



OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL INVESTIGATOR

NEW MEXICO BOARD OF MEDICAL INVESTIGATORS MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING- May 2, 2023

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

BOARD PRESENT:

Patricia Finn, MD

Vice Chair

Tim Johnson

Board Secretary

Kent House

Board Member

James Mountain

Board Member

Dean, UNM School of Medicine

Chief, New Mexico State Police

Chair, New Mexico Board of Funeral Services

Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Dept. of Indian Affairs

BOARD ABSENT:

Patrick Allen

Chair

Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Dept. of Health

ATTENDEES:

Natalie Adolphi, PhD

Janice Blevins

Garon Bodor

La Vonda Bowens Woodard

Anthony Cervantes

Lauren Dvorscak, MD

Heather Edgar, PhD

Ariana Espinoza Romo

Adriana Graham Torres

Breanna Henley

Heather Jarrell, MD

Nancy Joste, MD

Sara Navarrette

Gonzalo Olivas

Kyla Sorensen

Cassandra Toledo

Director of the Center for Forensic Imaging, OMI

Senior Deputy Medical Investigator, OMI

Research Scientist II, OMI

Director of Operations, OMI

Unit Administrator I, OMI

Assistant Chief Medical Investigator, OMI

Forensic Anthropologist, OMI

Deputy Medical Investigator, OMI

Deputy Medical Investigator, OMI

Director of Operations, DOH

Chief Medical Investigator, OMI

Professor, Chair, UNM Dept. of Pathology

Associate University Counsel, UNM HSC

Internal Auditor, UNM

Accountant 3, OMI

Deputy Medical Investigator, OMI

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

Dr. Finn called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM and confirmed a quorum.

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

Dr. Finn asked all board members present to confirm their agreement. There were no objections or “nays” expressed during the process.

3. **REPORT FROM THE CHIEF (information item)**

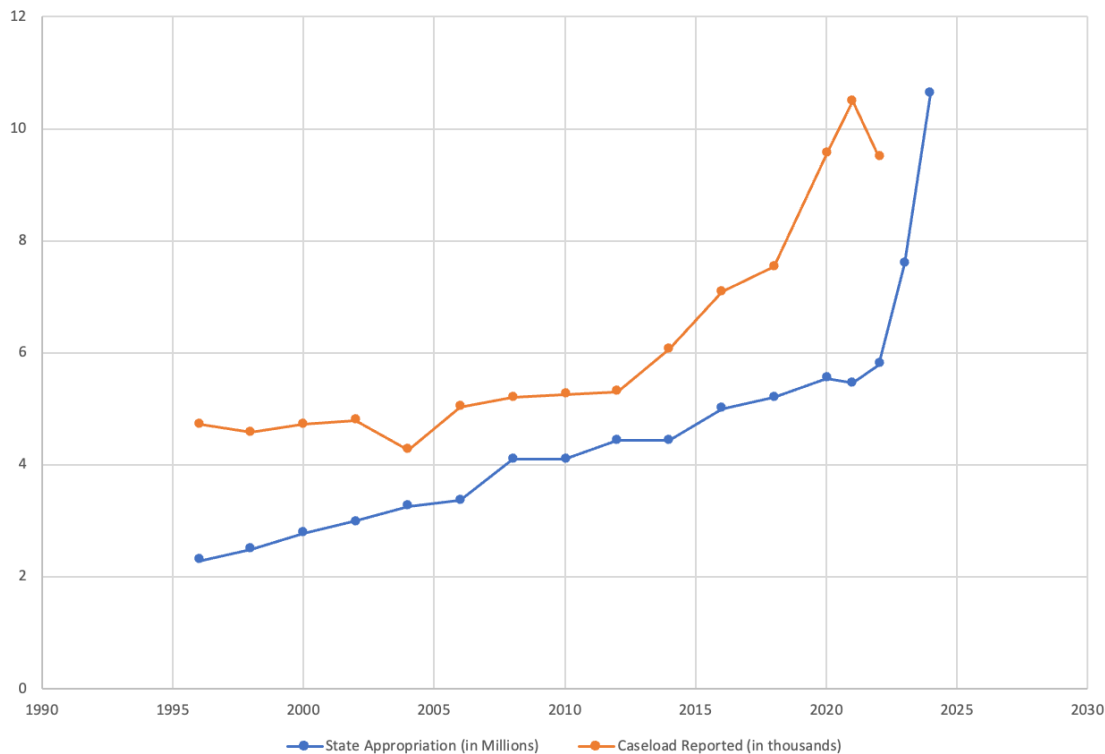
FY24 Funding Update:

