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Summer 6-25-2020

### 10.07.2019 Board of Medical Investigators State of New Mexico Meeting Minutes

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OFFICE OF THE  
MEDICAL INVESTIGATOR

NEW MEXICO BOARD OF MEDICAL INVESTIGATORS  
MINUTES OF MEETING- October 7, 2019

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

**BOARD PRESENT:**

<b>Paul Roth, MD</b> <i>Board Chair</i>	Chancellor of HSC, UNM, Dean School of Medicine
<b>Kathy Kunkel</b> (telephonic) <i>Vice Chair</i>	Cabinet Secretary, NM Dept. of Health
<b>Lynn Trujillo</b> <i>Board Secretary</i>	Cabinet Secretary, NM Dept. of Indian Affairs
<b>Tim Johnson</b> <i>Board Member</i>	Chief, New Mexico State Police

**BOARD ABSENT:**

<b>David Houston</b> <i>Board Member</i>	Chairman, New Mexico Board of Funeral Services
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**ATTENDEES:**

Karen Cline-Parhamovich, DO	Interim Chief Medical Investigator, NM OMI
Nancy Joste, MD	Professor, Interim Department Chair, UNM Dept. of Pathology
Scot Sauder	Deputy University Counsel, UNM HSC
Yvonne Villalobos	Director of Operations, NM OMI
Thu Luu	Supervisor of Accounting, NM OMI
Denise Padilla	Accountant, NM OMI
Lauren Decker, MD	Medical Investigator, NM OMI
Heather Jarrell, MD	Medical Investigator, NM OMI
Albert Arocha	Supervisor of Morphology Services
Anthony Cervantes	Unit Administrator, Asst. to the Interim Chief MI, NM OMI
April Rodriguez	Mgr, Acad Affairs/UNM SOM
Donna Sigl, MD, MS	Professor, UNM Psychiatry Administration
Denise Salazar	UNM Faculty Affairs

**CALL TO ORDER AND CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM**

Dr. Roth called the meeting to order at 1:09 PM

**ADOPTON OF THE AGENDA (action item)**

Dr. Roth announces modifications to the agenda sequence.

- Remove item #6- *SLD non-pending tox* and defer to a later date.
- Move item #7- *OMI pathologist staffing and workload*, to proceed item #5- *Budget*
- Executive session *Personnel* item will be moved to an open session agenda item to discuss an update on the search for a new Chief of the OMI. This item will follow item #4- *Report from the Interim Chief*.
- There will not be a closed session.

Dr. Roth asked for a motion to adopt the agenda as proposed. Chief Johnson **MOVED** to adopt the agenda with the proposed revisions. Sec. Kunkel **SECONDED** the motion. All were in favor. Motion **CARRIED**.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES (action item)**

Sec. Kunkel **MOVED** to approve June 18, 2019 general meeting minutes, Chief Johnson **SECONDED**. All were in favor. Motion **CARRIED**.

**REPORT FROM THE INTERIM CHIEF MEDICAL INVESTIGATOR**

Dr. Cline opened her Interim Chief Report with a review of a PowerPoint presentation.

- **Maintain NAME Accreditation:**

The National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) conducted a site visit and the OMI was downgraded to a provisional accreditation. NAME requires that 90% of reports of all postmortem examinations are completed within 90 calendar days from the time of autopsy. The OMI's postmortem report turnaround time was 86%. The provisional accreditation was scheduled to expire on September 16<sup>th</sup> 2019, however, since the NAME site visit, OMI faculty and staff have worked together to move cases forward. By first week of September 2019, the OMI reached 92% of all reports to be completed within 90 days. Dr. Cline announces to the board that the OMI was granted full NAME Accreditation. The OMI will have to submit annual updates to NAME. The next site visit is in 5 years.

- **Dr. Cline to continue as Project Director of CMS Replacement Project and IT Infrastructure improvements:**

Replacement of CMS:

- 2019 Project Effort: All divisions in OMI, multiple faculty and staff, average of 5 people per meeting.
  - Between Jan 1 – Oct. 1 : 136 weekly/biweekly in person and video conferencing meetings.
  - Translates into 1020 person-hours (26 work weeks)
- Systematic Process Analysis, Requirement Gathering, Purchase Order, Data Migration → Complete
- Work Requirements Document (WRD) – April 2018 through present; Expected approval by end of October 2019
- Vendor build, test environment installation --- TBD
- End-user testing/training in test environment --- TBD
- Installation into production environment --- TBD
- GO LIVE --- TBD

OMI IT Infrastructure improvements:

