

WCMEA BOD MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 9, 2019

Chula Vista Resort- Wisconsin Dells

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by President Angela Hinze at 5:08 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Members of the Board signed in attending include: Jen Schroeter (Kenosha County), Joe Morovits (Crawford County), Rory Groessl (Kewaunee County), Angela Hinze (Columbia County), Barry Irmen (Dane County), Mary Ricci (Barron County), Marcie Rosas (Dunn/Eau Claire County), and Lynn Johnson (Dunn/Eau Claire County), Agnieszka Rogalska (Dane County).

Members of the WCMEA in attendance include: Dr. P. Douglas Kelley (Milwaukee County); Tom O'Connor (Fond Du Lac County), Chris Shea (Fond Du Lac County).

MINUTES FROM JANUARY 27, 2019 BOD MEETING: Copies of the minutes are provided by Angela Hinze. The minutes had been previously reviewed online and approved.

OUTSIDE AGENCY PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS: None

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Angela Hinze reports she is receiving many questions regarding jurisdiction of C/ME from the membership, specifically relating to disposition of unclaimed remains. She suggests a position paper or statement from the WCMEA regarding best practice. Barry Irmen states that jurisdiction is already outlined somewhat in state statutes, with limited responsibility; the WCMEA could not make mandates above the law. Mary Ricci confirms this. Agnieszka Rogalska inquires about involvement from Vital Records, who had drafted some updates to the "Red Book". Barry Irmen states that Vital Records' proposed updates conflict with Public Health statutes, and thus they cannot proceed with their interpretations. Mary Rosas asked what the biggest concern is for the membership. Angela Hinze explains that disposition of remains – and the associated cost/burden, when decedent's cross state or county lines. For example, a person from County A is transported to a larger hospital in County B, and dies in County B. County A is where this person paid their taxes, lived, will likely be buried, etc. But, in many cases, the C/ME from County A will NOT take the responsibility of claiming the body if family is unable or unwilling to pay. Tom O'Connor asks if this is this a case of rural county confused about the jurisdiction or statute? Angela Hinze explains that the issue is funding for indigent cases when they live in one county but died in another. Tom O'Connor states the will call the other county if it is not their case. Joes Morovitz explains that the problem arises when county A refuses to take jurisdiction/responsibility for disposition, and County B has to take responsibility for disposition/reunification. Marcie Rosas states this often happens with decedents transported to a hospital in their county. She asks what statutes exist to define jurisdiction belongs to the county of origin in natural cases. Barry Irmen states that here is no statute. Dane County sets a reporting criterion of less than 24 hours for hospitals, and would refer these to the county of origin to investigate, as the ultimate COD/MOD and case history are best known by the law enforcement and care providers of County A, where that C/ME has jurisdiction, but this is not a statute. Angela Hinze refers to a collection of statute interpretations previously provided by Vital Records, referred to as the "Red Book". Barry Irmen clarified that these criteria outlined jurisdiction for INVESTIGATION of a death, not final disposition. He added that an attempt was made to resolve these issues with the 979 Legislature.

Angela Hinze discussed a panel presentation by the WCMEA or representative at the Wisconsin Counties Association. She was told the deadline had passed for this year, but that such a presentation might be possible next year. Angela Hinze feels this would be a good opportunity to address the leadership of all the WI counties to explain what C/ME do, what the functional requirements are, and present the concerns of C/MEs.

Angela Hinze asked about vendors for the conference. Barry Irmen provided the list, including a document scanning company. Angela Hinze stated she was contacted by a data entry software company. She also adds that several new vendors contacted her recently, but it was too late to add them for this conference. She states a need to send out flyers to outside agencies, like EMS. Agnieszka Rogalska asks if the intent to send flyers to EMS was meant as vendors or as attendees? Angela Hinze clarified she wanted to invite them as attendees. Rory Groessler stated that CME accredited by ABMDI counts for EMS credits, but will check to make sure it is covered. Angela Hinze stated that the Homicide Association wanted to attend, particularly as the conference no longer conflicts with their summer conference. Attendance of funeral homes was discussed, but their credits are very difficult to accredit by us because a specified portion of the conference has to pertain to their field directly.

1ST VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Barry Irmen stated that the conference was all set. He reached out to all doctors in the state, and had a good response. In addition, a nurse practitioner, Dr. Amy Carney is coming from California to present on Elder Abuse. In reviewing the last conference evaluations, there was overwhelming call for case presentations. A request was made by the WCMEA via email to request volunteers for presentations; only 3 counties responded.

