

WISCONSIN CORONERS AND MEDICAL EXAMINERS ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING
JUNE 9, 2009
SLEEP INN, EAU CLAIRE, WI (CHIPPEWA COUNTY)
===APPROVED===

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by President Dr. Doug Kelley at 8:50 a.m.

ATTENDANCE: An attendance sheet was passed for sign in. Those present include: Doug Kelley (Fond du Lac), P.J. Schoebel (Dodge), John Larson (Marathon), William Smith (Green Lake), Ralph Shireman (Richland), Faye Aschenbach (Manitowoc), Vicki Hoer (Fond du Lac), Diane Brunk (Oneida), Steven Solofra (Racine), Kim Winther (Racine), Kent Katalinick (Calumet), Barry Tomaras (Waupaca), Mike Pamperin (Waupaca), Barry Busby (Winnebago), Gabor Holczer (Wood), Richard Schleifer (Clark), Lou Brady (Juneau), Al Klimek (Brown), Laurie Parisey (Oconto), Susan Kohnert (Trempeleau), Katherine Gerrits (Chippewa), Bonnie Kindschy (Trempeleau), Mary Johnson (Florence), Thomas Miller (Walworth), Mary Ricci (Polk/Barron), Todd Van Langen (Washington), Kelly McAndrews (Washington), Art Nelson (Ashland), Eilef Sjolander (Ashland), David Wymore (Chippewa), Barb Beeksma (Ashland), Ray Wosepka (Dane-retired), Colleen Little (Dane), Barry Irmen (Dane), John Stanley (Dane), James Dalbesio III (Price), Pat Theder (Jefferson), Ruth Wulgaert (Outagamie), Kim Rossi (Kenosha), David Hudson (Kewaunee) and Jenifer Keach (Rock).

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: President Doug Kelley, 1st Vice-President Jenifer Keach, 2nd Vice-President Angela Hinze, Secretary Jon Hagen, Treasurer Robert Kulhanek, Sergeant-at-Arms Lou Brady, One-Year Trustee John Larson, Member-at-Large P.J. Schoebel.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Three-Year Trustee Traci England, Two-Year Trustee Mike Jesse.

APPROVAL OF 2008 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES: Copies of the 2008 annual meeting minutes were in the conference packet for review of the membership. A motion was made (Keach/Larson) to accept the minutes as written. No discussion was held. Motion passes unanimously on voice vote.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Dr. P. Douglas Kelley (Fond du Lac).

Dr. Kelley thanked the Board of Directors for their hard work in the past year. Dr. Kelley outlined the goals he had set last year; Communication, Education and Training, and a Proactive Membership. He feels the group achieved the "communications" goal, both between Board members and with the general membership via email and the WCMEA website, which has become a very important tool for the Association. The newsletter "The Examiner" is now primarily "electronic" although paper copies are still available to those who desire one. This allows cost savings and is environmentally friendly.

Regarding “education and training,” Dr. Kelley feels the WCMEA conferences are valuable and of high quality. He told of efforts made to provide cost-effective training to the membership and mentioned that Blueboard IT is currently being evaluated. When 979 becomes reality, he thinks we will be in good shape. 7 people just took ABMDI testing this weekend, and WCMEA attempts to make members aware of training opportunities.

Regarding “proactivity,” we are improving but still have a ways to go. He reminded the membership that if people would “volunteer” only two hours a month, how much work could be done. He did address “the good-old boys club” attitude among some of the members. He thinks it is time to dedicate time and efforts to the organization and let some things be in the past. He brought up “absentee voting,” allowing members to vote even if they are not present at the Annual Meeting. This will be added to revision of the by-laws. Some of the by-laws are vague, and even conflict in some cases. Dr. Kelley has begun to rewrite the by-laws, including ethics and voting procedures.

