

## **MEDICAL EXAMINERS COMMISSION MEETING**

Sawgrass Marriott  
1000 PGA Tour Boulevard  
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082  
August 17, 2016, 10:30 AM

Chairman Stephen J. Nelson, M.D. called the meeting of the Medical Examiners Commission to order at **10:30 AM** at the Sawgrass Marriott in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. He advised those in the audience that the meetings of the Medical Examiners Commission are open to the public and that members of the public will be allowed five minutes to speak. He then welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Commission members, staff, and audience members to introduce themselves.

### **Commission members present:**

Stephen J. Nelson, M.A., M.D., F.C.A.P., District 10 Medical Examiner  
Barbara C. Wolf, M.D., District 5 Medical Examiner  
Wesley H. Heidt, J.D., Office of the Attorney General  
Hon. James S. Purdy, J.D., Public Defender, 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit  
Hon. Rick Beseler, Sheriff, Clay County  
Robin Giddens Sheppard, L.F.D., Funeral Director  
Kenneth T. Jones, State Registrar, Department of Health  
Hon. Angela B. Corey, J.D., State Attorney, 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit  
Hon. Carolyn R. Whitmore, R.N., Manatee County Commissioner (via teleconference)

### **Commission staff present:**

Vickie Koenig  
Beth McNeil

Doug Culbertson  
James D. Martin, J.D.

### **District Medical Examiners present:**

Valerie J. Rao, M.D. (District 4)

Sajid S. Qaiser, M.D. (District 18)

### **Other District personnel present:**

Tim Crutchfield (District 4)  
Cathy Weldon (District 8)  
Carol Dean (District 4)  
Chris Boden (District 17)  
Randy Simmons (District 4)  
Corey Johnson (District 18)  
Karla Orozco (District 7&24)

Jeff Martin (District 1)  
Brett Harding (District 5)  
Christina Kitchka (District 4)  
Whit Majors (District 14)  
Phillip Collins (District 4)  
Lindsey Crim (District 7&24)

### **Guests present:**

Bruce A. Goldberger, Ph.D. (UF)  
Hon. John Corfield (British Consulate)  
Chandler Brownlee (LifeNet)  
Nancy Williams (Wuesthoff)  
Ricky Morris (LifeNet)  
Cory Hebert (LEITR)  
Lynetta Oxendine (TransLife)  
Dean Register (FDLE)

Ricardo Camacho (UF)  
Rebecca Sayer (LifeLink)  
Karin Frosio (LifeNet)  
Chris Poindexter (LifeNet)  
Andrew Mullins (LEITR)  
DiAnn McCormack (MEBFL)  
Brett Kirkland (FDLE)  
Thomas Graham (FDLE)

**A MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED, AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY FOR THE COMMISSION TO APPROVE AN AMENDED AGENDA THAT REMOVED ISSUE 4.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED, AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY FOR THE COMMISSION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 27, 2016 MEDICAL EXAMINERS COMMISSION MEETING.**

### **ISSUE NUMBER 1: INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- MEC Reappointments – Ms. Vickie Koenig informed the Commission that the Governor had not yet reappointed the District Medical Examiner or the Funeral Home Director positions on the MEC.
- District Medical Examiner Reappointments - Ms. Koenig informed the Commission that the Governor had not yet reappointed the District Medical Examiners in Districts 8 (Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy and Union counties), 10 (Hardee, Highlands and Polk counties), or 12 (DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota counties). The incumbent District Medical Examiners continue to serve until reappointed or replaced by the Governor, pursuant to the Florida Constitution.
- 2015 Drugs in Deceased Persons Report – Ms. Beth McNeil informed those in attendance that all the data has been reviewed by the Quality Assurance Committee and the report is currently being drafted. Its release is anticipated to be in September.
- 2015 Annual Workload Report – Ms. McNeil informed the Commission that the Annual Workload Report is currently under review and should be released later this month.
- 2015 Coverdell Grant Update – Ms. McNeil advised that all thirteen districts have submitted reimbursement requests, leaving only \$86.45 in residual funds.
- Appointment of Joshua D. Stephany, M.D. – Dr. Nelson informed the Commission and those in attendance that Joshua Stephany, M.D. has been appointed as the District Medical Examiner for Districts 9 (Orange County) and 25 (Osceola County) by their respective Boards of County Commissioners.

### **ISSUE NUMBER 2: BRITISH CONSULATE SERVICES**

Hon. John Corfield, Pro Consul, gave a brief presentation on the services provided by the British Consulate for British citizens visiting or living in the United States. Mr. Corfield asked that the medical examiners please contact the British Consulate should they investigate any deaths that they believe may involve a British national. Handout information from this presentation is attached.