Dr. Jarrell opened her report and announced that the OMI’s general state appropriations request for a \$3.1 million expansion was approved by the legislature and signed by the Governor.

Dr. Jarrell presented a slide illustrating OMI caseload and state appropriation history. Dr. Jarrell noted that the increase will help to reach the minimum staffing requirements for OMI.

FY21: \$5.413
 FY22: \$5.790
 FY23: \$7.587
 FY24: \$10.628

96% increase in state appropriations since FY21



HB407, Unclaimed Decedents:

- Updated antiquated procedures
- Provided timeline in keeping with other states for timely disposition of remains
- Increased the rate by which funeral homes/crematories are paid for cremation/burial
- Passed through House and Senate unopposed

HB407

Sponsors: Janelle Anyanonu, D. Wonda Johnson

1 AN ACT
 2 RELATING TO THE DISPOSITION OF DEAD BODIES; REQUIRING
 3 COUNTIES TO GIVE REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR LEGAL NEXT OF KIN
 4 TO TAKE POSSESSION OF AN UNCLAIMED DECEDENT; DEFINING "LEGAL
 5 NEXT OF KIN"; ALLOWING FOR COUNTIES TO AUTHORIZE THE
 6 DISPOSITION OF UNCLAIMED DEAD BODIES AND SET THE RATE THAT IS
 7 PAID FOR BURIAL OR CREMATION; CHANGING THE AMOUNT OF TIME A
 8 COUNTY SHALL RETAIN CREMATED REMAINS; REQUIRING THE ESTATE OF
 9 AN UNCLAIMED DECEDENT TO REIMBURSE THE COUNTY FOR BURIAL OR
 10 CREMATION EXPENSES; MAKING TECHNICAL CHANGES.
 11
 12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:
 13 SECTION 1. Section 24-12-1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1973,

Funding Requests for DNA Identification (Congressionally Directed Spending Request, Missing and Unidentified Human Remains Proposal for DOH):

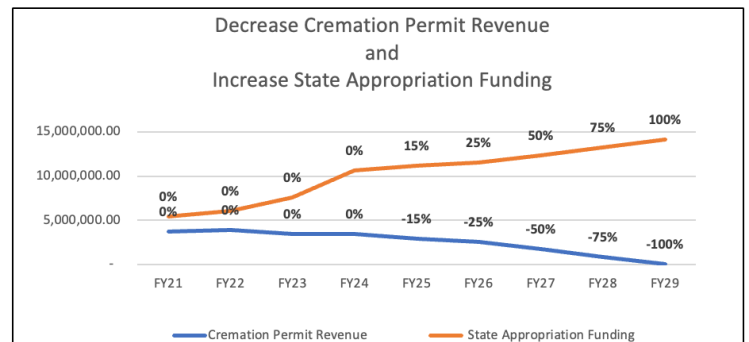
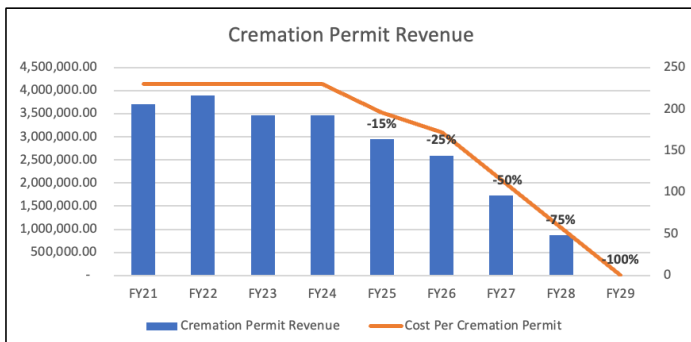
Dr. Jarrell informed the board members that she had personally visited the facility where OMI’s unidentified decedents are currently housed. The oldest case in storage dates back to 1978. As of now, there are approximately 200 individuals who have not been identified. Dr. Jarrell introduced OMI Forensic Anthropologist, Dr. Heather Edgar. Drs. Edgar and Jarrell have been actively seeking funding to help with efforts in identifying decedents in OMI’s care. DNA identification funding proposals submitted.

