chief Medical Examiner). This amounts to approximately \$600K per year less. This will reduce our annual carryover from \$1.9M to \$1.3M.

- Priority projects –

- ~ The web-based permit system is working very well and is nearly finished.

- ~ The automated annual report is very close to being finished. There are a few discrepancies in the report that are currently being addressed by the database developer, Tod Hardin with DiscoverSoft. A demonstration of the new process was presented.

- ~ The ongoing projects are the building upgrades for both locations and NAME (National Association of Medical Examiners) reaccreditation.

- Update on building remodel –

This process is moving very quickly. The site has been identified. A meeting with the CLO (Commissioners of the Land), local architects, national lab designers and the engineers was held January 5th and 6th. Funding is a major concern; this appears to be approximately a \$22M project, and the agency currently has \$5.6M. The schematic designs and Gantt diagrams have been provided by CLO. They anticipate occupancy by August of 2017.

Dr. Stewart asked Dr. Pfeifer if he is comfortable with the design. Dr. Pfeifer advised all recommendations are being added to the initial space program and schematic designs and that the agency is very much involved.

Update from Chief Administrative Officer – Amy Elliott

- Office updates –

- ~ The cases database is being expanded into additional areas. An anthropology tab is being added, in part, to account for time for search and recoveries.

Last month, 17 previously unidentified cases were identified. Some cases dating back to 1985.

The Administrative Rules for fee changes were submitted to the Secretary of State on December 21, 2015. The Rules have been approved and will be filed in the registry. Ms. Elliott was notified December 22, 2015, by Cabinet Secretary Thompson that the Rules meet with his approval. We are still waiting to hear back from the Governor's office. The proposed Administrative Rule change has been posted to the OCME web page. This is open for public comment until March 3, 2016. If any concerns are brought forward, Ms. Elliott will inform the Board. A public meeting will be held after the close of the comment period and will then go to the legislators for action then to the Governor. Dr. Pfeifer, Dr. Lanter, Amy Elliott and Timothy Dwyer have approached the funeral industry and spoke with 100-200 funeral homes letting them know about the fee increase. No negative feedback has been received by them.

The fees have not been increased since 2007 and are being brought up to the statutory limits. In 2015 the agency processed approximately 17,389 cremation and out of state permits. If the agency is allowed to increase the fees, this would bring in an additional \$869K.

- Staff updates –

- ~ No staff updates to report for Oklahoma City.

- Legislative update –

~ Ms. Elliott visited with representatives from Senator Standridge's office. They have reserved proposed SB2460 to include language clean-up so OCME and the State Health Department language read the same. This will be submitted as a bill January 21, 2016.

Update from Deputy Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Joshua Lanter

- Tulsa office updates – Josh Lanter, M.D.

~ There are no significant changes to announce for the Tulsa office.

Mr. McElvany motioned to enter into executive session. Dr. Vogel seconded the motion, roll was called and all were in favor. Dr. Pfeifer was asked to remain in the meeting. The videoconference was ended.

Videoconference was re-established. Mr. McElvany motioned to exit executive session. Dr. Vogel seconded the motion, toll was called and all were in favor.

Mr. McElvany provided the following statement on behalf of the Board. "Dr. Pfeifer, after your review today, we would like continually show our confidence in your leadership and our support for your leadership and our pleasure with what you have accomplished over these years. With the reduction of the time frames and accomplishment by you being able to develop staff and hire staff. We want to show that we support you 100%". Dr. Pfeifer thanked the Board members. No action was taken.

Mr. McElvany motioned to adjourn the meeting; Dr. Sloka seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.