### **ISSUE NUMBER 3: UNIDENTIFIED DECEASED INITIATIVE**

Mr. Culbertson reported that there were three success stories to report for this quarter:

1) District 5 identified remains that were discovered in 1977. District 5 Medical Examiner Barbara Wolf, M.D., and Michael Warren, Ph.D., of the C.A. Pound laboratory sent a bone from the remains to the University of North Texas in 2009 for DNA analysis. The resulting DNA profile was put into the National Missing Persons Database. Meanwhile, the Polk County Sheriff's Office reviewed the case of a missing man, Mark Woodard, and his DNA as sent to UNT for analysis.

On June 23, 2016 the DNA from the bones positively identified the remains as those of Woodard. The cause and manner of Woodard's death are unknown at this time.

2) District 17 reported two success stories, the first of which involved a body that was found floating in a canal in Margate, Florida on December 10, 2015, with no identification. Fingerprints were taken, but no match was found.

On June 22, 2016 a caller reported additional information on a missing person, and provided an ante mortem photograph. Dr. Mallak was able to identify the unidentified decedent based on the photograph, and the decedent's mother was notified of the death.

3) The second District 17 success story involved a decedent who was found on February 15, 2016, in an industrial area in an advanced stage of decomposition and with no identification. On June 27, 2016, a friend of a missing person provided investigators with information on his missing friend. On July 5, 2016, ante mortem dental images from the missing person were compared to the postmortem dental images of the decedent by a forensic odontologist. The decedent was positively identified as those of the missing person, and the next of kin was notified.

Mr. Culbertson noted that this was the best year for identifications of unidentified decedents in a long time.

### **ISSUE NUMBER 4: NATIONAL FORENSIC LABORATORY INFORMATION SYSTEM**

This issue was removed from the agenda as the scheduled speaker(s)/presenter(s) were unable to attend.

### **ISSUE NUMBER 5: EMERGING DRUG TRENDS**

Bruce A. Goldberger, Ph.D., gave a presentation on emerging drugs that are responsible for several deaths in Florida. These drugs include the fentanyl analogues that were previously discussed at a past MEC meeting, but focused on carfentanil, which is 100 times more potent than fentanyl, and 10,000 times more potent than morphine.

Dr. Goldberger also mentioned U47700, although this has not been detected in as many decedents as the fentanyl analogues.

### **ISSUE NUMBER 6: REPORT OF 2016 FAME EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE, JULY 13-15, 2016**

Dr. Goldberger reported that the 2016 FAME Educational Conference was a success. There were 100 participants and 16 vendors at this year's conference.

**ISSUE NUMBER 7: SOLICITATION FOR 2017 FAME EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE**

Dr. Goldberger reported that the 2017 FAME Educational Conference would be held in Orlando, Florida at the Hyatt in Downtown Disney. The Districts 9/25 Medical Examiner's Office will host the 2017 conference. There is no date set at this time, but anticipate the conference will be held either the second or third week of July.

**With no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 A.M.**



## Consular assistance offered to British nationals

The British Consulate-General Miami is responsible for providing consular services to British nationals in Florida, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. Our focus is helping British nationals following the unexpected. We assist by providing support and offering practical advice to effectively help customers at a time when they may be the most vulnerable. We provide a wide range of services to our customers, with some examples shown below:

- Deaths;
- Hospitalisations or cases involving Serious Illness/Communicable diseases;
- Victim of Major Crime (i.e. Violent Assault, Robbery, Rape, car and villa break-in);
- Customers sectioned under the Baker (mental health) or Marchman (substance abuse) Acts;
- Cases involving Juveniles at risk, such as a parent's arrest or a child taken in to State care;
- Child Abductions;
- Arrests (adults and juveniles);
- Issuing replacement travel documents in cases of loss/theft/damage/expiry;

Other areas where we can offer assistance include providing information on transferring funds, details of local lawyers, interpreters, doctors, funeral homes and organisations that can provide specialist support where we are unable to.

### During times of crisis, examples of the extra help we can provide are:

- Work with local authorities to establish if British nationals have been involved and provide information and support to those who have been affected;
- Deploy expert teams to support British nationals and to reinforce our Embassy staff, if required;
- Support the families of any British nationals killed in an incident – in particular around the repatriation of bodies to the UK;
- Set up an information hotline, SMS and online webform facilities for people to contact us.

British nationals requiring consular assistance in Florida should contact our staff at the British Consulate-General in Miami. There are also Consulates General in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, as well as the British Embassy in Washington who all provide consular services in their own regions. Our website at [www.gov.uk/world/usa](http://www.gov.uk/world/usa) has more information.

Our telephone lines are open 24 hours a day, but routine assistance is provided between 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday, excluding some public holidays.

**Tel: +1 (305) 400-6400**

(We also operate a local number in Orlando if callers are unable to make long-distance calls – Tel: (407) 254-3300)

Customers in Central Florida should call **before** travelling to Miami, as we may be able to provide assistance for routine matters in the local area.

**Consular Assistance is available 24-hours a day at: +1 (305) 400-6400**



**British  
Consulate-General  
Miami**

[www.gov.uk/world/usa](http://www.gov.uk/world/usa)

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