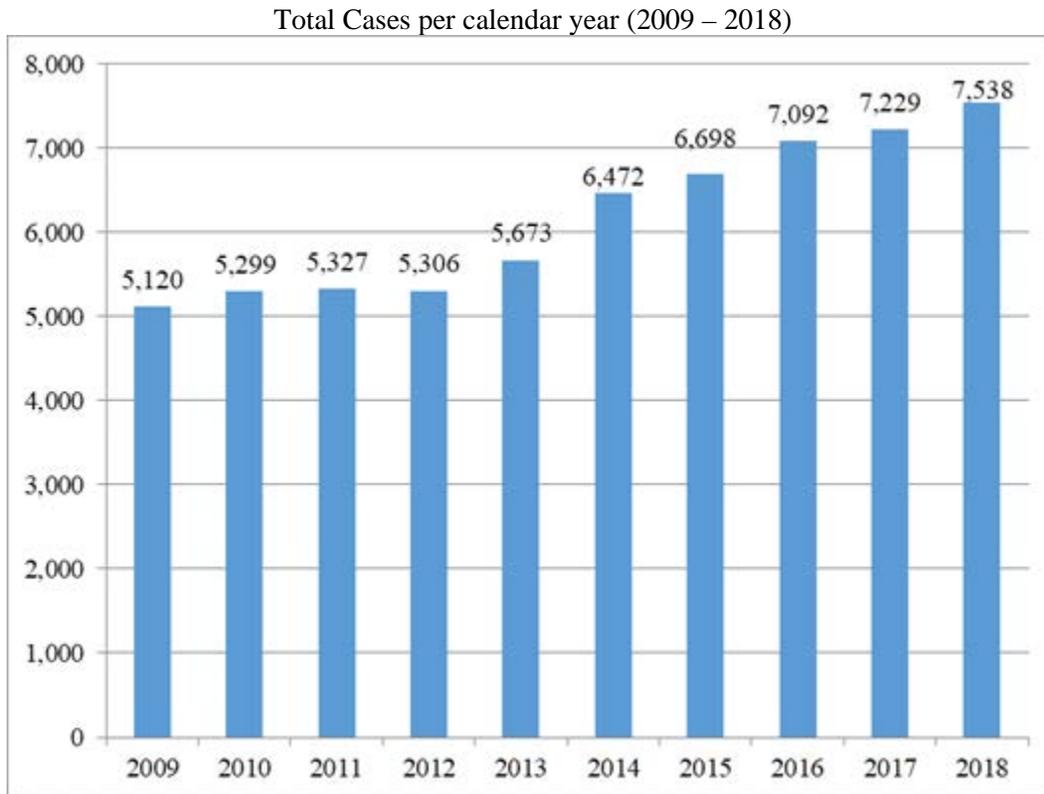
- Project began in 2017
- Vision: Move OMI from a standalone environment into a partnership with HSC IT and under the requirements of HSC for better performance.
- Replace network hardware that is end of life has been completed.
- Replacement of wireless access points has been scheduled.
- Move over from OMI standalone environment to the HSC Domain.
- Negotiate changes of IT support structure that are cost effective and better meets OMI's business needs.

- **Strengthening Core Clinical Operations:**

Dr. Cline listed OMI’s core clinical operations and presented a PowerPoint slide that illustrated OMI’s caseload totals from 2009 – 2018.

Core Clinical Operations:

- Death Investigations
- Postmortem examinations
- Reports of postmortem examinations
- Death Certification



The presentation continued with highlighting death investigations activity for 2017-2018

Activity	CY 2017	CY 2018
Reportable Deaths	7,229	7,538
OMI Jurisdiction	3,641	3,822
Consultations	917	890
Transported to OMI	3,519	3,768
Scene Investigations (Statewide)	4,604	6,424