Dr. Kelley feels it is time to change the organizational structure of the WCMEA; he proposed a new position; that of Executive Secretary, which would be hired on a part-time basis initially. This person, hired by the organization and working at the direction of the Board of Directors representing the membership, would be charged with running the day-to-day operation of the Association. Current Board members all work outside of their WCMEA duties and are busy; the Executive Secretary would be able to provide consistent attention to details, including monitoring legislative issues and maintaining affiliate relationship. Dr. Kelley stressed that the Board of Directors and the membership will provide direction for the Executive Secretary. The Wisconsin Emergency Medical Services Association (WEMSA) made a similar move a few years ago, hiring a part time Director, who is now full time. They have enjoyed increased membership and other successes since that occurred, recently building their own building. Dr. Kelley feels WCMEA would use WEMSA as a model and enjoy similar successes. He feels hiring an Executive Secretary will streamline things and be appealing to the membership. Dr. Kelley hopes that at the 2010 Annual Meeting, the membership can vote on putting an Executive Secretary in place, as well as approving the revised by-laws. He encouraged input from the membership, both pro and con. He did lay out a time line to progress towards this goal. The Board of Directors support Dr. Kelley in this endeavor.

The National Academy of Sciences has been critical of forensic science, and provided a list of recommendations. Dr. Kelley urged those in attendance to stay involved in the Association to represent their interests in death investigation. We need to maintain alliances with affiliated organizations.

Dr. Kelley thanked the membership for their support and took questions from the membership.

Barry Busby asked about “coroners vs. medical examiners” system. Dr. Kelley answered he would like to have it removed from the political arena, which he feels it is basically “how people got their jobs.” He thinks it is more about “how people DO their

jobs,” but is aware the NAS does specifically call for medical examiners instead of coroners. He stressed that people need to stay involved and be aware of what is going on at all levels.

A motion was made (Brady/Busby) to accept the President’s report. Dr. Kelley Passed unanimously on voice vote.

1st VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT: Jenifer Keach (Rock).

Conference Committee Report: The current conference location was discussed. Although a smaller facility, it worked out well. 59 total registrations for this conference; she feels the poor economy is partially to blame, as well as departments needing to keep people home to cover, etc. 34 counties were represented, and she feels we “can do better” in the future. Kate Gerrits, coroner of Chippewa County, was acknowledged for her assistance with the conference, assisting Jenifer.

Education Committee Report: Jenifer has been busy planning the conference, and has been sending emails about other training opportunities available to WCMEA members. She also has been providing Marc Playman with information and links to specific topics to be posted on the website. She also has posted a variety of forms and other information there. She asked the membership to share information that they have for the benefit of others. She thanked Marc for his assistance with the website. Jenifer feels strongly about ABMDI certification and she encouraged members to strive towards that goal. She stressed professionalism of the membership.

Reviewing her year in office, she planned two conferences, assisting with the building of the website, made members aware of training opportunities via email, research on electronic training for the membership, and working on a conference planning guide as a reference for the future.

She thanked the membership for their support.

A motion was made (Brunk/Schoebel) to accept her report. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

2nd VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT: Angela Hinze (Columbia).

Angela praised the membership for their efforts and dedication to death investigation. She mentioned a local case where John Folstad, a deputy coroner from Eau Claire County, helped save a life at the WIAA state tennis tournament by using an AED and providing CPR.

68 of 72 counties are members of the WCMEA, with 227 paid members of the Association; there are a total of 374 coroners and medical examiners in the state. She sent our surveys to get input as to how people think the Association should be improved, but only 48 people replied (374 surveys were sent). She would like to increase the

membership by including affiliated groups, such as attorneys, funeral directors, law enforcement, etc. We are only as strong as our membership. She feels the cost of the membership is a great value. She asked members to be sure their contact information, including email, is correct.

She thanked the membership for their support.

A motion was made (Parisey/Hudson) to accept Angela's report. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Jon Hagen (Outagamie).

Briefly addressed the audience, telling of how the minutes are kept and emailed shortly after the meeting to the Board of Directors for review and approval. He did tell of how Kim Krueger found WCMEA financial records from 1945.

A motion was made (Steers/Schlieffer) was made to accept Jon's report. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Robert Kulhanek (Sheboygan).

