

DOMES Meeting Minutes – January 26, 2022

Meeting Date: January 26, 2022

Time: 3:00pm

Facilitator: Dan Schebler, Director of Operations

Location: BOCC Conf. Rm./ Via Teams Meeting

Attendees:

In-Person:

- Dan Schebler (Chief Operating Officer (COO))
- Brad Baker (Santa Rosa County)
- Craig Coffey (Okaloosa County)
- Jerry Couey (public guest)

On-line:

- Eric Gilmore (Escambia County)
- Stephen G. West (Escambia)
- Melissa Thomason (Walton County)
- Tom Dannheiser (Santa Rosa County)

Mr. Schebler opened the meeting and stated based on the number of DOMES Board members actually present (2) at today's meeting, the requirements of the Bylaws are met, stating there must be two members physically present to equal a quorum and that members are allowed to participate via electronic meeting format which gives the meeting a physical quorum, not much action will be taken today. Mr. Schebler then turned the meeting over to Brad Baker.

Mr. Baker stated he would like to open up today's meeting for public forum using the same format as the Santa Rosa County Commissioner Board Meeting format.

All Board members agreed to public forum request.

Public Forum Comments:

Mr. Jerry Couey stated he has been a public advocate for many years and one of the things he takes very seriously is open government and to make sure every step of the Sunshine Law is handled. I say these comments only, as, they are not accusatory, because we are heading down a road I think you may need more support from the public than you may realize. One of the ways that garners support from the public is to make sure you are as open and transparent as you possibly can. A couple of things I have noticed; I don't know if in the beginning your meetings were noticed as well as they could have been. I would encourage the DOMES organization to get a little wider dispersal on when the meetings are. From a personal standpoint, and I have spoken with some other people, I understand the commission room was tied up today I get it, I would like to see these meetings in that setting of the commission chambers and I would also like to see it livestreamed. People right now are just starting to realize what we are talking about and I want you to know I'm trying to help you get out in front of this because if you don't fill in the blanks to the general public when they see your price tag they're not going to be happy. I mean it won't be about whether you need it or not it's going to be about hey this is the first we've heard of it and you want \$30 million dollars, are you kidding me? I'm trying to stop this from turning into that. The notice of the meetings and the livestream of the meetings I'm just a citizen so I'm just requesting it for consideration. I continue to be amazed at the number of people that I never see them

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at a county commission meeting but they know everything that is going on because they make it a point to either watch it live or watch it down the road. People want to be engaged in their government. They truly do. This whole organization is a not for profit set-up by government, standing in the shoes of government and 100% funded by the government so in essence it is a Sunshine organization.

Mr. Schebler shared with the Board members that the DOMES meetings have initially been advertised on the four county BOCC webpage calendars, which is still being done to-date and additionally now DOMES is publishing a public meeting notice in local area papers and on the www.fldem.com/districtoneme/ website. Mr. Schebler added that DOMES does not currently have a website, but creating a new website is in the works.

Mr. Couey stated between the counties. The big ask is coming, I don't want to see people stumble in matters of Sunshine law. I would rather clear the air and make sure we are doing everything we need to do and then there is no question. Nobody will be able to say, "well I didn't know" or "I wish I had been informed about that". Once again, I'm just a citizen. If you guys could just see it within this organization to take those additional steps I think the people that are howling in my ear about it will probably calm down about it. When I'm able to say it's on the county webpage, it's going to be in the county commission minutes, it's going to be lived streamed, it's going to be recorded so you can watch it at any time, I think you have met all the transparency that you need. I appreciate it and thank you for letting me sit in, I wish you well in your journey, I know there are a lot of questions to be asked in all of this.

End of Public Forum

Mr. Baker stated the next item of business is the approval of the meeting minutes and turned the meeting over to Dan.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Schebler stated two sets of meeting minutes were distrusted via email to all board members:

- November 22, 2021
- December 7, 2021

The December minutes covered the review of the contractor proposal rankings for the A&E firms. Mr. Schebler asked if anyone had any questions on the minutes.

Mr. Coffey commented the only change he would ask for are in the November 22nd minutes, restricting the recruitment incentive to the two discussed positions during the November 22nd meeting so that incentives are not an automatic process each time a new position needs to be filled. Subsequently any time an incentive to hire is needed the request will come before the DOMES board for approval.

Mr. Schebler agreed and the change will be made to reflect in the November 22nd meeting minutes.

~Mr. Baker called for a motion to approve the December 7, 2021 and November 22, 2021 meeting minutes with amendments. Mr. Coffey moved to approve; Ms. Thomas seconded; All in favor.

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Agenda Items

Discussion on Item I (Review Draft of DOMES Bylaws)

Mr. Schebler stated, as discussed in the October DOMES meeting, a copy of the draft Bylaws has been presented via email to the DOMES Board for review and discussion and added a copy has been provided to the DOMES attorney for review, clarification and recommendations. Mr. Schebler stated, since assuming his role, one of the objectives is to build a full standalone functioning non-profit. The draft Bylaws reflect key points to the process of building and independent non-for-profit organization include a purpose, mission and goals. The organization is defined as the Board of Directors, with a chairman and secretary, the change was made from chairman to president in an effort not to confuse board members with officers of the organization, i.e., Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer and Chief Medical Officer.