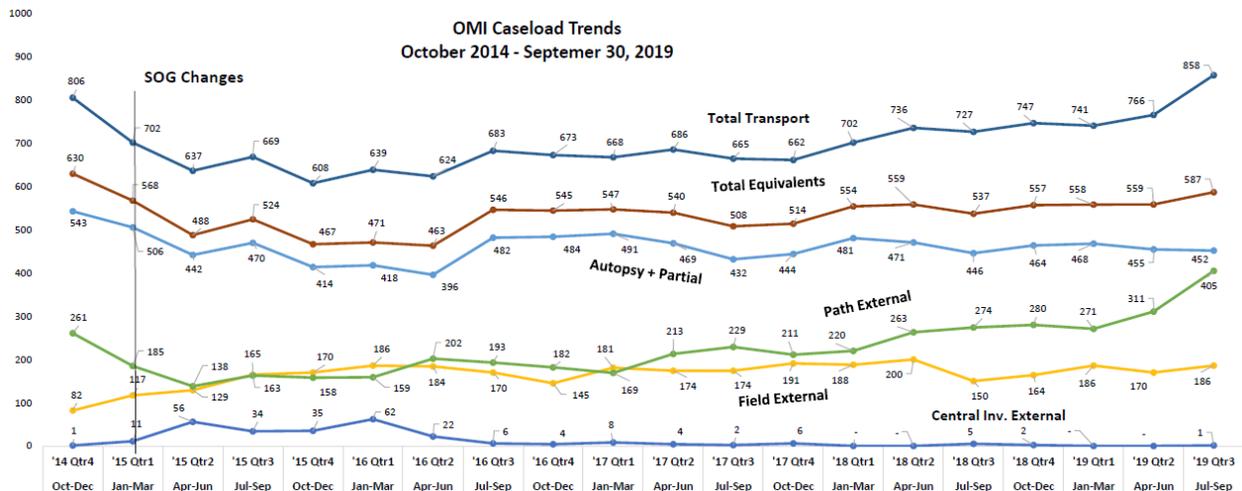
Sec. Trujillo inquired if a reportable death does not fall under OMI jurisdiction, what other jurisdiction will it fall under? Dr. Cline explained that after the death is reported to the OMI, the pathologist screens the circumstances. If it is determined to be a natural event, the OMI will terminate jurisdiction so that the decedent’s primary care physician can sign the death certificate. Dr. Roth inquired of the disproportionate increase in scene investigations? Dr. Cline indicated that there is no explanation at this time, the data is only preliminary. Other preliminary data that was learned is that Saturdays are often the busiest. Once the data is finalized, Dr. Cline will focus on using the data to change practices to accommodate operations.

The next slide highlights the levels of postmortem examinations

Exam Type	2017	2018
Full Exams	1,762	1,755
Partial Exams	81	111
Pathologist External Exams	826	1,049
Field External Exams	722	707

Dr. Cline spoke about the slide and pointed out the increase in Partial Exams. Because of OMIs limited resources, the increase is a reflection of a change in procedures to determine if a case needs a full autopsy, and the ability to use the CT scanner.

Dr. Cline briefly discussed, and presented the next slide illustrating OMI Caseload Trends.



Dr. Cline presented the next slide which listed OMI activity with the NM Criminal Justice System. These statewide activities include OMI pathologists and the administrative staff's time.

Q1 2019 (July – September)

- 35 Pre-trial interviews completed by OMI faculty
- 18 Criminal subpoenas received for OMI faculty
- 5 Criminal Testimony (of the five 1 was staff)
- 6 Criminal cases pled
- 14 Criminal cases were continued
- 2 Civil Testimony
- 4 Civil Depositions
- 10 Civil case consult reviews

Q 1 2019 (July – September)

- 9 Case reassignments (Due to faculty attrition)
  - 1 DA requesting a pre-trial interview
  - 1 Upcoming trial date
  - 1 Civil case review
  - 2 Review of the manner of death
  - 3 Request for family meeting
  - 1 Family request to review the report

Dr. Cline moved on to the final core clinical operation: Death Certificates

The OMI developed a new program called Decedent Affairs. There is one administrative position in this program. Veronica Tovar is the new Program Coordinator of OMI Decedent Affairs. The main purpose of the program is to process death certificates to the NM Vital Records. Dr. Cline presented data in the next slide. The table includes a list of other areas of focus for the new Decedent Affairs Program.

Time frame	OMI DCs need of processing	Event
June 5, 2017	389	Started tracking
June 12, 2017	354	Concerted efforts within office
Temp. grant funding DOH Jan –Aug 2019		
October 4, 2019	202	Sept. Decedent Affairs Program Coordinator approved through UNM

- Get death certificates to BVS→ Families
- Facilitate release of decedents at OMI
- Reduce # DCs in need of processing to less than 150
- Reduce # decedents in OMI's refrigerated storage (capacity is 150)
  - 189 at OMI as of Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> 2019;
  - 197 as of this morning Oct. 7, 2019
- Indigents (unclaimed): 150 decedent's 9/2018-9/2019

As listed in the slide, Dr. Cline noted to the board that as of Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 the OMI is at refrigerated storage capacity. From Sept. 2018 to Sept. 2019 there are 150 indigent/unclaimed decedents that require indigent burial processing. The OMI must do their due diligence to ensure that there is no next-of-kin or that the next-of-kin declined their legal right for final disposition of the decedent.