Only 30-40 people are registered for the June 2019 conference, which is disappointing. Part of that is that we made updates late, and this might be our fault because wasn't out on time. Angela Hinze wondered if this was due to lack of need for ABMDI credits? Barry Irmen said we don't have a listing of actual ABMDI certification among the membership, but there are numerous competing venues, like the Milwaukee John R. Teggatz Forensic Science Seminar and the Minnesota Coroners and Medical Examiners Conference. Agnieszka Rogalska asked Dr. Kelley if he is noticing an increase in WCMEA members filtering into the Milwaukee conference, instead of the WCMEA. Dr. Kelley said he doesn't know for sure, but doesn't think so. The Milwaukee conference has a substantial number of law enforcement, district attorneys and funeral directors, and only a handful of C/ME. Rory Groessler noted that we have had a substantial downtrend in attendance, from 80 to 60 to 30 people. Angela Hinze considers if the WCMEA should change to an annual conference, as attempts to draw more people in – venues, dates, topics, have not been successful; a yearly conference would decrease our expenses. Mary Ricci and Barry Irmen point out that the biannual conference allows more opportunities for counties with less flexible coverage. Agnieszka Rogalska asks Mary if her contact with the membership identified any specific reasons why they aren't attending the conferences? She says no. Rory Groessler added that the size of the membership hasn't changed, but who is sending people to the conferences has. Dr. Kelley offered that in the past, people have compared this conference to the MN one, and preferred the latter; the forum was less social, but the format is in little pieces with 20 minute vignettes. Agnieszka Rogalska confirmed this, and added that this has been attempted and we will strive to make it so again this year. Marcie Rosas added that she has been to several different ones last year to compare, and found the populations were different at the other conferences (more LE, ADA). She stated the biggest issue is scheduling, and getting coverage. Mary Ricci confirmed.

Agnieszka Rogalska discussed the WSLH/DHS toxicology tours, and the potential to meet a much larger audience through travel. Although she didn't know the exact number of people, there were many new

faces never seen at a conference. Barry Irmen thought it might be a good idea to go “back to basics”, to address needs of the new C/ME after the elections. Agnieszka Rogalska saw that a past conference split into two separate afternoon courses – easy, and complex topics. Angela Hinze confirmed this, but said it had been difficult.

2nd VICE-PRESIDENT’S REPORT:

Mary Ricci reported that she had two memberships for next year already from Adams and Kewaunee Counties. She stressed the need to get the membership letters out soon because July is the beginning of the new membership year. Barry Irmen wanted the letter to be circulated online before it was sent. He added that with current technology (PayPal), we can do up to 5 registrations at a time. Mary Ricci decided to wait to send out the 2019-2020 membership info pending the results of the election. Rory Groessle added it was easier to track the money from membership when it’s in the same fiscal year.

Tom O’Connor wanted to know how merged counties are being handled, and Mary Ricci responded that invoices just go to the one person who is in charge.

SECRETARY’S REPORT:

Rory Groessl spoke for Kalynn, who is absent. In her absence, the Member-At-Large, the Sgt.-At-Arms and Secretary go over the absentee ballots. Kalynn made sure all ballots were qualified, so no need to review them. The BOD reviewed the requirements for counting ballots in the absence of the secretary, which state that the Secretary will keep these absentee ballots to the next morning, until 7:30 am when the list of eligible members is given to the 2nd VP and treasurer, and the general membership cast votes. Barry Irmen called a motion that the Past President Jennifer Schroeter stand in for the absent secretary at this conference. Joe Morovits seconded. There was no additional discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER’S REPORT:

Rory Groessl reviewed the fiscal statement which indicated a slight profit; however, the upcoming conference (June 2019) was not tallied in the current numbers. The WCMEA lost money on the January conference for a variety of factors, including: approximately 98% of registrants took advantage of the early bird registration (\$100 less per person); the conference vendors decreased 50%, including a dip from the tissue banks, some of which merged; nice gifts; low attendance. Rory Groessl stated the success of this conference depends on the resort bill. Rory Groessl stated that although a few people haven’t paid yet, using PayPal payment options has reduced the number of unpaid significantly. Barry Irmen added that the early bird discount cost the WCMEA \$1000, that the power bank giveaways were very expensive, and also additional revenue was lost when presenters were allowed to attend one day free when speaking.

New purchases this year include: 1) a much needed new laptop Lenovo YOGA, which was acquired out of the box at reduced cost; 2) an Optima projector which can project in widescreen and standard settings which is beneficial as new PowerPoint presentations are being provided in a wide screen mode; and 3) a 1 TB external hard drive for storage of scanned WCMEA documents/files. Neither the projector nor the computer are being used at this conference, as we had rented the resort projector and the presentations were on Barry’s laptop. Rory Groessl suggested we not rent a projector next conference. The new computer has Office 365; which needs yearly membership. But, this is the standard now, and there is no continued support for one-time OS purchases.