- DNA Analysis to Resolve Cold Case Unidentified Individuals
 - Submitted for Congressionally Directed spending
 - Submitted by Senator Lujan to Senate Appropriations Committee
 - \$524k to identify decedents in OMI’s care
 - Forensic genetic genealogy technology available
- Missing and Unidentified Human Remains
 - Submitted to National Institute of Justice
 - Amount Requested \$1 million
 - Perform DNA Analysis on 60 cases that currently do not have CODIS profiles
 - FGG permitted for cases where manner of death is homicide

Dr. Finn inquired about the \$524K earmarked for identifying decedents and the \$1 million for missing and unidentified human remains. In response, Dr. Jarrell explained that until 2018, the OMI would send DNA samples from unidentified decedents to the University of North Texas (UNT). However, due to a change in funding, the UNT can no longer accept these cases. There is currently no other institution within the state that can perform DNA analysis for OMI. As a result, OMI started sending cases to the FBI, but the process can take anywhere from 1 to 2 years to receive a result. To expedite the identification process, OMI has also began sending cases to Oklahoma state, where familial comparisons can be conducted if there is a presumptive ID. However, for cases where the identity is completely unknown, OMI is dependent on the DNA analysis conducted by the lab in Oklahoma, after which the results are uploaded into Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), where only law enforcement has the ability to upload cases. The timelines for obtaining results in the area of forensic genetic genealogy comes at a significant cost of approximately \$8k per case.

Research & Public Services Program Funding Request, FY25 - Cremation Permit Fees:

Dr. Jarrell presented a slide of FY25 funding request & cremation permits. The OMI would like to reduce the cost for cremation permits. However, a reduction in fee is contingent upon securing additional funding from the state. At this point the OMI is not asking for a decrease in the fee for cremation permits. Instead, will assess the funding situation for the upcoming fiscal year before making any formal requests to the board.



Equipment: Autopsy Table Replacement and Fleet Vehicles

2024 Fiscal Year Replacement Project:

Director of Operations Ms. La Vonda Bowens provided the board with important information regarding OMI's special requests that was not selected during the legislative session which must be funded from the OMI budget.

Equipment - Autopsy Tables:

- 16 tables and parts
- Phased project timeline (TBD)
- Cost \$446,652.16
 - Freight and installation not included (estimate approx..\$600)

Equipment – Fleet Vehicles:

- Current Feet
 - 2012 Ford Escape purchased for \$23,445
 - 83,256 Mileage
 - 2017 Ford Explorer purchased for \$25,724
 - 81,673 Mileage
 - 2017 Ford Explorer purchased for \$25,724
 - 84,752 Mileage
 - 2021 Ford F 250 purchased for \$33,454
 - 10,313 Mileage

Equipment – Specimen Refrigeration:

- Current Refrigeration Inventory
 - Two ThermoFisher Single TSX 23CU FT
 - Purchased in 2010
 - Two IsoTemp Upright Freezer Minus 80 Units
 - Purchased in 2012 for \$7,382.19 each
- Replacements
 - ThermoFisher 45 CU FT Lab Refrigerator
 - Costs \$6,672.60 USD
 - IsoTemp – Upright Freezer Laboratory Use 23 cu. Ft.
 - Cost \$19,236

Total Equipment Upgrade Costs:

- Autopsy tables \$600,000
 - Scene response vehicle \$50,000
 - Specimen Refrigerators \$7,000
 - Specimen Freezer \$20,000
- Total: \$677,000

4. **BUDGET (information item)**

Dr. Jarrell opened the budget presentation with a PowerPoint slide illustrating OMI FY23 Income Statement Projections 7/1/22 - 6/30/23. Dr. Jarrell noted the following:

- UNMH revenue is about \$42k/month and has decreased by about \$200k from FY21 and FY20
- Cremation permit revenue is 25% of total revenue
- State Appropriations increased by 31% from FY22
- Salary & Fringe is 23% increase from FY22
- Decedent transportation is \$150k per month, 9% increase from previous year
- Toxicology testing for cases that require toxicology in order to determine cause and manner of death is \$290K

OMI FY23 Income Statement Projections 7/1/22 - 6/30/23			
Revenue			
	Operating Revenue		
		University Hospital Revenue	\$735,880
		Sandoval Regional MC Revenue	\$109,648
		Other Sales and Services	\$4,413,631
	NYU RECOVER Cohort Autopsy Study		\$128,105
	Non-operating Revenue		
		State Appropriation	\$6,987,900
		State Appropriation: Non-Recurring	\$500,000
		Junior Bill Appropriation: Non-Recurring	\$100,000
	Intra University Activities		
		Gains from Sponsored Projects	\$130,724
		Transfer & Allocation	(\$48,138)
		FEMA Covid-Related Reimbursement	\$599,640
Total Revenue			\$13,657,390
Expenses			
	Salary & Fringe		\$8,961,066
	Body Transportation		\$1,810,683
	Utilities & Plant Maintenance (SLD, Security, Kone Elevator, Pest Control, etc...)		\$746,791
	Equipment Warranties (Phillips, Siemens, CT Scanner mis maintenance, etc...)		\$243,144
	Services (CLEAR database, records storage, PACS, Grief Consult, TriCore, etc...)		\$634,234
	Patient Care Expenses (PPEs, Body Bags, Formalin, etc...)		\$323,053
	NMS		\$290,100
	Other Expenses (Appr's Overhead, travel, FDMIs mileage reimb, Supplies, Banner tax, etc...)		\$819,612
Total Expenses			\$13,828,683
FY23 Projected Net			(\$171,293)
FY22 Reserves			\$208,195
FY23 Overall Projected Net			\$ 36,902

REVENUES

State Appropriations	10,628,100
UNMMG Revenues	27,300
UNM Hospital Funding	600,320
SRMC Revenues	41,088
Sales and Service	5,197,467
Gain on Sponsored Projects	226,343
Allocations and Transfers, net	(88,102)
Total REVENUES	16,632,516

EXPENSES

Compensation Costs

Housestaff Postdoc Salaries	316,347
Faculty Salary Detail	2,190,742
Faculty Incentive	217,654
Salary Adjustments	1,002,749
Other Salaries	5,066,963
Payroll Benefits	2,755,187
Total Compensation Costs	11,549,642

Non-Salary Expenses

Bad Debt Expense	15,000
Supplies	240,740
Travel	256,486
Communication Charges	70,304
Services	2,524,850
Plant Maintenance	430,561
Utilities	448,318
Patient Care Expense	331,600
Other Expense	625,450
Banner Tax	39,565
Capital Expenditures	100,000
Total Non-Salary Expenses	5,082,874

Total Expenses	16,632,516
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NET MARGIN	0
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Budgeted Use of Reserves	0
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NET RESERVES	0
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- PUBLIC COMMENT**
No public comment

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

Dr. Finn asked for a roll call vote to close the general meeting and proceed in executive session.

Mr. Cervantes took roll call:

Dean Finn – yes

Chief Johnson - yes

Mr. House - yes

Mr. Mountain – yes

All were in favor. General session closed at 1:37 PM

7. **RE-OPEN THE GENERAL MEETING**

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

The meeting **ADJOURNED** at 2:17 PM.