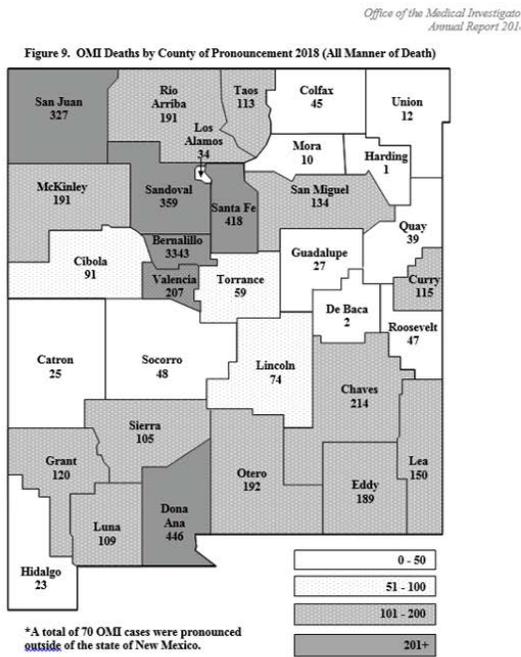
The Dept. of Indian Affairs is involved with the NM Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force Act. (MMIW). Secretary Trujillo asked if there is a racial breakdown of indigent and unclaimed decedents, and if there was a correlation with the cause and/or manners of death? Dr. Cline replied that the current and future new OMI database will be able to identify those types of cases individually however, currently the OMI is not tracking that data.

Chief Johnson asked if there are high numbers of indigent/unclaimed cases in other states. Dr. Cline confirmed that this is the trend nationwide. Dr. Cline noted to the board that OMI's indigent and unclaimed process is led by OMI Sr. Investigator Wendy Honeyfield. Ms. Honeyfield reported that she use to only process 2 indigent cases a year. Sec. Trujillo asked if cause and manner of death was determined for all unclaimed individuals, if so, it may be a good idea to identify how many of those deaths are related to drug overdoses. Dr. Cline replied that there is a cause and manner of death for indigent/unclaimed cases, currently the OMI does not focus on capturing data to determine if there is a correlation with cause/manner of deaths and indigent/unclaimed cases. Dr. Cline agreed and affirmed Sec. Trujillo's recommendation to track the trends.

Chief Johnson asked Dr. Cline what are the issues preventing OMI to clear the backlog of indigent/unclaimed cases? Dr. Cline summarized the investigative process for these cases. The OMI would need more investigative staff. Currently OMI is using multiple databases to locate next-of-kin (NOK). Once OMI has made contact with NOK, letters are sent out to claim the body. If NOK does not want to claim the body, they must sign a letter stating they are giving up their rights for final disposition of the body. Then there is a waiting period to receive the signed letter before the body can be declared indigent. The OMI is already holding bodies longer than what is required by law.

Dr. Cline noted to the board, that as a result of her assessment of indigent/unclaimed cases, she plans to focus on developing a process and a matrix to help make the process better. Dr. Roth asked, what percentage of bodies held at the OMI do not have NOK? Dr. Cline replied that she does not have that number at this time. Sec. Trujillo stated that it would be a good idea to track this data going forward to help identify trends and/or seek additional resources to help OMI. Dr. Cline agreed and affirmed the board's suggestions to capture and analyze data for indigent and unclaimed bodies.

Next, Dr. Cline presented a slide to update the board on Hidalgo County. Dr. Cline opens this presentation recognizing the project as Community Outreach. Hidalgo County's temperatures are typically hot. Additionally, state highway I-10 runs through the county. There are many dust storms near the highway which result in many traffic fatalities. There is no holding facility for bodies with refrigeration. Hidalgo County is not staffed with an OMI Field Deputy Medical Investigator (FDMI). The previous FDMI quit the job because of the many obstacles in this county. The closest field investigator is a retired FDMI in Grant County and it can take at minimum an hour for him to get to the scene causing delays in traffic with a death investigation scene on the highway. In order to get a decedent off the scene as quickly as possible, OMI must work with funeral homes located in Grant or Luna County for body storage. These situations causes multiple issues within the community. OMI is working with the Hidalgo County Manager to help identify a location for OMI to purchase a 3 body refrigeration holding storage. OMI Director of Operations, Yvonne Villalobos is leading this project. The project includes an agreement between UNM Purchasing, OMI and Hidalgo County for the care and maintenance of the cooler. Sec. Kunkel stated that the county has needed this for many years. The Secretary expressed her gratitude to Dr. Cline for moving the project along.

