



Idaho State Association of County Coroners
Board Meeting Minutes
Via Zoom | January 29, 2021

Members Present

Lucky Bourn, Minidoka County, President
Dotti Owens, Ada County, Past President
Warren Keene, Kootenai County, District 1 Rep
Perry Larson, Lewis County, District 2 Rep

Gene Turley, Twin Falls County, District 4 Rep
Mark Rose, Power County, District 5 Rep
Mike Ernest, Lemhi County Coroner, District 6 Rep
John Buck, Gem County, At Large

Members Absent

Tara Parsons, Butte County, Vice President
Craig Rinehart, Cassia County, Secretary/Treasurer
Sue Warner, Adams County, District 3 Rep

Others Present

Kristin Cundiff, IAC Director of Operations
Matthew Gamette, Idaho State Police

I. Call to Order

President Bourn called the meeting to order at 10:02 am on Friday, January 29, 2021.

II. HB0031

President Bourn introduced Matthew Gamette, Idaho State Police's Laboratory System Director, to speak on HB0031. Gamette began by indicating that the state is dealing with toxicology in a different way than we have been in the past. They are operating with no backlog so they can meet turnaround times that the courts need.

Gamette mentioned that the original bill had some issues with the statement of purpose (SOP). There were some things added that weren't supposed to be in the statement of purpose and he wanted to clarify what the intent of the bill is. The updated statement of purpose states it "would allow ISP to perform testing for coroners that do not have the resources or do not want to pay for the testing at a private lab." Somehow there was wording that got included in the first SOP about counties having to report murders to ISP and that is not part of the bill.

HB31 essentially allows the ISP Laboratory to provide aggregate data to the department of health and welfare and gives clear statutory authority that the lab can accept anything from coroners. Currently, anything submitted to the ISP Lab needs to be of criminal nature. Gamette clarified that not all toxicology screenings would be criminal in nature. He also noted that counties would not be required to use the lab, they would still be able to utilize the services of NMS Lab and ISP has no intention of competing with NMS.

Gamette exited the meeting so the coroners could discuss the bill. After a few minutes of discussion, Buck moved to support HB0031, but the motion died due to a lack of a second.

Buck said that small counties could benefit from this service. Owens noted that larger counties might get their budgets reduced for toxicology because the commissioners might not realize NMS does a

more in-depth toxicology screen and think ISP could run all toxicologies in the county. Buck suggested that the sponsor of the bill make a change to note the service would be for smaller counties with a small population size - perhaps under 50,000.

Larson moved to oppose HB0031, Ernest seconded. Motion passed with two in opposition.

Lucky will follow up with Gamette and the membership to see about a potential revision of the bill.

III. Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

Owens received a shipment of PPE a few days ago. She reached out to each of the county coroners to see what their needs were for PPE in their county. The order was based on those that responded they would like to receive PPE. Now some counties are reaching out and letting her know that they could use some even though they didn't request it originally. The group agreed that Owens should distribute to those that originally requested the PPE and circle back with leftovers to others that have requested in the meantime. Owens will ship supplies to North Idaho, drop off supplies in Twin Falls, and Ernest and Rose indicated they would travel to Boise to pick up their district's supplies.

IV. PTSD Legislation

In 2019, the Idaho Legislature passed a bill that allowed first responders to receive worker's compensation for PTSD or other related psychological conditions. Owens is planning to draft legislation for the 2021 session that would add coroners to the list of first responders that would benefit from the worker's compensation. Bourn agreed to forward the legislation to Representative Wood and ask if it could be introduced.

V. Online Training

Owens recently emailed the coroners to find out who would be interest for an online training. This training would be a bundle with five classes all taught by Darren Dake (Death Investigation Training Academy) at a cost of \$369 per person. The classes included would focus on: response and understanding a death scene; understanding the sciences in death investigation; courtroom testimony; PTSD and wellness; and injury wound interpretation. These classes are all online and at your own pace, but must be completed within six months. The bundle will award 25.5 hours of continuing ABMDI education credits. The board indicated that since they were not spending money on in-person training for Midwinter, they have some room to pay for the online training.

Ernest moved to approve paying for the county coroner and up to two deputies (ABMDI certified) from each county to participate in the online training, Keene seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

VI. Mills Adler Awards for 2020 and 2021

Bourn explained that due to pandemic, we were not able to present a Mills Adler Award for 2020 so we are going to hopefully present the 2020 award at the IAC Annual Conference in September. We'll need to nominate someone for 2020, as well as 2021. Bourn asked for suggestions and volunteered to send out a notice to the full membership for nominations.

VII. Other Business

Owens was approached about a coroner that wasn't sure about the law and what happens when a new funeral home comes to their county. Buck volunteered to look into this issue and get back in touch with the board.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 12 at 10:00 am MST/9:00 am PST. Cundiff will send out a calendar invite with the Zoom link.

Bourn adjourned the meeting at 11:34 am.