Mr. Schebler stated the most substantial change for further discussion among the DOMES board is the potential expansion of the board. Preliminary discussion has previously been had regarding adding appointed board members to the DOMES Board in addition to the current Board members making the maximum number of members nine (9). Mr. Schebler stated he is seeking feedback from the DOMES Board on defining an executive/finance committee as a separate committee in that would handle the budget. This committee would take their recommendations to the full board. I think as a private non-profit there is a public benefit to having a broader board that represents the DOMES stakeholders. These stakeholders could be from the medical community to FDLE (Florida Department of Law Enforcement) director law enforcement

After much discussion regarding an advisory committee vs. executive committee the Board concluded the best option for now is to keep the DOMES board structure as it is currently. The next step would be having state appropriations directly sent to DOMES as a non-profit through an agency and have DOMES do its own procurement.

Ms. Thomas added quarterly stakeholder meetings or public workshops would be a good way to get stakeholder feedback without including the process in the Bylaws, this way minor changes do not require a vote each change by the respective BOCC's.

Mr. Baker added in speaking with, and we went through legislative dates, Senator Broxson, what we are promoting gets into the \$500,000.00 dollar additional design money, I promoted it just so you know, the District One Medical Examiner's office is going to come back asking for construction money and to anticipate that money to come through DOMES.

Mr. Schebler suggested revisiting and focusing on the roles in the Bylaws. The Bylaws say what this board approves and delegates responsibility and autonomy to the CEO and COO for the day to day operations. Additionally, we need to revisit the Interlocal Agreement to have the role of "Administrative Coordinator" removed from the agreement as DOMES is now directly handling the responsibilities previously assigned to the Administrative Coordinator.

Mr. Schebler stated he wants to be clear in his understanding, when the DOMES draft legislation proposal is submitted next year, it must go before the DOMES board and then the DOMES board would take that legislation to the respective four BOCC County Boards for approval and then it is ready for submittal to the legislature for consideration?

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Mr. Coffey stated, Correct. If DOMES will provide regular updates to each of the DOMES board members, the members can be sure to provide it in their weekly or bi-weekly reports provided for their BOCC's so they are up-to-date on DOMES business.

Discussion on Item II (DOMES Interlocal Agreement)

Mr. Schebler stated he has not drafted language for the Interlocal Agreement amendment as discussed, but he has sent the current Interlocal agreement to the DOMES attorney for review and feedback on removing the administrative coordinator section. Mr. Schebler added, some of the discussion just had in this meeting feeds into defining the Interlocal Agreement a bit more. I will get a draft together to share with the DOMES Board members and hopefully be ready to present to the respective four BOCC's in March or April. Mr. Schebler will get a draft together for the DOMES Board review in couple of weeks in advance of the February meeting. Mr. Schebler added another item of discussion is to include in the amendment the wording for DOMES to be able to charge fees for services. A sample was provided in a previous meeting from District 4 Jacksonville.

Mr. Coffey stated if the amendment language is provided in advance, the DOMES members could run it past their BOCC's for feedback prior to making it permanent in the Interlocal agreement.

Discussion on Item III (Facility Update)

Mr. Baker stated Santa Rosa County received the first draft from Caldwell last Friday about 3:00pm. Caldwell has been delayed due to team members being ill and out of the office. Mr. Baker stated unfortunately to get Caldwell's proposal on the next SRC BOCC agenda it is need by Wednesday, February 2nd. Basically, we have the agreement for researching analysis of the pre-design facility program and sizing and a concepts schematic. However, I have asked Caldwell to provide a narrative scope of work and it was relayed that the Medical Examiner expressed a need to move at a more rapid pace and asked if they could go ahead and start. I confirmed Santa Rosa County is comfortable with the request as long as the \$250,000.00 dollars is not exceeded. Ultimately, once we have a scope of services not to exceed appropriations the plan is to take that to the Board and have the county attorney draw up the contract for Board approval.

Mr. Schebler added for informational purposes, the proposal states a 45-day period for data gathering and a 10 day period for review with 45-days for conceptual design with a 10-day review period.

Discussion on Item IV (Financial Report)

Mr. Schebler provided the first annual report for the first fiscal quarter of the year in a slightly different format, stating in the absence of the bookkeeper and his predecessor, he has since discovered that the books were partly kept in spreadsheets and partly in Quickbooks. In the name of transparency, what is presented here today is not as clean as it should be but it is a work in progress and currently being consolidated into QuickBooks. Mr. Schebler went on to state an engagement letter has been signed with a CPA firm to provide DOMES taxes, 1099's and financial advisory services. He added there are 3 or 4 additional accounts you see listed, one is Pathcare LLC, which is a private business owned by Dr. Gallagher and Quality Autopsy is private business owned by Dr. Oleske. After conversation with the accountants and these are not DOMES accounts the plan is create work through closing these accounts and have each doctor conduct their private business via their business bank accounts. Mr. Schebler went on to explain there is a line item showing DOMES paid liability insurance for the doctors, which in

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accounting terms is an asset line item since it shows DOMES paid \$35,000.00 dollars and the first quarter billing shows as an expenditure. It is an accrual basis. Those funds show on your liability and accumulated cash wise.