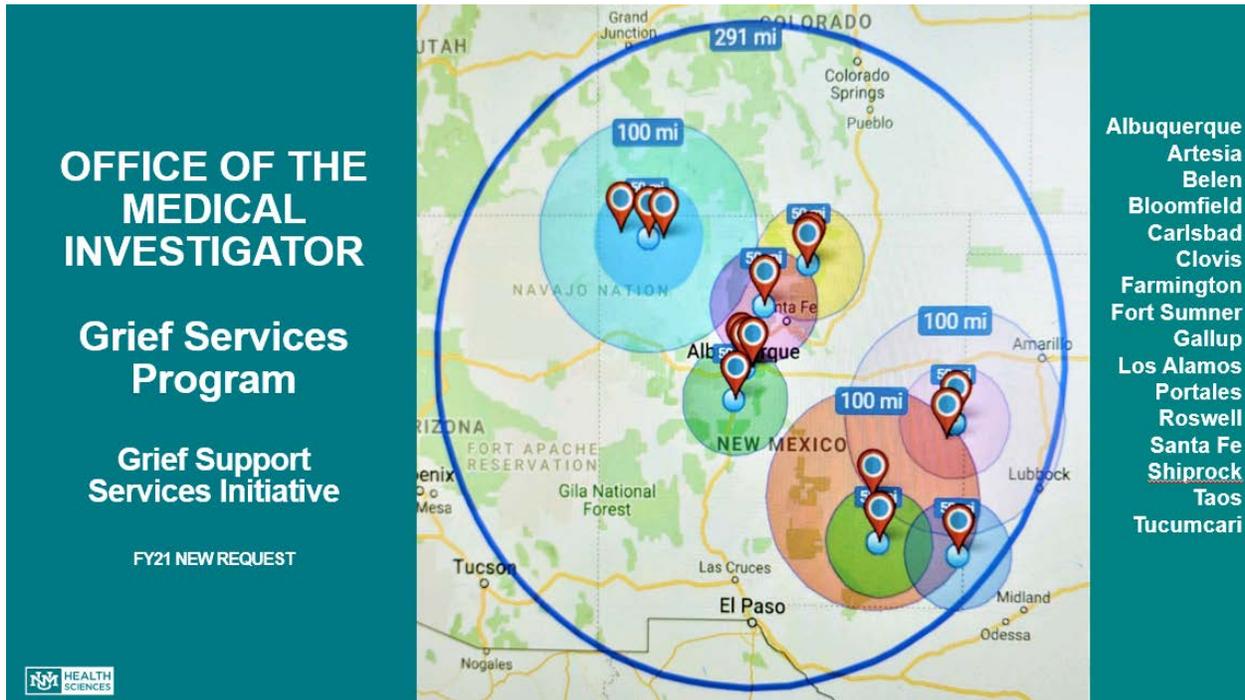


In the next slide, Dr. Cline updated the board on the progress of the CT Scanner Replacement.

# CT Scanner Replacement

- Research phase- Complete
  - In-person meetings, phone calls, emails with 5 major vendors
  - Demos/site visits in Oklahoma City and Cleveland
  - No scanner is optimized for our practice (high volume, whole body scanning)
    - technical specifications
    - limitations
- Request for Proposal (RFP)
  - Technical specifications being written
  - Dr. Adolphi working with UNM Purchasing
  - RFP Expected to be open by end of October
  - RFP Committee Kethery Haber, Dr. Natalie Adolphi, Thu Luu

The next slide highlights OMI's Grief Services Program and illustrates locations throughout the state where OMI grief services now offers providers.



### **UPDATE ON THE SEARCH FOR THE NEW OMI CHIEF MEDICAL INVESTIGATOR**

In the next agenda item, Dr. Roth introduced Dr. Donna Sigl, Assistant Dean, Office of Faculty Affairs, UNM School of Medicine (SOM). Dr. Sigl, summarized to the board the functions of the Office of Faculty Affairs to include conducting searches for key institutional leaders. Dr. Sigl introduced staff from Faculty Affairs that will help coordinate the search for a new OMI Chief. April Rodriguez and Denise Salazar. Faculty Affairs will first began the search by identifying members of the search committee. Members of the board will designate someone from each of their entities to participate in the search. The designee will represent each of OMI's stakeholders:

- New Mexico Dept. of Health
- New Mexico Dept. of Indian Affairs
- New Mexico State Police
- New Mexico Board of Funeral Services

The Office of Faculty Affairs will designate someone from UNM SOM Departments of Pathology and Radiology. OMI recently updated the mission and vision statement, and is updating the leadership statement to highlight primarily in the areas of the academic requirements and expectations. OMI faculty agree that these leadership requirements and expectations are key in distinguishing this position from other positions like it around the country. Dr. Sigl asked Dr. Cline if she wanted to comment.