Barry Irmen added that the giveaways were not yet accounted for on the spreadsheet, and he will provide Rory Groessl with the numbers. Also, the speaker cost us \$500, which still needed to be paid to her.

Rory Groessl stated that in the absence of a lobbyist bill, the WCMEA should continue to accrue revenue if we streamline our discounts and spending.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS REPORT: Joe Morovits had nothing to report.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE REPORT: Lynn Johnson had nothing to report.

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Past President Jennifer Schroeter reported helping on elections and conference stuff, and that she had revised the scholarship letter following the online discussion a few days ago, which had some concerns about the timeliness of the information. Not wanting to exclude portions of the membership, the letter was written to allow submissions until September 1st. This will allow the BOD to review the submissions and make a decision about winners at the fall MOD meeting. Barry Irmen inquired about the specifics of the funding, specifically that it paid for attendance at one WCMEA meeting, and was not transferrable to another venue or to support an outside project. Tom O'Connor asked if this is to be used in the same year awarded. Angela Hinze confirmed this. Agnieszka Rogalska noted that the person to receive these applications is the Member-At-Large, who is currently running for the position of Trustee. This was corrected for online.

TRUSTEE REPORTS:

First Year Trustee Agnieszka Rogalska reported that she was able to follow up on several tasks assigned to her over her entire time as a trustee. This included scanning in of all WCMEA paperwork from 2007 to present. Several years worth of records are absent or incomplete (2013, 2014, part of 2015); all files that could be found have been included. These will be stored on the external hard drive mentioned by the Treasurer above. She noted great variability in the records retained, and suggested in future that there be a specified protocol for document retention. In general, categories such as "vendors", "invoices", "ABMDI", were common, but some 1st VPs were better at subcategorizing/retaining documents such sign-in sheets, registrations, and presenter handouts. She recommended a protocol for naming and retention of documents be considered for future use. Also, the BOD needs to determine how long to retain the files. Barry Irmen added that there should be TWO archival hard drives to protect the information. Rory Groessl suggested cloud storage as well.

In addition, handouts of the proposed templates (Guidance for Presenters; Objective Instructions for Presenters: Abstract Submission Form; Presenter Objective Form; Conflict of Interest Form) were distributed. As there had been no comment online, AR requested a review of materials and approval as soon as possible, so that these can be used for the upcoming January conference.

Barry Irmen suggested that new BOD consider this over the next 30 days post election over the Google mail, and vote within 30 days of election. Rory Groessl seconds this.

AH: further discussion? hearing none, all ayes: 9 proposed Motion carries

Agnieszka Rogalska also provided a copy of the current book list available for giveaways. The money was donated anonymously, and she used it to purchase books for giveaways, as per the last BOD meeting minutes. She chose both academic and popular media texts to give away. In addition to known forensic texts like the DiMaio and the Spitz & Fischer, she relied on the ABMDI recommended reading list. Many of these texts on the ABMDI list were out of print, however, she was able to acquire quite a few.

Mari Ricci stated she was familiar with many of them, and that they were good books for investigators. The number of books should last the WCMEA for several years.

Agnieszka Rogalska discussed the need to get information out about the next meeting as soon as possible. She suggested that the meetings be organized at least 6 months in advance. This would allow the BOD to address problems and concerns months before the conference, rather than last minute. If the content of the meetings were known at the previous meeting, we might be able to increase attendance. As such, she has 4 speakers already confirmed for the January 2020 conference, and hopes that the future BOD will continue in this fashion to make the program done or almost done by the fall BOD meeting.

2nd year Trustee Marcie Rosas stated that she has nothing to report. She added that it was very difficult to figure out her role, and what her function is as the 2nd year trustee. Dr. Rogalska agrees, saying that over the three years as a trustee, she has seen a need to organize the roles. She suggested that the incoming 1st VP define roles for the Educational Committee, determine who will be members, and how they will function. She stated that creating increasingly involved roles for the Trustees would help them understand the functions of the BOD and WCMEA, and allow them to take on more responsibility and escalate up the WCMEA ranks.

3 year trustee –patty Schachtner was absent.

OFFICER REPORTS: Jennifer Schroeter makes motion to accept the officer reports. Joe Morovits seconds. There was no discussion and the motion was passed unanimously.

WEBSITE COMMITTEE: Barry Irmen reports that PayPal has been working for registration. The goal is to make membership registration available through PayPal, and ultimately to purchase a handheld device for merchandise. The WCMEA doesn't have a quote yet about the cost of these services, but it is likely to be the same 3% as paying for registration. The hope is that we'll be able to do 5 memberships/registrations at a time to avoid the transaction fee. There is software to allow more people, but it is expensive and few counties would meet these criteria. In addition, most of suggested functions/additions to the website brought to Barry have been incorporated and are available on the website.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE: Past President Jennifer Schroeter reported that the latest news letter and scholarship letter was sent this afternoon, and that the goal of the upcoming newsletter is to have the president's message; conference updates; and advertise.

