



OFFICE OF THE
MEDICAL INVESTIGATOR

NEW MEXICO BOARD OF MEDICAL INVESTIGATORS
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING- December 14, 2021

NM Office of the Medical Investigator
The University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center
VIRTUAL MEETING

BOARD PRESENT:

David Houston <i>Board Vice Chair</i>	Chairman, New Mexico Board of Funeral Services
Tim Johnson <i>Board Secretary</i>	Interim Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Dept. of Public Safety
Michael Richards <i>Board Member</i>	Interim Dean, UNM School of Medicine
David Scrase <i>Board Member</i>	Acting Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Dept. of Health
Lynn Trujillo <i>Board Member</i>	Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Dept. of Indian Affairs

ATTENDEES:

Garon Bodor	Research Scientist 2, OMI
Anthony Cervantes	Unit Administrator 1, OMI
Lauren Decker, MD	Medical Investigator, OMI
Lauren Dvorscak, MD	Assistant Chief Medical Investigator, OMI
Daniel Gallego, MD	Forensic Pathology Fellow, OMI
Felicia Garcia	Fiscal Services Tech, OMI
Emily Helmrich, DO	Medical Investigator, OMI
Heather Jarrell, MD	Chief Medical Investigator, OMI
Nancy Joste, MD	Professor, Chair, UNM Dept. of Pathology
Aidan Kerr, MD	Forensic Pathology Fellow, OMI
Clarissa Krinsky, MD	Medical Investigator, OMI
Thu Luu	Accountant 3, OMI
Lori Proe, DO	Medical Investigator, OMI
Mark Rudi	UNM HSC Public Information Officer
Alexandria Sanchez	UNM HSC Public Information Officer
Scot Sauder	Deputy University Counsel, UNM HSC
Jolee Suddock, DO	Forensic Pathology Fellow, OMI
Joshua Trujillo	Deputy Medical Investigator, OMI
Yvonne Villalobos	Director of Operations, OMI
Martin Wetterstrom	Technical Analyst 2
Amy Wyman	Supv, Technical Services, OMI

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM**

Chief Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM and confirmed a quorum.

2. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (action item)**

Sec. Trujillo **MOVED** to adopt the agenda. Mr. Houston **SECONDED**. There was no discussion. All were in favor. Motion **CARRIED**.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES (action item)**

Sec. Trujillo **MOVED** to approve the June 10, 2021, General Meeting Minutes. Mr. Houston **SECONDED**. There was no discussion. All were in favor. Motion **CARRIED**.

4. **ELECTION OF BOARD CHAIR (action item)**

Chief Johnson **MOVED** to elect Sec. Scrase to be the Board Chair. Sec. Trujillo **SECONDED**. All were in favor. Motion **CARRIED**.

5. **REPORT FROM THE CHIEF MEDICAL INVESTIGATOR**

Retirement of OMI Director of Operations:

Dr. Jarrell recognized Yvonne Villalobos for her years of service to OMI. Ms. Villalobos will retire from OMI at the end of this year.

Cooler Project:

New Mexico Department of Health provided funding for two additional permanent coolers.

- Allows additional space throughout pandemic and increased case number trajectories.
- OMI currently assists with storage of decedents who do not fall under OMI jurisdiction.
- Case trajectory prediction is currently difficult, the goal is to remove the refrigerated trucks off-site as soon as possible.

Dr. Jarrell stated that there is nationwide forensic pathologist shortage. OMI hired two more forensic pathologists who started in August. This brings the total forensic pathologists at OMI to seven. OMI needs ten. OMI hired two current forensic pathology fellows. They will begin next fall.

- Emily Helmrich, DO, Forensic Pathologist
- Sophia Rodriguez, MD, Forensic Pathologist
- Aidan Kerr, MD, Forensic Pathology Fellow (will begin next fall)
- Daniel Gallego, MD, Forensic Pathology Fellow (will begin next fall)

Research & Public Service Project Expansion Request (RPSP):

Dr. Jarrell will present a Research & Public Service Project Expansion Request to the legislature. The request is for \$1,723,000.

- Over the past 3 decades, the OMI has grown along with the state's needs for OMI services.
- Current state appropriations are \$5,744,200.
- Current state appropriations cover 46% of OMI's budget.
 - FY1991, OMI budget 90% covered by state.
 - FY2014, OMI budget 65% covered by state.

OMI must generate revenue. This is largely done by issuing cremation permits. Cremation permits are required to cremate a body in the State of New Mexico. They can only be obtained by the OMI. New Mexico's cremation permit fee is one of the highest in the country. The cost is \$200 plus a handling fee. Other medical examiner offices charge \$50 or less to issue. Funeral homes charge this fee to the family. Dr. Jarrell noted to the board that her long-term vision as Chief is to increase state appropriations so that OMI can cover operating expenses and decrease cremation permit fees.