Dr. Cline briefly summarized updates that were made by OMI faculty to the mission, vision and leadership statements. Dr. Cline added that OMI faculty feel strongly that an OMI faculty member participate on the search committee. Dr. Cline respectfully made that request.

Dr. Sigl explained the expectations of the search committee members. The timeline includes: First month the search committee will meet with Dr. Roth and put together a matrix. During the second and third month the ad will be posted and Faculty Affairs will be actively recruiting. Dr. Sigl encouraged existing OMI faculty and board members to nominate anyone that may be a good candidate for the position.

In the fourth month the search committee will discuss and rate the nominees. Interviews will take place during the fifth and sixth months. The interview process is expected to include interviews with the designee, daytime meetings and evening meeting such as dinners. During the sixth and seventh months there will be a discussion of any recommendations to include second interviews if needed. Overall the time commitment for committee members is around 25-29 hours. The Office of Faculty Affairs will be forwarding the board a copy of the Ad/Statements. Dr. Roth recommended that individual board members may participate on the search committees or they can provide designees. Dr. Roth will send out a request to board members to select a committee member by the end of the month, to also include asking existing OMI faculty to identify a participant. Dr. Sigl responded to Dr. Roth and mentioned that two faculty names have already been submitted. Dr. Sigl introduced April Rodriguez to discuss advertising for the search. Ms. Rodriguez stated that ads will be posted with the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME), American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS). A flyer will be prepared for advertisement at the upcoming NAME meeting in October.

Before wrapping up this agenda item, Dr. Cline had one last question. Dr. Cline asked if the Chair of The Department of Pathology will participate in the search process. Dr. Roth responded yes, the Chief of the OMI has to be a faculty member in the UNM Department of Pathology and the Chair of that department has the authority and responsibility in selecting and recommending the finalist. The board has the final authority.

**PATHOLOGIST STAFFING AND WORKLOAD**

Dr. Cline reported that between July and November there will be two forensic pathologists departing the OMI. Dr. Mathew Cain left the OMI at the end of July to become a fellow in medical informatics at Indiana University. Dr. Cain was with the OMI for three years and was instrumental on working with the new OMI case management system and information technology projects. Dr. Hannah Kastenbaum completed her fellowship with the OMI in 2012 and was hired as a faculty pathologist. Dr. Kastenbaum has been with OMI for eight years. During her time at the OMI she has been the Director of the UNMH Hospital Autopsy Service, principal investigator (PI) of the coverdell grant for toxicology funding and Violent Death Reporting System grant, OMI point of contact for fentanyl deaths, managed the medical student rotation clerkship and visiting resident’s rotations. Dr. Kastenbaum will be moving to Pennsylvania where she will be a Forensic Pathologist at the Medical Examiner’s Office in Philadelphia, her last day with OMI is November 15<sup>th</sup>.