Bob provided a written financial statement to the membership. The Association has \$79,149.30 in our account, as of June 5, 2009.

Bob provided details of a financial discrepancy from last year's conference at the Heidel House. He also read from the old financial records from the recently found books, to the delight of those in attendance. Bob told of how he communicated with Jenny and Angela regarding membership or conference issues, greatly streamlining operations. Bob thanked Dr. Kelley for his direction during his term.

A motion was made (Busby/Stanley). Barry Busby asked for a breakdown as to where the money actually is. Bob verbally explained where the accounts are. He explained where the information is on his written report. He currently is utilizing short-term CD's for much of the money. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS REPORT: Lou Brady (Juneau).

Lou was put in charge of WCMEA merchandise. She did demonstrate reflective vests available for sale. She was charged with reducing inventory of older items, which has been sold at reduced prices. She did explore selling merchandise on the website, but not much was sold that way. The Board of Directors did allow Lou to spend \$3000 on merchandise on this conference. Notebooks were ordered and given to conference attendees, and a limited number of merchandise was purchased for resale. She received previously-purchased merchandise in good condition and well-inventoried. She thanked Dr. Kelley and the Board for their support.

A motion was made (Keach/Kulhanek) to accept Lou's report. Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

A break was taken at 1020. Upon resuming the meeting, Jenifer Keach reminded attendees that two \$600 training scholarships will be awarded at the banquet tonight. Requests should be directed to Jenifer or Dr. Kelley.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE REPORT: P.J. Schoebel (Dodge).

This was P.J.'s first year on the Board, and he expressed thanks for the opportunity to serve. He feels he learned a lot in the past year, and spoke with many Association members. He sees membership and education as our biggest challenges. Many of our members are inactive, and he would like that addressed. He asked active members to help with that.

A motion was made (Larson/Brunk) to accept P.J.'s report; passed unanimously on voice vote.

TRUSTEE REPORT: John Larson (Marathon).

John has been a Board member for several years, and feels much was accomplished in the past year. He plans to remain active. He encouraged other WCMEA members to get involved. He thanked the membership for their support over the years. He thanked Dr. Kelley and other Board members for their contributions.

A motion (Kulhanek/Stanley) to accept John's report; passed unanimously on voice vote.

The other two trustees were not present.

BYLAW COMMITTEE: Summarized earlier by Dr. Kelley.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Summarized earlier by Jenifer Keach. She thanked sponsors for the conference.

INFORMATION/TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE: Marc Playman.

Marc said he is not able to reset passwords. Website usage has increased by 300%, with about 10,000 hits a month. There is a lot of information on the secure member side as opposed to the public side. He will be giving a presentation tomorrow at the conference, and deferred more information until tomorrow. He will continue to update the website for another year.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT: Summarized earlier by Angela Hinze.

MERCHANDISE COMMITTEE REPORT: Summarized earlier by Lou Brady.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT: John Stanley (Dane). The fall elections had a large turnover of legislators, and therefore committee chairman. Rep. Vrunik is now overseeing changes to 979. She supports training and education for death investigators. Also, the poor economy has led to budget cut backs; a bad year to start doing new things. We are looking at other sources of funding, including the life insurance industry. Amy Sue is taking charge, talking with other legislatures about issues at hand. It is unsure which State department death investigators will be placed under.

John said that WCMEA actually was incorporated in 1930; we are in our 79th year. There had been earlier discussions as to when the organization was originally formed. The Secretary of State's office has lost our originally incorporation papers.

Regarding the revision of 979, work is still being done. It was ready for a vote in the Assembly, but the vote never occurred. Some changes have been made, as we don't want to have to add amendments. One area of interest is changing the cause and manner of death. We are asking that the "medical certifier" be able to present their side of the case when challenges are made. We are also changing the composition of the _____ Board. The draft of bills are at the direction, and the property of, the Legislator; therefore we are not able to post the current bill on the website for members review. If WCMEA members have a problem with the bill, don't call the legislator, but instead call a member of the WCMEA Legislative Committee. WCMEA encourages participation within the organization.

