

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

November 17, 2022

Board Members Present

- Dr. Shelly Steadman, Director, Regional Forensic Science Center
- Brad Crisp, Deputy Chief, Sedgwick County Fire District #1
- Capt. Christian Coy, Wichita Police Department
- Kevin Lanterman, Chief, Sedgwick County EMS
- Dr. Kevin Brinker, Medical Director, Sedgwick County EMSS
- Russell Leeds, Assistant County Manager
- Jennifer Magana, City Attorney, City of Wichita
- Darrell Atterberry, Chief of Police, Bel Aire
- Marc Bennett, District Attorney

Board Members Absent

- C.D. Dugan, Interim Fire Marshal, Wichita Fire Department
- Dr. Timothy Gorrill, Sedgwick County Coroner
- Dr. Garold Minns, Dean, KU School of Medicine-Wichita
- Melissa Walker, Director, WSU Hugo Wall School of Public Affairs
- Jeffrey Easter, Sedgwick County Sheriff
- Dr. Ron Varner, Coroner, 13th District

Attendees Present

- Katie Asbury, Forensic Administrator, Regional Forensic Science Center

AGENDA

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM.

II. Introductions and Roll Call

III. Review of Minutes from the May 19, 2022 Meeting

IV. RFSC Performance Metrics

Dr. Shelly Steadman

Performance Metrics and Trends

- Medical Investigations
 - Estimating 3,961 reported deaths for 2022
 - Estimating 599 scenes attended in 2022
- Pathology
 - Estimating 1,130 pathology cases for 2022 performed by 2 physicians
 - Intentionally diverting out-of-county services to focus on Sedgwick County cases
 - Suicides are currently at 11%
 - Significant issue of overdoses – steadily increasing since 2019 (25% increase with 339 pending) largely due to the fentanyl crisis
 - Nearly 60% of overdose deaths involve fentanyl
- Toxicology
 - Backlog has improved due to grant funding used to send-out cases and training new staff
 - Estimated 1,012 toxicology cases in 2022
 - Antemortem testing – saw a large spike in cases submitted at the end of 2021, but have decreased throughout 2022
 - Estimated 265 HPT cases in 2022
- Drug Identification
 - Currently staffed with 2 trained chemists, out of 4 positions with 2 in training
 - Backlog is currently at approximately 800 cases
 - Overwhelming amount of fentanyl
 - Huge seizures
 - 4 times as many cases as 2021
- Fire Debris
 - 1 chemist working cases
- Firearms
 - Hannah Withrow is now a fully trained and certified analyst
 - Second analyst (Sara Rogers) is finalizing her training
- Biology/DNA
 - Trending down to approximately 100 cases in the backlog
 - Continuing to prioritize cases for the District Attorney's Office
 - Number of cases has remained consistent compared to 2021

Quarterly Summary

- Tox and DNA backlogs continue to decrease
- Competitive Grant received for Tox instrumentation
- Staffing in investigations continues to be critical:
 - One MI began leave in September
 - One MI is in training
 - One temporary position is currently posted

- Locum Tenens Deputy Coroner assigned 41 cases so far
- Firearms Examiner is now qualified and accepting comparison cases
- Fentanyl submissions continue to rise, as is the backlog
- Tox lab continuing to outsource with JAG and Coverdell grant funds
- Onboarding full-time Chief Toxicologist (Dr. Tyson Baird) in January 2023

2023 Budget Enhancements

- Adjust Coroner/Deputy Coroner pay (\$99,739)
- Resources for final disposition on unclaimed bodies (\$44,109)

CIP Requests

- DNA Addition – construction project should begin in 2023

2023 Grants Submitted

- Coverdell Formula (\$86,800) → (\$95,700) pending
- Coverdell Competitive (\$426,250) → received \$414,277
- CEBR (approx. \$265,084) → received

Questions and Discussion

- A brief discussion was held regarding fentanyl and overdoses and how those relate to autopsy case statistics.
- A brief discussion was held regarding any differences in caseloads following the City of Wichita's decriminalization of marijuana.

V. Agency Reports

There were no agency reports presented.

VI. Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 AM.

Next Meeting: May 18, 2023 at 9:00 AM

1109 N. Minneapolis Street, Wichita Kansas, 67214 or via Zoom (TBD)

Next Quarterly Update: February 2023