

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Sedgwick County Regional Forensic Science Center
1109 North Minneapolis Street, Wichita, Kansas 67214

November 18, 2021

Board Members Present

- Dr. Shelly Steadman, Director, Regional Forensic Science Center
- Dr. Ron Varner (Chair), Coroner, 13th District
- C.D. Dugan, Interim Fire Marshal, Wichita Fire Department
- Jose Salcido, Deputy Chief, Wichita Police Department
- Brad Crisp, Deputy Chief, Sedgwick County Fire District #1
- Ann Swegle, District Attorney's Office
- Jennifer Magana, City Attorney, City of Wichita
- Dr. Kevin Brinker, Medical Director, Sedgwick County EMSS
- Russell Leeds, Assistant County Manager
- Darrell Atterberry, Chief of Police, Bel Aire
- Melissa Walker, Director, WSU Hugo Wall School of Public Affairs
- Dr. Garold Minns, Dean, KU School of Medicine-Wichita

Board Members Absent

- Jeffrey Easter, Sedgwick County Sheriff
- Dr. Timothy Gorrill, Sedgwick County Coroner

Attendees Present

- Katie Asbury, Forensic Administrator, Regional Forensic Science Center

AGENDA

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 AM.

II. Introductions and Roll Call

III. Review of Minutes from the August 19, 2021 Meeting

IV. Vacant Appointment Updates

Dr. Shelly Steadman

- Re-appointments for Dr. Varner and Chief Atteberry were approved by the BOCC on October 6, 2021

V. RFSC Updates

Dr. Shelly Steadman

- Quarterly update on reported deaths and medical (scene) investigations
- Percentage of total out-of-county cases remains ~20%
- Suicides are stable
- Fentanyl continues to be an emerging factor dealt with in pathology and toxicology – almost 50% of overdose cases have fentanyl onboard
- Number of accidental overdose cases continues to increase
- Making progress on the toxicology backlog – 4 analysts in training can now contribute to assay workflow, 2 are scheduled for moot court
- Number of submitted ante-mortem toxicology cases up 26%
 - Push to test all rape kits in the State of Kansas complicates toxicology as well
- Drug ID backlog remains fairly low
- Not much of a backlog for function testing in Firearms – 2 examiners are still in training for comparison qualification
- Special projects (such as LIMS) and validations have required additional staff resources
- Overall, staffing has been stable
 - Have had recent drug chemist and front desk/receptionist departures
- Currently recruiting for: Pathologist (Deputy County Coroner), Chief Toxicologist, Forensic Scientist I (DID) and Pathology Assistant Supervisor (funded in 2022)
- Will explore out-of-county services in January-February
- Discussions with El Dorado Correctional Facility were positive
- Have had disruption in front desk services and transcription

Discussion

- Chief Atteberry asked if the testing for DUI cases could be sent to an out-of-state/private lab to reduce RFSC workload.
- Ms. Swegle noted it could cause some witness issues when testifying at trial (especially pertaining to travel).
- Dr. Steadman noted that testing at private labs had significantly increased this year in comparison to other years.
- Chief Atteberry asked if transcription duties could be temporarily outsourced for a

quick turnaround and/or alleviate the backlog.

- Dr. Steadman noted that the issue with transcription lies with finalizing cases for Dr. Oeberst, whose last day is scheduled for December 18, 2021, but the amount remaining should be achievable (20 to 30).

VI. Agency Reports

There were no agency reports presented.

VII. Discussion: Future of the Advisory Board – Revised Resolution

Dr. Shelly Steadman

- A draft resolution was presented to the advisory board for consideration
- Resolution needs updating because the overall organizational structure of the RFSC has changed since 1996 and digital media forums didn't exist when the original resolution was drafted
- Updates include:
 - Adding the Director of the RFSC as a member of the advisory board
 - Convening for meetings at least twice per year, with quarterly reports coinciding with the meetings and made available to the board at the approximate mid-points between meetings
 - Language removed regarding electing a President/Vice-President of the advisory board – the Director of the RFSC will serve in that role, and will be responsible for arranging meetings, tracking attendance and taking minutes
 - Adding language to include optional advisory board involvement when selecting a new RFSC Director and/or District Coroner
 - Repealing and replacing the current resolution
- Revisions will be reviewed and approved by County management before being placed on a BOCC agenda

VIII. Discussion: Out-of-County Autopsy Services

Dr. Shelly Steadman

- Still reviewing options
- Currently working well over 1,000 autopsy cases per year – recommended caseload is 250 cases per pathologist
- Number of qualified applicants has significantly decreased
- Considering options for developing an agreement with other forensic pathologist(s) to assist with cases on some weekends

IX. Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

X. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 AM. Next Meeting: February 17, 2021 at 9:00 AM
1109 N. Minneapolis Street, Wichita Kansas, 67214 or via Zoom (TBD)