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COMMISSION ON MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATIONS MEETING MINUTES

June 30, 2023

The meeting of the Commission on Medicolegal Investigations was held at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) in Farmington, CT on Friday, June 30, 2023.

Present: Todd D. Fernald, J.D. Chairman (Present)
Sidney M. Hopfer, PhD. Secretary (Present)
Beth Frugale, DPH (Present)
John H. Sinard, M.D., Vice Chairman (Remotely)
Michael Krinsky, M.D. (Remotely)
Susan Keane Baker, M.H.A. (Remotely)
Celia Pinzi (by phone)

Also Present: James R. Gill, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner
Maura E. DeJoseph, D.O., Deputy Chief Medical Examiner
Holly Cuomo, Executive Secretary
Lincoln Dwayne Gordon, OCME Administrator

Chairman Fernald called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm.

The March 2023 minutes were adopted and signed.

Medical Examiner Summary:

Dr. Gill provided the Chief Medical Examiner report to the COMLI.

Autopsy Workload and Turnaround Times: Dr. Gill provided information regarding the projected 2023 autopsy numbers.

Case completion data was reviewed. It is projected that all the Medical Examiners will be below 325 autopsies, which is the maximum allowed by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME).

Medical Examiner Staffing: The Legislature approved an additional Medical Examiner (ME) position; therefore, there is a total of three (3) vacant ME positions.

Scene Investigations: Investigator scene presence for March and April were 98% and 99% respectively.

Updates on Connecticut General Statutes: Reviewed the recent legislative changes to our statutes.

Fiscal Summary:

Lincoln Dwayne Gordon provided the fiscal update for OCME.

Agency Staffing: He used the provided meeting materials/spreadsheets to illustrate the current staffing and vacancies, along with the recruitment summary provided by Jaime Sanz, Human Resources Director. At the beginning of June, we had 90 authorized positions, consisting of 63 full-time positions, 6 per diem and 21 part-time. Recruiting efforts continue to fill the vacancies.

Human Resources: Jamie Sanz is finishing up the CHRO report, which is the Affirmative Action Plan for the office.

Fiscal:

Expenditures and Grants: The budget numbers for June/ fiscal year end will not be completed until next week.

Revenue: A summary of revenue streams was reviewed. The cremation report shows the downturn in paper billing for cremations that is offset by the marked increase in EDRS (electronic death registry system) electronic payments for cremation.

Contracts: The lease for two (2) leased refrigerated trailers will be eliminated.

Security: DAS completed a security audit of the facility, including a full inspection, review of cameras, perimeter, and other areas of weakness. They made recommendations which included 24/7 security presence at the facility.

Other Conversations:

EDRS Updates: Beth Frugale updated the group that a fetal death module is under construction as an addition to EDRS and they hope it will be complete by the beginning of 2024. This module will contain all the fetal death certificates (any fetus >20 weeks gestation that is stillborn must have a fetal death certificate).

Election of Officers: Commission Fernow stated that members will stay in their current officer positions until they no longer wish to, or somebody else wishes to have an election, in which case an election will occur immediately.

Adjournment:

There were no other matters to address. Followed by a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 3:02 pm.

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Signed minutes will be published once approved.

Sidney M. Hopfer, PhD
Secretary