

## **MEDICAL EXAMINERS COMMISSION MEETING**

Tampa Marriott Westshore  
1001 North Westshore Boulevard  
Tampa, FL 33607  
November 17, 2016, 10:00 AM

Chairman Stephen J. Nelson, M.D. called the meeting of the Medical Examiners Commission to order at **10:00 AM** at the Tampa Marriott Westshore in Tampa, 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  
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

### **Commission members absent:**

Hon. Rick Beseler, Sheriff, Clay County

### **Commission staff present:**

Vickie Koenig  
Beth McNeil

Doug Culbertson  
James D. Martin, J.D.

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

Jon Thogmartin, M.D. (District 6)  
Mary Mainland, M.D. (District 13)  
Russell Vega, M.D. (District 12)

Joshua Stephany, M.D. (District 9 & 25)  
Thomas Beaver, M.D. (District 16)

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

Jennifer Park, M.D. (District 9 & 25)  
Brett Harding (District 5)

Cathy Weldon (District 8)  
Bill Pellan (District 6)

### **Guests present:**

Bruce A. Goldberger, Ph.D. (UF)  
Rebecca Sayer (LifeLink)  
Karin Frosio (LifeNet)  
Kelsee Hentschel-Fey (USF)  
DiAnn McCormack (MEBFL)  
Lisa Robinson (Lions Eye Inst.)  
Nico Pratt (RII Donor Services)

Ricardo Camacho (UF)  
Chandler Brownlee (LifeNet)  
Jean Davis (LifeLink)  
Erin Kimmerle (USF)  
Liz Lehr (LifeLink)  
Paula Kiatt (Lions Eye Inst.)  
Betty McEntire (American SIDS Inst.)

**A MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED, AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY FOR THE COMMISSION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED, AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY FOR THE COMMISSION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 17, 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.
- District 14 Medical Examiner Appointment – Ms. Koenig informed the Commission that the Governor’s Appointments Office had not yet appointed Jay Radtke, M.D. as the District 14 Medical Examiner, serving Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, and Washington counties.
- Ms. Koenig informed the Commission that the following district medical examiners are up for reappointment in 2017: District 15, Michael D. Bell, M.D. (Home Rule), District 16, Thomas R. Beaver, M.D., District 17, Craig T. Mallak, M.D., J.D. (Home Rule), District 18, Sajid S. Qaiser, M.D., District 19, Roger E. Mittleman, M.D., District 20, Marta U. Coburn, M.D., District 21, Rebecca A. Hamilton, M.D., District 22, Riazul H. Imami, M.D., Ph.D., District 23, Predrag Bulic, M.D., District 24, Marie A. Herrmann, M.D., and District 25, Joshua D. Stephany, M.D. (Home Rule),

The surveys and assessments for these district medical examiners for districts 15-25 will be sent to the constituents of these districts in January 2017. Ms. Koenig indicated that surveys and assessments for the funeral homes will go out via U.S. mail, rather than electronically, due to poor responses to the electronic surveys. Electronic surveys will still go out to all other constituents for each district.

- District 11 Medical Examiner Appointment - Dr. Nelson informed the Commission that Emma Lew, M.D., had been appointed as the District 11 Medical Examiner. Dr. Nelson explained that District 11 (Miami-Dade County) is a home rule district; therefore, the appointment was not subject to approval by the Commission or Governor’s Office.
- 2016 Interim Drugs in Deceased Persons Report – Ms. McNeil reminded the Commission and those in attendance that the data for the Interim Drugs in Deceased Persons Report is due by January 1, 2017.
- 2016 Coverdell Grant Update and Solicitations for 2017 – Ms. McNeil advised the Commission that 2016 funding is expected to be awarded after the first of the year. Award letters will be sent to participating districts as soon as funds have been approved for release. As a reminder, the award period for the 2016 grant will be January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2017.

Notices will be sent out in January to begin accepting 2017 funding requests. This will allow the Commission to review and approve the proposals at its February meeting prior to the solicitation close.

### **ISSUE NUMBER 2: UNIDENTIFIED DECEASED INITIATIVE**

Ms. Jan Henderson of the Missing and Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse (MEPIC) informed the Commission that her office will begin visiting each district medical examiner to offer help in assessing the status of that district's unidentified deceased, and to ensure that all information has been entered into NAMUS. Ms. Henderson said that while she is retiring at the end of December 2016, her replacement will conduct the visits. Dr. Nelson volunteered his office for the first visit.

Dr. Nelson asked that staff conduct a survey of the district medical examiners in order to determine if everyone is sending deceased fingerprint cards to the Quality Control Section at FDLE. He also requested that the MEPIC staff to determine if the deceased fingerprint cards that are received by FDLE are being searched against warrants and other criminal history information, and is there any manner to provide the district medical examiners with some type of verification that the cards were processed.

### **ISSUE NUMBER 3: HUMAN DONATION PROGRAM FOR FORENSIC RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA**

Erin Kimmerle, Ph.D. gave a brief presentation regarding her proposal for a forensic anthropology research facility. Dr. Kimmerle said that she was trying to complete a Legislative Budget Request for state funding of the project.

