

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



EASTERN DIVISION
1115 West 17th St.
Tulsa, OK 74107
Tel: (918) 582-0985
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, March 6, 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 12:25 pm, March 5, 2014.

Members Present: Mr. Chris Ferguson, Mr. Rocky McElvany, Mr. Charles Curtis, Dr. Barbara Bane, Mr. Thomas Mortensen and Dr. Eric Pfeifer

Members Attended via Videoconference: Dr. Doug Stewart

Members Absent: Dr. Michael Ogle and Dr. Karlis Sloka

Others Present: Kari Learned (OCME), Martha Kulmacz (OAG), Lori Shively (OCME), Samantha Mitchell (LifeShare) and Callie Farrar (OCME via videoconference)

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

Mr. McElvany motioned to adopt the minutes from the December 12, 2013 meeting. Mr. Curtis seconded the motion. Roll was called and all were in favor.

Dr. Pfeifer provided the following update:

- The financial snapshot continues to show the typical carryover, we are still running in the black. The Agency had some major expenses this month with replacing the roof on the Tulsa building and document scanning.

- Permit update: We continue to email permits to the funeral homes, which is saving an enormous amount of time for our employees who process the permits. The front end process has been built. It includes the form that allows the funeral home to complete an application and send it to us via email. Once we receive the email, the application information is imported into our database. When the medical records have been received and a diagnosis is determined, the case is transmitted to the doctors desktop where it can be signed out electronically. We hope to have this out to the beta test funeral homes within two to three weeks.

- Legislative update: The Governor has added us to her executive budget with recommendation for a \$2M appropriations increase. If this passes, we will be able to hire the additional personnel that were requested and pay for a bond for the Oklahoma City Building. This could possibly pay for a bond to renovate the Tulsa office as well.

Update from Chief Administrative Office

- Meetings have been held with several groups regarding our mass disaster readiness plan. We are very close to having the plan updated with specific detailed instructions. Mrs. Elliott will send it to the Board once the plan has been reviewed by Dr. Pfeifer. The tornado shelters have been installed in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. We plan to have a full tornado drill in the very near future and will notify the situation room at the State Health Department that we are having a drill. Mrs. Elliott is meeting with the Funeral Home Association this coming Tuesday, March 11th, to discuss how they will be fit into the mass disaster plan.

- The Department of Health has given us \$150K they had left over from Federal Grants. The paperwork has been completed and the funds are being transferred to us. We are purchasing GPS tracking devices for the investigators. This will allow them to know the coordinates when they are in a situation where there are no recognizable landmarks. We are also purchasing radios to be used when cell phones are not available due to tower outages. Cement pads will be installed on the west side of the building to park trailers on. We want to thank the Health Department for the generous gift.

- Mrs. Elliott introduced Samantha Mitchell with LifeShare. We have worked with her on creating the protocol between our Agency and LifeShare. The protocol has been reviewed and approved by Martha Kulmacz with the AG's office.

- Dr. Ruth Kohlmeier joined the Oklahoma City office in January 6th and Dr. Niblo will join the Tulsa office in July. Dr. Pfeifer added that Dr. Kohlmeier has a strong academic background. She has agreed to act as the fellowship program director for our program.

- The fax server was installed in Oklahoma City; this saves an enormous amount of paper.

- Mrs. Elliott continues to work with OMES on implementing an online payment system. The original request to them was June 28, 2013. We have a meeting scheduled for Friday, March 14th; this process will allow the funeral homes to pay invoices online.

- We are waiting on OMES to approve our RFID system which will be installed in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. This will allow us to track the movement of bodies through the morgue and when they are being released to funeral homes. Oklahoma City will be able to move the equipment to the new facility when the building is ready. Dr. Pfeifer added this will assist with chain of custody questions on the witness stand.
- We are having a new Polycom videoconference system installed. It should be up and running by our meeting next month. The Lodox x-ray machines have been purchased for Oklahoma City and Tulsa. We anticipate installation in approximately 4 months. Additional microscopes have been approved for purchase.
- The OSU affiliation letter has been finished and approved. This will allow students from OSU to intern in the Tulsa office.
- Oklahoma City will not have a fellow for 2014-2015. Dr. Roquero's student visa will not be extended.
- Dr. Miller will interview in Oklahoma City April 1st for our fellowship. She is applying for the 2015-2016 academic year.
- Legislative update: Senate Bill 1183 passed the Senate and will now go to the House; a committee will be set up to review the language cleanup. Rep. Lisa Billy is carrying this for us. Rep. Billy also introduced HB 2940; this bill would prohibit the release of a report to the public prior to being released to a family. The House has approved the bill and it is going to the Senate.
- We are experiencing significant leaks throughout the building in Oklahoma City. The roof must be replaced or repaired.
- Thanks to Mr. Ferguson, Mrs. Elliott met with Cindy Longenacre who is on the Oklahoma Funeral Board. She has agreed to create a Q & A webinar that will provide hospice groups information on having family complete an approval form when a patient is put on hospice. This approval would allow OCME to have medical history in advance. This would speed up the process if the family chooses to have the patient cremated.

Update from Tulsa Office Manager

- Personnel update: Investigator Matt Davis transferred to an open investigator position in Oklahoma City. Liz Coldwell, Tulsa Investigative supervisor stepped down and took the open position vacated by Matt Davis. It was decided that the open supervisor position would not be filled. Ms. Farrar will take over scheduling, human resources and personnel issues and Mr. Dwyer will deal with job related issues. Tulsa now has an opening for a death investigator; interviews for this position are being held next week.
- An area of the office that was originally set up as a lab was not being utilized. This area has been remodeled and is being used by the transcriptionist and records department. There were some repairs made to the doctor's offices and Dr. Niblo's office was finished.
- The heat exchangers on the boiler need to be replaced. It is a large expense, but it must be repaired.

- Ms. Farrar is currently working with AT&T on getting lines and conduit installed for the fax server installation.

There was no action taken on the agenda item regarding Title 63 as it relates to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

Mrs. Kulmacz advised that the Chief Medical Examiner has broad power managing the Agency and Dr. Pfeifer has the authority to approve the LifeShare protocol. Dr. Pfeifer is satisfied with the protocol and is willing to approve it as written.

Mr. Curtis advised Rep. Leslie Osborn introduced HB 3294 which would change unclassified employees to classified and would eliminate merit protection. This would provide for an increase of 2% for all employees and an additional 1% targeted for specific groups such as law enforcement.

Dr. Stewart questioned the language in Title 63 as to the Chief Medical Examiner retaining the authority to delegate investigative authority to pathologist throughout the state or emergency medicine physicians. Dr. Pfeifer advised that in the event of a large emergency DMORT would be deployed with a DPMU. With that a large number of professionals would be deployed as well.

Mr. Ferguson questioned the release time of bodies being changed from 18 to 24 hours. Dr. Pfeifer advised that in the last 4 weeks we have had extremely few bodies carryover to the next day. This is due to the additional physicians on staff.

Mr. Curtis motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Mortensen seconded the motion. Roll was called and all were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm.