1. **CALL TO ORDER AND CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM**
   Chairman Scrase called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM and confirmed a quorum.

2. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (action item)**
   Chairman Scrase called on board members to raise their hand to accept the agenda as presented. All were in favor.

3. **UPDATE ON DMORT MISSION & OMI DECEDENT STORAGE PROGRESS**
   Ms. La Vonda Bowens, OMI Interim Director of Operations presented a PowerPoint to update the board on the Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams mission (DMORT).
Minutes: Board of Medical Investigator Special Meeting 3.7.2022

Bernalillo County Cases:
Go Live – March 2, 2022
• 172 Cases sent to Bernalillo county (all cases 7 days or older)
• Progress to Date
  o 10 OMI Clear Licenses transferred to Bernalillo County DMORT Support 3.5.2022.
  o Bernalillo has agreed to purchase investigations software.

Non-Bernalillo County Cases:
Go Live – March 2, 2022
• 93 Cases worked internally on-site by DMORT Staff (all cases 7 days or older)
• Progress to Date
  o 51 – IB paperwork in progress to deliver to counties by Friday, March 11, 2022.
  o 28 – IB/Unclaimed releases conducted since go-live
  o 9 – Potential releases based on family statements
    ▪ DMORT following up week of March 7, 2022
  o 5 – Potential IB’s less than 14 days

4. FEMA TRAILERS AND STATE-OWNED REFRIGERATED TRUCKS
Chief Medical Investigator, Heather Jarrell noted that a representative from DMORT is in attendance for questions from the board. Dr. Jarrell presented a PowerPoint and summarized an update regarding the refrigerated trucks.
• 4 state-owned, 3 FEMA (1 leaving on 3/14, remaining to be returned by 4/1)
• 2 trailers currently empty
• Each can hold roughly 40 decedents.

Goal: Remove refrigerated trucks from OMI by April 1, 2022

Plan Moving Forward:

- Consolidation of Due Diligence Efforts
  - Fully mapping the role of OMI and the counties in the unclaimed/IB process

Training Scheduled on 3/7 with all 33 counties, to train regarding state regulations, expectations, and process of due diligence, as well as need for timely process

• OMI begins standardized search for L/NOK (2 weeks or less)
• OMI will notify the county at one week of potential unclaimed/indigent
• Notification to county will occur no later than 2 weeks

County arranges for decedent transfer from OMI
OMI Staffing Needs:

- **Issue:** Legal Next-of-Kin (LNOK) notification has been the duty of the investigator at OMI.
  1. Increase caseloads and short staffing have not allowed sufficient time to perform this task.

- **Solution:** Create a formal Decedents Affairs Positions (includes a manager) for LNOK notification and death certificate processing.
  1. Created 3 1.0 FTE positions for LNOK searches (interview have been conducted). These are **dedicated positions for LNOK searches**.
  2. Will utilize 3rd party consult service when needed for LNOK searches.

Chairman Scrase inquired if OMI had funding for the new positions. Dr. Jarrell responded that there is no funding for the new positions. Dr. Jarrell called on Dr. Richards to answer. Dr. Richards affirmed that OMI does not have the budget however the UNM School of Medicine (SOM) has directed OMI to fill the positions. UNM Health Sciences Center (HSC) will cover the funding until a plan is developed.

5. **STORAGE FEES**

FEMA/DMORT Recommendation:

- Consider fees associated with storing remains.
  - Implement storage fee for counties and funeral homes for not picking up decedents within one week of notice of unclaimed/indigent decedent.

Dr. Jarrell noted; as mentioned in the prior board meeting, many years ago the board established such fee that is built into the OMI Fee Schedule. The fee has never been implemented. The fee is $61 for each decedent per 24-hours. A potential unintended consequence would be that the funeral home would charge the fee to the family. Dr. Jarrell stated that she does not want to see this happen. Chairman Scrase recommended that in the next meeting he would like to hear more about implementation of the storage fee. Items would include background on why OMI has not been charging the storage fee, implementation barriers, and what can be done to ensure that the fee does not get passed on to families. Sec. Trujillo agreed. Additionally, Mr. Chairman asked Mr. Billy Jimenez and Scot Sauder to look into options that would prevent the storage fee charged to families.

6. **CREMATION PERMIT REVENUE VERSUS STORAGE FEE REVENUE**

Dr. Jarrell stated that OMI has one of the highest cremation permit fees compared to other medical examiners offices. There was some discussion regarding cremation permit revenue versus storage fee revenue.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dr. Natalie Adolphi commented. With the increase in case numbers, there has been no delays in completing examinations at OMI.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Scrase asked for a **MOTION** to adjourn. Sec. Trujillo **MOVED**. Chief Johnson **SECONCED**. All were in favor.

The meeting **ADJOURNED** at 1:51 PM