MERCHANDISE COMMITTEE: Sgt.-At-Arms Joe Morovits reported that purchases include long hooded coats, "big-man" shirts, denim shirts, and blue/pink fleece shirts which have either been requested or did well in the past.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Joe Morovits makes a motion to accept the Committee Reports. Jennifer Schroeter seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: Barry Irmen discussed the amendment to the bylaws, and confirmed copies of these are in the folders. He asked the BOD if, upon membership approval of the bylaws, new covered constitutions should be provided for the membership. Several members stated that they had disposed of a total of 70 copies of the 2009 constitution, indicating the need likely did not outweigh the cost. The

website was suggested as the official place of record for the WCMEA, and that any member can print it out when desired. Agnieszka Rogalska made a motion to make a copy of the new bylaws for each BOD member, but the membership would have it available on the website. Jennifer Schroeter seconded the motion. During discussion, Rory Groessl stated he did NOT want a print copy. The motion passed 8-1.

NEW BUSINESS: Barry Irmen reminded the Board that the newly elected BOD members will need to pose for pictures. This would best be done right after the election results were announced, after the meeting.

Angela Hinze brought up the student attendance fee of \$75 dollars. This value was historically given as the cost of meals/registration. Agnieszka Rogalska discussed that past meeting minutes and education committee discussions suggested that students don't pay at all if they are presenting. However, she added we haven't had any students in a long time. Angela Hinze said she had nursing students and interns who she pays for when they attend the meeting. Agnieszka Rogalska inquired if this isn't covered by the sponsoring university, and shouldn't we try to get more to come? Barry Irmen stated that the students are registered through a sponsoring county; they can't just come on their own. This was established because of the sensitive nature of the topics presented. He added that there need to be criteria in place to prevent random attendance, including a confidentiality agreement for non-C/ME or their designees attending.

Per Barry Irmen, the \$75 daily cost is no longer applicable. The menu at that time was the lowest rate state menu, which had significant complaints from the membership. As such, a higher tier of the state menu was selected, bringing up the daily per person cost to the WCMEA at \$145/day. Joe Morovits recommended we make it \$150, which would likely be the cost increase in coming years anyway. Rory Groessl suggested the fee for single day registration, \$125. Angela Hinze suggested a motion to accept this fee. Barry Irmen suggested this should be done by the new BOD after elections.

Barry Irmen indicated the Board needs to decide what we are going to charge for the extra giveaways. Angela Hinze, Rory Groessl and Joe Morovits suggested \$20 each, given their cost.

Angela Hinze asked the Board to consider shortening the conference to two days only. Rory Groessl indicated the WCMEA has committed to rooms/venues through Chula Vista until June 2020. Angela Hinze suggested we will soon have to look at new venues and options. Barry Irmen suggested an additional meeting shortly after the new elections. If the next BOD meeting isn't until the fall, we are crippling the progress of the Board for a quarter of a year. Rory Groessl suggested an organizational meeting immediately after the elections. Angela Hinze agreed that it would be good to "pass the torch" and to update any new members coming in. Agnieszka Rogalska added that the 1st VP should consider having an Educational Committee meeting between the June meeting and fall meeting, either by internet or in person to facilitate conference planning.

Angela Hinze suggested meeting on Tuesday after the conference once the new BOD was announced. Barry Irmen brought up that meetings of the Board need to be announced ahead of time. Review of the constitution revealed the bylaws allow special meetings to be called without the constraints of full BOD meetings. As such, Angela Hinze suggested that the Board meet immediately after the Tuesday lectures at 5 pm, and then decide on a date to meet approximately 30 days later to discuss topics above and move forward.

Joe Morovits motioned to accept New Business, and to move into Closed session. Marcie Rosas seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Members Tom O'Connor, Dr. P. Douglas Kelley, and Chris Shea left the conference room.

CLOSED SESSION: The Board moved to closed session at 7:32 pm for further discussion. Ethics committee meeting. Rory Groessl motioned to move to open session. Marcie Rosas seconded. There was no further discussion. Closed session adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

OPEN SESSION: Return to open session at 9:18 p.m.. Barry Irmen motioned that board members research potential attorneys to hire for assistance with evaluating the current ethics issue. At the next face-to-face special meeting, the BOD will make a decision about how to proceed. Rory Groessl seconded. There was no further discussion. Angela Hinze recused herself from decisions regarding the Ethics Committee. The motion passes 8-0.

ADJOURN: Jim Morovits made a motion to adjourn. Rory Groessl seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Agnieszka Rogalska

Third Year Trustee (filling in for Secretary Kalynn Van Ermen)