FY22 Revenue from Cremation Permits

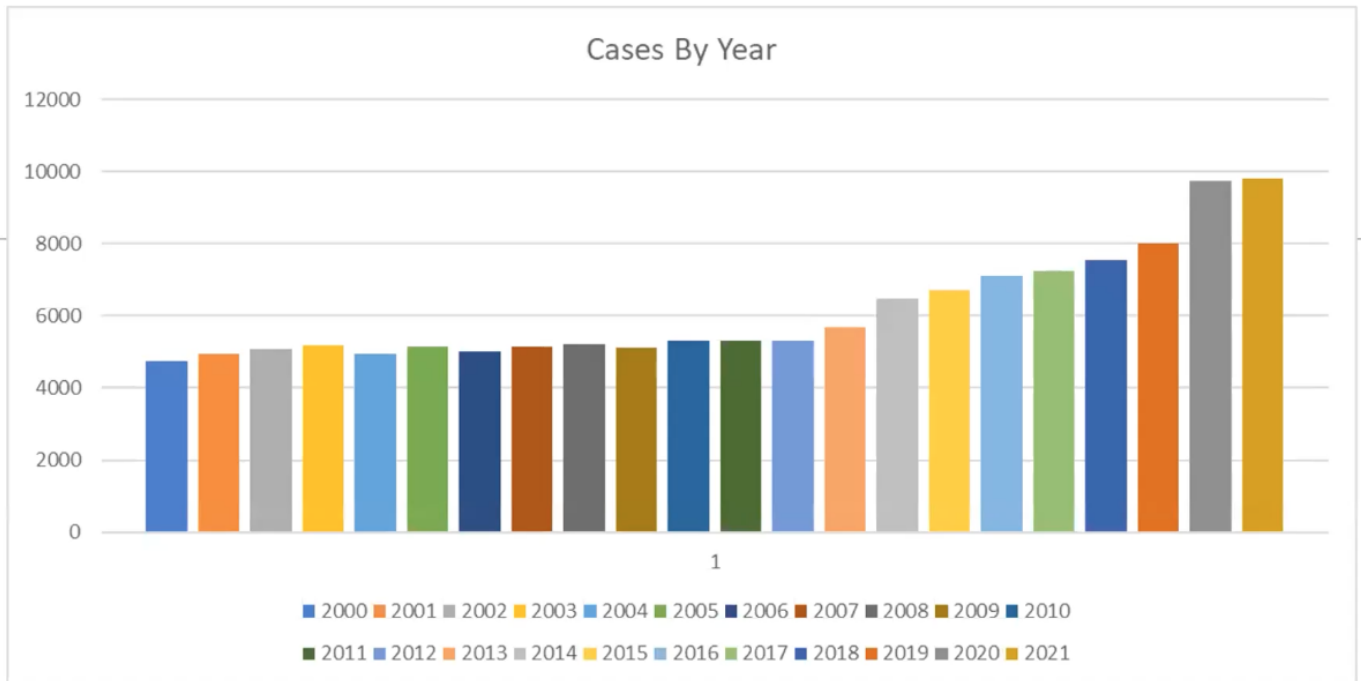
- Expenditures: \$12,096,197
- State Appropriations: \$5,541,600
- OMI Generated Revenue: \$5,757,773

	% Revenue from Cremation Permits	Cremation Permit Revenue
FY20	26%	\$2,970,910
FY21	32%	\$3,703,507

FY22 to date: \$1,673,480

*FY21 increase due to increased cremations secondary to pandemic

Dr. Jarrell presented a slide and discussed the OMI caseload trend.



Primary reasons for Expansion

- Increase state appropriation to cover at least **55%** of operating expenses
- Create additional staffing support as caseload increases
- Create additional forensic pathologist position
- Support toxicologic testing for cases

6. **BUDGET UPDATE:**

Dr. Jarrell presented a slide to the board and gave an update about the OMI budget. Dr. Jarrell highlighted the Body Transportation expense. Historically this has been OMI's biggest expense. The OMI is a statewide jurisdiction and therefore must transport decedents from all over the state to the OMI when an examination is needed. There may be an increase in transportation. One contracted employer is requesting cost per mile increase from \$1.72 per mile to \$3.14 per mile. This would increase OMI's budget an additional \$726k.

OMI FY22 Income Statement Projection 7/1/21 - 6/30/22

Revenue	
Operating Revenue	
University Hospital Revenue	\$924,755
Sandoval Regional MC Revenue	\$44,480
Other Sales and Services	\$4,896,657
NYU RECOVER Cohort Autopsy Study	\$129,472
Non-operating Revenue	
State Appropriation	\$5,744,200
Intra University Activities	
Transfer & Allocation	\$149,063
FEMA Covid-Related Reimbursement	\$541,299
Total Revenue	<u>\$12,429,926</u>
Expenses	
Salary & Fringe	\$8,072,767
Body Transportation	\$1,677,536
Utilities & Plant Maintenance (SLD, Security, Kone Elevator, Pest	\$581,704
Equipment Warranties (Phillips, Siemens, Stryker, C-Scan Technol	\$145,338
Services (Locums, J&J, Janitorial, Waste Destruction, Malpractice, Tric	\$1,120,269
Patient Care Expenses (PPEs, Body Bags, Formalin, Scalpel Blade	\$285,005
NMS - Non-Pending Toxicology	\$75,723
Other Expenses (Appr's Overhead, bad debt, FDMIs mileage reimb,	\$1,005,156
Total Expenses	<u>\$12,963,498</u>
FY22 Projected Net	(\$533,572)
FY21 Reserves	\$237,712
FY22 Overall Projected Net	(\$295,860)

Transportation Increase Request: \$726k additional
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7. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment

8. **VOTE TO CLOSE THE MEETING AND PROCEED IN CLOSED SESSION:**

Chairman Scrase called to close the general meeting and proceed in executive session.
Chief Johnson **MOVED**, Sec. Trujillo **SECONDED**.

Mr. Sauder took roll call:

Dr. Richards – Yes

Chief Johnson – Yes

Sec. Trujillo – Yes

David Houston – Yes

Chairman Scrase – Yes

Mr. Sauder confirmed the roll call vote was unanimous. General session closed at 2:02 PM.

9. **RE-OPEN THE GENERAL MEETING:**

The general meeting re-opened at 2:15 PM. Chairman Scrase certified that only the matters described in the executive session agenda were discussed during closed session.

The meeting was ADJOURNED by consent at 2:19 PM