

DOMES Meeting Minutes – May 21, 2024

2:00pm

Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners Conference Room

DOMES Members: Dan Schebler (DS), COO, Dr. Deanna Oleske (DO), CEO, Craig Coffey (CC), President, Brad Baker (BB), Secretary, Jeff Goldberg (JG), Director, Eric Gilmore (EG), Director.

Call to Order: Mr. Coffey called the meeting to order at 2:12pm

Roll Call: Dan Schebler, COO, Craig Coffey, President, Brad Baker, Secretary, Jeff Goldberg, Director; Dr. Michael Pagacz (D1MEO) and Chrissy Nieten (D1MEO)

Via Teams: Eric Gilmore, Director; Stephen West (Escambia); Matt Richardson (Walton); Shy Carson (D1MEO)

Public Forum: No public comments

Approval of Minutes: Approval of the March 27, 2024, DOMES Meeting Minutes

Mr. Coffey asked for a motion to approve the March 27, 2024, DOMES meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Baker moved; Mr. Goldberg seconded. All in favor.

1. Discussion on Item I (DOMES CEO/COO Report)

Monthly Financial Reports – February and March 2024

- Confirm if best for accounting to be done on accrual or modified accrual basis
- Locums Tenens budget started this fiscal year with \$25,000
- 5 Doctor positions currently in the budget
- Previously moved \$100K in salaries and employees costs to Locums Tenens budget line item
- Close to budgeted figures on insurance
- New Fellow will require additional liability insurance policy
- Fund reallocation was made for uniforms; due to staff turnovers

~Mr. Coffey called for a motion for acceptance of the February and March 2024 financial reports as presented. Mr. Goldberg moved to approve; Mr. Gilmore seconded. All in favor.

Fellowship Program

- The Fellowship Program has been officially approved by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and will be sponsored by Florida State University (FSU)
- Small fee is paid to FSU to maintain the website, and this was budgeted for in the current years budget and is included in next year's budget
- Dr. Andres Candela is the first fellow. He is a surgical pathologist with 30 years of Pathology experience, who in his retirement decided he wanted to become a forensic pathologist
- Fellowship Program runs from July 1 – June 30, 2025
- This is the first new Forensic Pathology program in 20 years in Florida

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- Press release was sent out and social media sites have been updated to reflect announcement of the program
- Senate Bill 474 passed in this year’s legislative cycle and was signed into law by the Governor on March 22, 2024. This bill protects victims of suicide autopsy reports
- Last legislative cycle there HB1513 has a clause about Victims of Domestic Violence under the age 18 years of age and requesting autopsy reports. Its states an autopsy record is exempt from release, however that does not cover D1MEO in relationship to the Toxicology reports, investigative reports, and case notes, which essentially are used in some dynamics of the autopsy report. There needs to be more clarity in the law in relationship to the additional reports that contain quite a bit of detail.
- Forward details to the DOMES Board for follow-up on finding potential legislative sponsorship to address the language in SB 474 and HB 1513.
- Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital (SHH) - SHH experienced a data breach which locked down their software systems for a period of time. This breach impacted D1MEO operations; the biggest issue has been obtaining radiology imaging. At this time, D1MEO is unable to get SHH imaging. In lieu of this issue, the ANDE DNA technology will be used in the two unidentifiable cases we currently have, which cost approx. \$1500 per test. This is informational for the DOMES Boards awareness of elevated costs in the budget line item.

~ No Board Action Required

2. Discussion on Item II (2024-2025 DOMES Budget)

Proposed budget /presentation

- The budget template used this year is the same as the template presented last year and is based on case load history and fiscal year.
- There was a significant increase in autopsies from FY19-20 to FY20-21, with a small decrease in the number autopsies last calendar year, even though there was an overall increase in the number of total cases. Halfway through this fiscal year autopsy numbers are tracking close to the FY22-23 numbers and total cases continue to increase. The draft budget assumes overall minimal case load (autopsies and other) increase based on 2023 data; in speaking with other districts they are seeing the same overall changes.
- A portion of the fellowship initiative budget we will use in next year’s budget to support the fellowship program. Cost savings to D1MEO:
 - Dr. Lopez, associate medical examiner will be the program director
 - Shy Carson, operations coordinator will serve as the program coordinator
- Additional FTE requested this year for an administrative investigator. This role will work between the investigation team and administrative team to manage the workload where we are seeing the increases (paper cases (investigations and cremations), to improve turn-around time, which was of some concern highlighted by the reappointment discussion during the last Medical Examiner’s Commission meeting.
- There is one FTE in the budget that is grant funded. Currently, under the agreement with the Michigan Public Health Institute, funding for this FTE will be paid upfront in the next six weeks to cover the next 4 years of costs associated with this position. The money will carry forward each year out of the allocation for the next four years. Salary and benefits would be a total cost of ~\$70K. The draft budget includes 32 total FTEs
- Revenue side shows \$80K as grant revenue, \$100K is DOC and other revenue costs, \$10K miscellaneous revenues for a total of \$190K

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- Small Capital Request - \$50K: Digital slide Scanner –\$30K - This would allow D1MEO to send digital slides while retaining original slides in D1MEO possession. An additional microscope needed for the Locums/Fellows office at an approx. cost of \$15-20K
- Evaluating if toxicology should be sent out for procurement
- Researching new Professional Employer Organization offering comparable benefits
- FYI, \$125K carryover per the interlocal agreement no longer covers a payroll (which was the basis of the discussion and decision last year). Payroll now running at approx. \$160K.

The updated splits for slide four shows calendar based on the agreed upon methodology last year

- CY 2023 - place of death 1196 autopsy
- County of Residence for non-residents – FY23 was 10%; FY24 is at 12%

~ Mr. Coffey called for a motion to accept the DOMES budget as presented, Mr. Goldberg moved; Mr. Baker seconded, all in favor.

3. Discussion on Item (DOMES Capital Project)

Project Update

- Schematic design was completed and sent to the construction management firm to prepare an updated costs estimate. The estimate should be in by May 31, 2024. If everything is good, we move onto design development. If things are not what we expect, the plan is to reconvene the DOMES Board for discussion.
- Costs savings will be built into the estimate.
- Mr. Coffey advised the DOMES Board that the CM-GC Part A Contract for DOMES has been reviewed by the DOMES Board and the Okaloosa County attorney and will be signed by Mr. Coffey.

Land Transfer

- Attorneys are currently reviewing the legal documents, which should be completed by June 10, 2024.

Funding Discussion

- Escambia County and Okaloosa County plan to process a one-time payment for the building project.
- Phase-I environmental done in 2020, by owners before the County. The attorneys have asked that Biome provide a reliance letter for approx. \$800 to present a new Phase-I environmental letter that states the assessment from 2020 is still good. The Board was asked if a reliance letter or updated Phase 1 environmental assessment was required. Consensus of the Board was that nothing additional was required.

~ No Board Action Required

4. Meeting Schedule

- June 20, 2024
3:00pm
Santa Rosa County Administrative Offices

5. Next Steps:

- Mr. Schebler to provide four respective counties with a copy of the Fellowship Program press release to share

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- Provide DOMES Board members with legislative verbiage in preparation for next session after coordinating within ME community.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:11pm