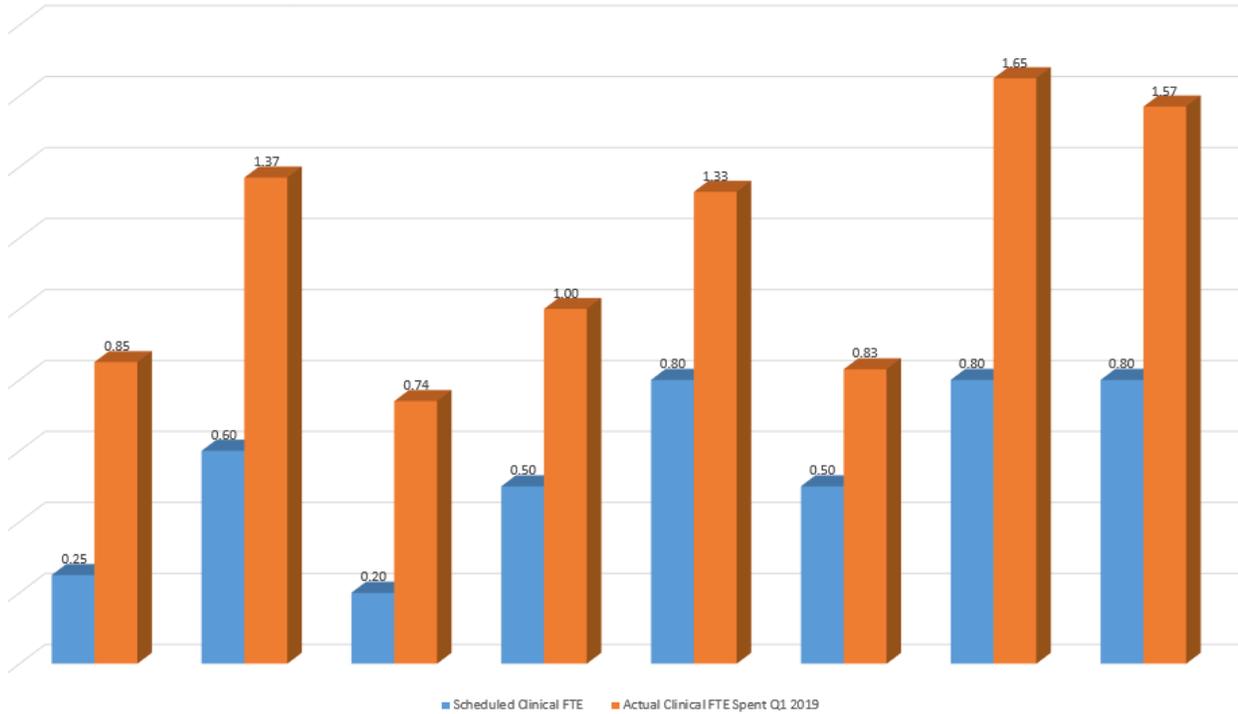
Theses departures will leave both positions vacant. Dr. Cline transitioned to slides illustrating pathologist caseloads and short-term faculty retention and staffing plans.

Q1	Q2	Faculty Pathologists	Combined Clinical FTEs	Actual Clinical FTEs
2018		10	5.75	9.24
2019		8	4.45	9.34
	2019	7	3.95	Expected ~9

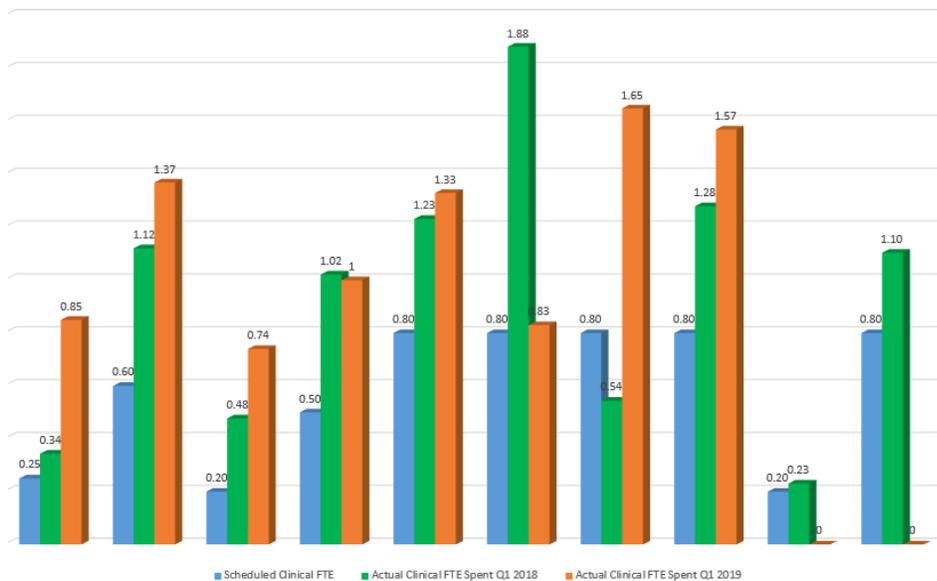
Project a need of 8.8 Clinical FTEs → 9

- Based on annual caseload of 2200 AE & NAME accreditation guidelines that 1 FTE pathologist performs no more than 250 AE’s per year → Excludes periods of short staffing from medical leave, maternity leave

OMI Pathologist Caseload Comparisons: July 1 – Sept 30, 2019  
 Expected clinical FTE versus Actual FTE



OMI Pathologist Caseload Comparisons: July 1 – Sept 30, 2019  
 Expected clinical FTE versus Actual FTE FY Q1 2018 & 2019



Full-time Clinical UNM is 0.80 (remainder for education/scholarly activity)

Q1 2018: 10 faculty combined → 5.75 Scheduled FTEs doing caseload of 9.24

Q1 2019: 8 faculty combined → 4.45 FTEs with caseload of 9.34 FTEs

Q2 2019: 7 Faculty combined → 3.95 FTEs Similar caseload expected

## Short Term Faculty Retention and Staffing Plan

- Extra Compensation: To reward faculty for exceeding the expected clinical effort, proportional to the amount of extra cases per quarter
- Faculty Search: Ongoing, Committee currently reviewing applicants → If successful most likely wouldn't start until July or August 2020
- Locums: 1 Pathologist scheduled to come from Jan 2020 – Mar 2020 (possibly through June 2020)
- Interviewing for a 2<sup>nd</sup> Locums
- Pathologist Assistant – New position, posted

### BUDGET UPDATE

Dr. Cline identified items in the board packet and gave an update about the OMI budget.

