

Houston Forensic Science Center, Inc.

MEETING OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES
May 11, 2018

The undersigned, being the duly appointed secretary of the Houston Forensic Science Center, Inc., (the "Corporation") hereby certifies the following are true and correct minutes of the May 11, 2018 meeting of the Board of Directors (the "Board") of the Corporation.

- A. In a manner permitted by the Corporation's Bylaws, the meeting was called by providing all directors with notice of the date, time, place and purposes of the meeting more than three days before the date of the meeting.
- B. In accordance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, made applicable to the Corporation by Section 431.004, Texas Transportation Code, a notice of the meeting was duly filed on May 8, 2018, in the same manner and location as required by law of the City of Houston, Texas (the "City").
- C. The meeting was called to order by Nicole B. Cásarez, Board chairwoman, at approximately 9:01 a.m. on Friday May 11, 2018 in the Council Annex Chambers, 900 Bagby St. (Public Level), Houston, Texas 77002.
- D. Ms. Jordan Benton called the roll. The following directors were present: Nicole B. Cásarez, Philip Hilder, Francisco G. Medina, Janet Blancett and Chief Mary Lentschke.

The following directors were absent: Anthony Graves, Dr. Robert "Bob" H. McPherson, Dr. Stacey A. Mitchell, Sandra Guerra Thompson and Tom P. Allen (ex-officio)

Chairwoman Cásarez declared a quorum was present


- E. Chairwoman Cásarez noted a draft of the minutes of the April 13, 2018 Board meeting had been distributed to the directors. Ms. Blancett made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Hilder seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- F. Chairwoman Cásarez asked if members of the public wished to address the Board. No one addressed the Board.
- G. Chairwoman Cásarez presented a chair's report. She welcomed Dr. Darrell Davis, a member of HFSC's Technical Advisory Group, to the meeting. Ms. Cásarez said she met with Mayor Sylvester Turner and he had asked her to serve another term on the Board. Ms. Cásarez said she had agreed to serve at least another year as Chairwoman to continue assisting with HFSC's facility needs. The Chairwoman told the Board of CNN would be airing its final episode of "Death Row Stories," featuring Mr. Graves' wrongful conviction and exoneration.
- H. Dr. McPherson joined the meeting at approximately 9:03 a.m.

- I. Dr. Stout gave the president's report. Dr. Stout discussed pending disclosures to the Texas Forensic Science Commission (TFSC.) He reviewed the lab's grant proposals. Dr. Stout reviewed the April 2018 's average turnaround time (TAT), backlogs and requests received. Dr. Stout noted the continual decrease in the latent print backlog. Dr. Stout shared recent outreach activities, including a tour with Board member Philip Hilder. He also provided a staff update and shared information about staff who achieved certification in their field.
- J. Mr. Graves joined the meeting at approximately 9:25 a.m.
- K. Mr. Darrell Stein, director of information strategy, updated the Board on HFSC's ongoing transition to a new Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS). Mr. Stein reminded the Board of the project's complexity and said due to unforeseen issues that are being resolved, there is no deadline for when it will be complete. Currently, the team is transferring information to a cloud-based environment and ironing out last-minute issues with a custom-made request portal. Mr. Stein said three disciplines are operating in the new JusticeTrax LIMS. The remaining disciplines are still using the old LIMS until the new request portal is operational.
- L. Dr. Stout requested the Board extended his signing authority to \$350,000 to ensure the vendor, Catapult, can continue work on the custom-made portal. Dr. McPherson made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Hilder seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- M. Dr. Amy Castillo, vice president and COO, presented the operations report. She reminded the Board that the transition to the new LIMS and an independent network has impacted all operations. Dr. Castillo reported the Client Services & Case Management (CS/CM) division is expected to be accredited in June. As part of its accreditation, HFSC has informed stakeholders it will refuse to analyze evidence that is improperly handled or packaged. Chairwoman Casarez said the Board supports HFSC rejecting any evidence that has not been handled according to proper protocol. Dr. Castillo reviewed each section's scorecard, including CODIS (Combined DNA Index System) and process improvement projects. She talked about each section's TAT, accreditation, current backlogs among other updates. Mr. Jerry Pena, director of the Crime Scene (CSU) and digital & multimedia units, updated the board about his team's accomplishments.
- N. Ms. Courtney Head, manager of forensic biology, presented the Board with a plan for HFSC to eliminate a longstanding backlog in the DNA section She said the current plan would allow the lab to outsource all incoming work, including sexual assault kits (SAK), during the next 10-12 months. Ms. Head said by outsourcing incoming casework the section would be able to focus on cross-training all staff and eliminating backlogged cases. Staff needs to be cross-trained to do all parts of the DNA testing process to eliminate bottlenecks that cause backlogs. Ms. Head said she believed at the end of the outsourcing and training project the section would have a process in place that allows them to have a sustainable 30-day turnaround time. She said outsourcing will cost about \$2.43 million and would be paid for by HFSC and grant dollars. Board members expressed concern about whether testimony provided by analysts at a private laboratory would meet HFSC standards. They questioned whether it would be wise to retest

evidence in-house for cases that come to trial. Ms. Head said while this is done on occasion, there is a concern about consuming evidence in retesting and that all private labs are accredited and vetted ahead of time by HFSC's DNA technical lead to ensure they meet our standards. Ms. Head said the lab had also used outsourcing to successfully eliminate its inherited rape kit backlog, as well as a much smaller backlog that accumulated in 2016.

- O. Mr. Leach requested Board approval to reallocate funds in HFSC's FY18 budget. Chairwoman Cásarez made a motion to approve the budget reallocations. Dr. McPherson seconded the motion. The Board approved the budget reallocations unanimously.
- P. Mr. Leach presented a treasurer's report. Mr. Leach said HFSC is working to fill open positions and the budget will be fully used once personnel are hired. Mr. Leach gave a line-item overview of spending to-date as well as an update on grants.
- Q. Ms. Lori Wilson, quality director, gave an update for April 2018. Ms. Wilson shared information about proficiency tests, the blind quality control program and internal audits.
- R. Pursuant to Section 551.071, consultation with attorney, Section 551.072, deliberation regarding real property, and Section 551.074, personnel matters, of the Texas Government Code, the Board went into executive session at approximately 11:17 a.m. HFSC's general counsel Ms. Renee Byas, Dr. Stout and Dr. Castillo were present in the executive session.
- S. The executive session concluded at approximately 12:08 p.m. The meeting reconvened in open session.
- T. The Chairwoman reviewed that during the executive session, the Board reviewed Dr. Stout's performance over the past year. Ms. Casarez made a motion to provide Dr. Stout with a three percent pay raise. Dr. McPherson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously
- U. The meeting ADJOURNED at approximately 12:09 p.m.

By:



Jordan Benton Secretary