John does not think that the "coroner system" in Wisconsin will be changed anytime soon, although it is possible that changing to a "medical examiner" system in the state may occur someday.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Barry Busby asked for a complete listing all WCMEA members. The State does put out this information. Angela also has some of this information. It is available on the "member" side of the website. Any change in information, email address, etc. should be forwarded to Angela.

Jenifer Keach brought up that there is not a formal "Death Investigators" week, as there is "EMS Week, Nurses Week," etc. Some felt that was a good idea and Jenifer will pursue that.

Discussion was held about a site for the 2011 Summer Conference. The January 2010 (January 3-6) will be in Wausau; the 2010 Summer Conference (June 6-9) will be in Columbia County. Door County and Crawford County expressed interest in hosting the 2011 Summer Conference.

A motion was made (Larson/Kulhanek) to hold the 2011 Summer Conference in Door County; passed unanimously on voice vote.

Dr. Kelley broached the subject of changing the dates of the conferences; either switching to a April/September format or moving the summer conference to later in June. Discussion was heard about vendor availability at a different time. No changes will be made at this time.

VOTING FOR OFFICERS: Nominating committee was John Larson, John Stanley and Richard Schliefer, as appointed by Dr. Kelley.

Their recommendations, presented to the membership, are:

President: Jenifer Keach (Rock)

1st Vice-President: Angela Hinze (Columbia)

2nd Vice-President: Lou Brady (Juneau)

Secretary: Jon Hagen (Outagamie)

Treasurer: Robert Kulhanek (Sheboygan)

Sergeant-at-Arms: P.J. Schoebel (Dodge)

Three-year trustee: Al Klimek (Brown)

Two-year trustee: Traci England (Oneida) progressive term

One-year trustee: Marcus "Mike" Jesse (Shawano) progressive term

Past-president: Dr. Doug Kelley (Fond du Lac)

Member-at-large: Richard Schleifer (Clark) as chosen by President Keach

The membership was advised that nominations were eligible from the floor.

President: a nomination from the floor for John Larson. John respectfully declined the nomination. No other nominations from the floor. A motion was made (Brunk/Klimek) to accept Jenifer Keach as President. Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

1st Vice-President: No nominations from the floor. A motion was made (Solofra/Steers) to accept Angela Hinze as 1st Vice-President. Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

2nd Vice-President: No nominations from the floor. A motion was made (Kelley/Kulhanek) to accept Lou Brady as 2nd Vice-President. Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Secretary: No nominations from the floor. A motion was made (Kulhanek/Tomas) to accept Jon Hagen as Secretary. Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Treasurer: No nominations from the floor. A motion was made (Stanley/Schoebel) to accept Robert Kulhanek at Treasurer. Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Sergeant-at-arms: No nominations from the floor. A motion was made (Klimek/Kelley) to accept P.J. Schoebel as Sergeant-at-arms. Passed unanimously on voice vote.

Three-year trustee: No nominations from the floor. A motion was made (Brady/Kelley) to accept Al Klimek at the three-year trustee. Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Member-at-large: President Jenifer Keach selected Richard Schleifer to fill this position.

New President Jenifer Keach addressed the membership, stating that she is honored to be elected to the office. She promised to “champion the cause” for training and education, promoting professionalism through the WCMEA. She said that “education and credentialing is our pathway to respect and recognition.” She noted that we as death investigators are our own entity, not an ancillary service, as we work side-by-side with law enforcement, district attorneys and others as we perform our duties. We are entitled to such basic amenities as an office, a reasonable budget for training and equipment and a phone number. She urged members to not allow themselves to being placed on the sidelines, and reminded us there are state statutes that can be used to our advantage. She said that as time goes on and that there will be mandatory training and perhaps certifications, some investigators will likely retire while others will embrace the challenge.

A motion was made (Larson/Brunk) to adjourn the meeting at 1149; passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon K. Hagen, RN, BSN, D-ABMDI
Chief Deputy Coroner, Outagamie County
Secretary, WCMEA