Documents presented:

- FY19 Income Statement Projection 7/1/18 – 6/30/19
- FY20 Income Statement Projection 7/1/19 – 6/30/20

<b>OMI FY19 Income Statement Projection</b>	<b>7/1/18 - 6/30/19</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	
<b>Operating Revenue</b>	
University Hospital Revenue	\$773,379
Sandoval Regional MC Revenue	\$20,066
Other Revenue Services	\$3,958,836
<b>Non-operating Revenue</b>	
State Appropriation	\$5,313,400
State Appropriation - Grief	\$140,000
<b>Intra University Activities</b>	
Salary Support: Dr. Adolphi & Dr. Edgar	(\$56,500)
Transfer & Allocation	(\$163,066)
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$9,986,115</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Salary & Fringe	\$5,692,161
Body Transportation	\$984,920
Utilities & Plant Maintenance (SLD, Security, Kone Elevator,	\$604,599
Equipment Warranties (Phillips, Siemens, Stryker, C-Scan T	\$262,342
Services (J&J, Janitorial, Waste Destruction, Malpractice, Tr	\$604,847
Patient Care Expenses (Body bags, Specimen collectors, gk	\$310,106
NMS - Toxicology	\$10,857
Other Expenses (Appropriation's Overhead Charge, Supplie	\$963,774
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$9,433,606</b>
<b>Projected Net</b>	<b>\$552,509</b>
<b>FY18 Reserves</b>	<b>(\$720,725)</b>
<b>Total FY19 Projected Net</b>	<b>(\$168,216)</b>

<b>OMI FY20 Income Statement Projection</b>	<b>7/1/19 - 6/30/20</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	
<b>Operating Revenue</b>	
University Hospital Revenue	\$763,017
Sandoval Regional MC Revenue	\$17,679
Other Revenue Services	\$4,186,609
<b>Non-operating Revenue</b>	
State Appropriation	\$5,528,900
House Memorial 97 Appropriation	\$360,000
<b>Intra University Activities</b>	
Transfer & Allocation	(\$37,931)
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$10,818,273</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Salary & Fringe	\$6,267,387
Body Transportation	\$1,014,467
Utilities & Plant Maintenance (SLD, Security, Kone E	\$622,737
Equipment Warranties (Phillips, Siemens, Stryker, C	\$273,128
Services (J&J, Janitorial, Waste Destruction, Malpra	\$791,028
Patient Care Expenses	\$253,299
NMS - Toxicology	\$109,000
Other Expenses (Appropriation's Overhead Charge,	\$885,031
FDMIs VeritQ Training	\$49,582
Faculty Recruitment (Chief & 2 Faculty)	\$35,000
FDMIs OT Owed	\$25,000
Locum - R. Robinson - 6 months	\$262,776
Locum - TBD Essential for Survival	\$262,776
1 PA @ base \$95K + Fringe - 8 months	\$85,817
FY20 Faculty Extra Comp \$327K + \$96K fringe	\$423,049
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$11,360,078</b>
<b>FY20 Projected Deficit</b>	<b>(\$541,805)</b>
<b>FY19 Deficit Reserves</b>	<b>(\$168,216)</b>
<b>Overall Projected Deficit (Including FY19 Reserves)</b>	<b>(\$710,021)</b>
** Pending Possible Additional 1% Compensation During Mid-Year	

In closing of the budget update, Chief Johnson asked Dr. Roth if UNM School of Medicine (SOM) could alleviate OMI of the debit owed. Dr. Roth replied, the SOM and Dept. of Pathology were planning on picking up the locum salaries.

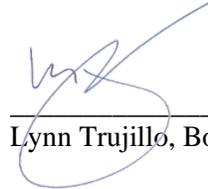
**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment

**ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Roth declared completion of all agenda items and asked if there was any other business that the board would like to bring forward. There was none. The meeting **ADJOURNED** at 2:20 PM

Approval of Minutes:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lynn Trujillo, Board Secretary

6/25/2020  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date