Mr. Schebler continued, Durst and Associates came recommended as a local company in Pace has been retained to audit DOMES. This is something new DOMES is starting this year. With the help of the bookkeeper, I can now share with the DOMES board where DOMES is for the first year. Personnel costs planned were \$880,000.00 thousand dollars, the actual costs were \$882,000.00 dollars, so a couple thousand dollars over, but mostly due to Locums costs. DOMES has \$114,000.00 dollars in Locums fees already in the first quarter. DOMES is still actively recruiting for a fourth doctor, we have a positive indication, but waiting on confirmation from the doctor on whether they accept the position. DOMES' total operating expenses planned for the quarter were projected at \$1.2 million dollars and came in currently at \$101.3 million dollars, slightly under for operating expenses. In October the first of every quarter DOMES pays the doctor overages per the operating agreement if they do more than 63 ¼ they are paid at the Locums Tenen rate in October on the 1st, 15th and 30th.

IT Line Item - in 2020 Cares Act money was provided to the Medical Examiner's office with the agreement to use the money for a new software program. My predecessor received a proposal from a company, sent the company a check for \$155,000.00 dollars to provide software service for four years. The money was paid to a company for a software program to provide a new case management software system for DOMES. That check was written in December 2020. The current program in use at that time was a soft access database built by my predecessor and needed to be replaced. I started with DOMES in September 2021 and at that time the program had not been implemented. I reached out to the company and after some conversation, they refunded DOMES a check for \$152,000.00 dollars, minus \$3,000 dollars for a 3-4hour training they stated was provided. This is the result in the negative line item as it was paid out of last year's budget. The \$152,000.00 dollars will be used to pay for the new DOMES case management system which was implemented at the first of the year and cost \$30,000.00 dollars. The company DOMES has contracted with provides software support for Medical Examiners all over the country and DOMES is the second company in Florida to onboarded with them. The case management system is being built to integrate with the state death reporting system, which is good, because every death certificate goes into the state system and must be reviewed. If an inconsistency is noticed the Medical Examiner is notified. Additionally, some of the monies will go toward utilities.

Grant Update - Mr. Schebler provided a grant update sharing DOMES will not make the grant cycle for facility funding due to the timing and information would be need around March/April. DOMES has registered with SAM and has established a DUN'S number in order to be eligible for federal funds. Additionally, Mr. Schebler states he has reviewed a couple of other grant opportunities, one which is through Escambia County Health Care Defiance Authority and offers up to \$150,00.00 dollar grant. Some of the applications require audited financial statements. There is the Bureau of Justice Assistance with DOJ, they are not very large grants but are generally used to improve medical examiner services, forensic sciences, etc.

Discussion on Item IV (DOMES Other Business)

Lowdox Update – The Lowdox (low dose 360 degree x-ray machine from head to toe) was purchased with Cares Act money, Escambia County chose to purchase it directly. It has finally been delivered this week and will make a big difference in our operating procedures; it could mean less full autopsies. It is a

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step below CT Scan, but it is five steps above where we are now. It provides a very clear picture to the doctors what they need to see to determine if they need to cut. This is a line item you will see on the asset side of the books as \$111,000.00 dollars lease hold improvement. Mr. Schebler added, when the time comes to relocate to the new facility, the Lowdax machine will move too.

Meeting Livestreaming - Mr. Schebler asked if there is any direction from the Board on the public forum comments regarding live streaming specifically. I will make sure that you know the meeting notice has been received but livestreaming is not a requirement of the Sunshine Law. However, we do record the meetings on Teams and would be happy to send a copy of the recording if requested. The Board commented additional discussion will be need on this matter. The DOMES board agreed to send their thoughts on livestreaming to Mr. Schebler via email in follow-up. Mr. Coffey added public comment should be put on every DOMES meeting agenda.

Next DOMES Meeting Date – A list of the regularly scheduled DOMES meeting dates were emailed to each DOMES member, please advise on location preferences. Initially meeting in the middle of the counties was thought to be a good location. The DOMES board agreed to alternate meetings between the Crestview and Milton locations.

Adjourned: 4:43pm

Next Steps:

- Add “Public Forum” to DOMES meeting agenda
- Email 3-page financial summary to Melissa Thomas and Eric Gilmore
- Send Board Members Name and contact information for DOMES Attorney
- Create update for board to distribute in their weekly or bi-weekly report
- Board agrees to send their comments on livestreaming the meetings going forward