**A MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED, AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY FOR THE COMMISSION TO SUBMIT A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT TO THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA.**

### **ISSUE NUMBER 4: FEMORS-NATIONAL GUARD MASS CASUALTY/FATALITY EXERCISE: MARCH 2017**

Dr. Nelson reminded everyone of the FEMORS/National Guard Mass Casualty Exercise to be held in March, 2017 at the Dade-Collier Training and Transitional Airport (TNT), a public airport located within the Florida Everglades, 36 miles west of the central business district of Miami in Collier County. The airport is owned by Miami-Dade County and operated by the Miami-Dade Aviation Department. The airport is on the Tamiami Trail (US 41) near the border between Miami-Dade and Collier counties in central South Florida.

### **ISSUE NUMBER 5: RESOLUTION FOR STATE ATTORNEY ANGELA COREY, 4<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA**

Dr. Nelson read the following resolution for departing Commission member Angela Corey into the record:

**WHEREAS** the Medical Examiners Commission was created in 1970 by the passage of Chapter 406, Part I, Florida Statutes, also known as the Medical Examiners Act; and

**WHEREAS** this Commission plays a vital role in support of the State of Florida's criminal justice system, to the families of the deceased in determining the cause and manner of death of their loved ones whose deaths come under the jurisdiction of the medical examiner, and by contributing to the protection of the public health of the citizens of the State of Florida; and

**WHEREAS** the Honorable Angela B. Corey, J.D., is the elected State Attorney for the 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit (Duval, Clay and Nassau counties) in the State of Florida, where she has served the citizens since she was initially elected in 2008; and

**WHEREAS** State Attorney Angela B. Corey has served the citizens of Florida as a prosecuting attorney for over thirty years; and

**WHEREAS** State Attorney Angela B. Corey was appointed to the Medical Examiners Commission in August 2011 by Governor Rick Scott to represent the concerns of Florida's prosecuting attorneys; and

**WHEREAS** State Attorney Angela B. Corey has enriched the Medical Examiners Commission with a unique blend of learned wisdom and scholarly legal opinion on the many important issues that have been brought to our Commission's attention during her tenure;

**NOW THEREFORE** let it be resolved that this Commission on behalf of Florida's Medical Examiners, the medical-legal community, and all of the citizens of Florida whom she has served so well, does hereby recognize and commend State Attorney Angela B. Corey for the dedication, exemplary service and valuable guidance she has offered to the Florida medical examiners system and hopes that she maintains this same professionalism and success in all her future endeavors.

**PASSED AND RECORDED**, in the official minutes of the Medical Examiners Commission meeting on this Thursday, the 17<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2016, in Tampa, Hillsborough County, Florida.

#### **ISSUE NUMBER 6: RESOLUTION FOR SHERIFF RICK BESELER, CLAY COUNTY**

Dr. Nelson read the following resolution for departing Commission member Sheriff Rick Beseler into the record:

**WHEREAS** the Medical Examiners Commission was created in 1970 by the passage of Chapter 406, Part I, Florida Statutes, also known as the Medical Examiners Act; and

**WHEREAS** this Commission plays a vital role in support of the State of Florida's criminal justice system, to the families of the deceased in determining the cause and manner of death of their loved ones whose deaths come under the jurisdiction of the medical examiner, and by contributing to the protection of the public health of the citizens of the State of Florida; and

**WHEREAS** Sheriff Rick Beseler, having over thirty years' experience in law enforcement, is the elected Sheriff of Clay County in the State of Florida, where he has served the citizens since he was initially elected in 2004; and

**WHEREAS** Sheriff Rick Beseler has served his fellow citizens and his community by sitting on many diverse civic organizations, councils, and task forces; and

**WHEREAS** Sheriff Rick Beseler was appointed to the Medical Examiners Commission in August 2013 by Governor Rick Scott to represent the concerns of Florida's sheriffs and the law enforcement community in general; and

**WHEREAS** Sheriff Rick Beseler's many years of law enforcement experience has enriched the Medical Examiners Commission with his keen insight and respected judgement on the many important issues that have been brought to our Commission's attention during his tenure;

**NOW THEREFORE** let it be resolved that this Commission on behalf of Florida's Medical Examiners, the medical-legal community, and all of the citizens of Florida whom he has served so well, does hereby recognize and commend Sheriff Rick Beseler for the dedication, service and valuable guidance he has offered to the Florida medical examiners system and hopes that he maintains this same enthusiasm, professionalism, and success in all his future endeavors.

**PASSED AND RECORDED**, in the official minutes of the Medical Examiners Commission meeting on this Thursday, the 17<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2016, in Tampa, Hillsborough County, Florida.

#### **ISSUE NUMBER 7: 2017 FAME EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE**

Dr. Goldberger reported that the 2017 FAME Educational Conference would be held in Orlando, Florida. The Districts 9 and 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.

#### **ISSUE NUMBER 8: OTHER BUSINESS**

Bruce Goldberger, Ph.D. gave a presentation regarding emerging drugs in Florida, including carfentanil, U-47700, and new cathinones. He spoke briefly on the Drug Enforcement Administration's recent decision to conduct further studies on Kratom prior to possibly scheduling the drug. Dr. Goldberger anticipates that there are hundreds of deaths in Florida attributed to carfentanil, but the lack of available analytical standards is delaying the identification of the substance.

During this discussion, Dr. Nelson made request that there be better communication between FDLE's crime lab, the county crime labs, and the medical examiner toxicology labs. Dr. Nelson also suggested bringing the now defunct "Crime Laboratory Council" back as a means to aid in the discussion between the labs due to the increase in synthetic drugs nationally and in Florida.

**With no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 11:47 A.M.**