

# Illinois Forensic Science Commission

## Meeting Minutes

18 June 2024

### I. **Call to order**

Illinois State Police Director Brendan Kelly, Commission Chairperson, called to order the meeting of the Illinois Forensic Science Commission at approximately 10:00 a.m., on June 18, 2024. The meeting was held in-person at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology Room 1619. The meeting also was available via WebEx.

### II. **Roll-call**

1. The following Forensic Science Commission Members and staff were present in-person:

1. Brendan Kelly, Chairperson
2. Dr. Ponni Arunkumar, Member
3. Jillian Baker, Member
4. Jeff Buford, Member
5. Claire Dragovich, Member
6. John Hanlon, Member (present via Web Ex)
7. Judge Art Hill (ret.), Member
8. Jodi Hoos, Member
9. Phil Kinsey, Member
10. Jeanne Richeal, Member
11. Caryn Tucker, Member
12. Carrie Ward, Member
13. Amy Watroba, Executive Director

2. Quorum confirmed.

3. The following members of the public were present in-person at the meeting:

1. Timothy Ruppel
2. Sarah Ware

The following members of the public were present via WebEx:

1. Jan Johnson
2. Joanne Liu
3. Linda Mandat
4. Timothy Tripp

### III. **Review/Adoption of the Minutes of March 18, 2024.**

The motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2024, was unanimously approved.

### IV. **Housekeeping Items**

1. ED Watroba spread of record that a videographer was present at the meeting to shoot B-roll footage for a video project stemming from the Training and

Career Development Subcommittee. Additionally, a photographer was present in the hallway to take photographs of Commission members after the meeting for the purpose of posting the photographs and Commission Members' biographies on the Commission website.

## V. Executive Director Summary

1. Commission Logo: ED Watroba shared the final versions of the Forensic Science Commission logo which were developed after the March meeting based on the Commission's instructions. Commission letterhead also is being designed for written communications sent from the Executive Director's Office on behalf of the Commission.
2. Education/outreach: ED Watroba presented a general presentation about the Commission at the International Association of Homicide Investigators (IHIA) DNA & Genealogy Conference in Collinsville in June. She also was accepted to represent the Commission in the National Association of Forensic Science Boards (NAFSB), and she plans to attend the NAFSB's annual meeting in Albany, NY in September. ED Watroba reminded all Commission members that they also can join the NAFSB. Chairperson Kelly indicated that funds may be available through the Commission to cover the \$100 membership fee for any Commission members interested in joining the NAFSB.
3. Legal & Legislative Update: ED Watroba explained that a decision in the case of *Smith v. Arizona* is expected from the US Supreme Court within days. ED Watroba next summarized the end of the legislation session and provided updates on bills that were previously discussed in Commission meetings. HB 1168 passed both houses and proposes amendments to the Rights of Crime Victims and Witnesses Act (725 ILCS 120/3 and 725 ILCS 120/4) related to the use of victim DNA consistent with the Commission's previous recommendation. HB 1168 is awaiting possible signature by the governor. The bills related to DUI-cannabis will be discussed later in the meeting as a separate agenda item. The bills essentially died in Rules Committee. A bill which includes minor amendments to the Commission's enabling statute passed both houses. Also, legislation was discussed during this session that would create a state-wide public defender's office. If that legislation is re-visited in the future and ultimately passes, ED Watroba suggested that any such organization might be a useful resource for pushing out education related to forensic science to lawyers. Chairperson Kelly indicated that if a state-wide public defender's office is created in the future, that might also serve as a source to fill the position on the Commission designated for a defense attorney.

## VI. Subcommittee Reports

1. Quality Systems Subcommittee: Claire Dragovich, subcommittee chairperson, first shared that the Assistant Lab Director from NIRCL, Mark Milford, unexpectedly passed away recently. Mr. Milford was an invited guest who provided much assistance to the subcommittee. Ms. Dragovich expressed

condolences on Mr. Milford's passing. Next, Ms. Dragovich shared the subcommittee's idea to produce informational documents related to quality that could be published on the Commission's website. One of the first documents identified would explain accreditation in layman's terms to members of the public and legal professionals, explaining what accreditation is, why it is important to Forensic Science Service Providers (FSSPs), and the benefits of accreditation. The subcommittee will begin work on that document as well as others and then bring forth their work product to the Commission for review, discussion, and possible action in the future. The subcommittee's annual report will be discussed later in the meeting as a separate agenda item.

2. Training and Career Development Subcommittee: Caryn Tucker, subcommittee chairperson, summarized the continued progress on three training videos covering the introduction to the Illinois Forensic Science Commission, a general overview of the laboratories and services provided, and a deeper dive into the sections at the laboratories. Additionally, the training documents and recommendation prepared by the subcommittee will be addressed later in the meeting as a separate agenda item. ED Watroba added that she has continued to have discussion and meetings related to the longer-term "Forensics and the Law" project mentioned at previous meetings that would further the goal of pushing out education to non-forensic scientists. Chairperson Kelly indicated that he reached out to a professor at the University of Illinois Law School to schedule a meeting to discuss a possible partnership with the university. Chairperson Kelly indicated that hopefully the meeting will result in information that could be discussed at the next quarterly meeting of the Commission. ED Watroba mentioned DD Woolery's idea to survey participants who attend ISP's Fall Forensics Symposium to gauge interest in an educational program for law enforcement professionals and lawyers.
3. Public Policy Subcommittee: John Hanlon, subcommittee chairperson, participated in the meeting via telephone. As such, Ms. Dragovich provided a summary of the subcommittee's work at the Commission meeting. Ms. Dragovich reported that the subcommittee continues to meet to discuss issues related to DUI-cannabis. Several members attended an on-line meeting of the IDOT Impaired Driving Task Force during which three toxicologists presented on the topic of cannabis impairment. Additionally, Jennifer Cifaldi, Illinois's Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor (TSRP) is scheduled to present at the next subcommittee meeting in July. The subcommittee hopes that Ms. Cifaldi will be able to provide information, in addition to what the subcommittee has already gleaned from toxicologists, relevant to the subcommittee's consideration of whether the Commission should make a recommendation related to the two-hour collection window currently in the per se DUI-cannabis statute. ED Watroba stated that an update related to the Commission's previous recommendation related to the definition of "delta-9 THC" will be part of the discussion portion of the meeting.
4. Technology Subcommittee: Jeff Buford, subcommittee chairperson, reported that the subcommittee completed Phase 2, where they studied and heard

presentations from subject matter experts in various disciplines about current and emerging technologies. The subcommittee will prepare a summary report for the Commission on the information gathered during Phase 2 for the next Commission meeting. Mr. Buford noted that the completion of Phase 2 does not end the continual pursuit of emerging technologies in all disciplines. Chairperson Kelly suggested that the use of AI and attendant ethical considerations and best practices/standards in Illinois labs may be a topic for the subcommittee to examine in the future, both with respect to what is currently in use and what may be used in the future.

5. Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy (FIGG) Subcommittee: Subcommittee chairperson Cris Huges was absent from the meeting, so Jeanne Richeal presented the subcommittee report. Ms. Richeal reported that the first meeting was a roundtable discussion about FIGG and that additional discussion was held regarding seeking out information from various agencies using FIGG pursuant to different models. The subcommittee also discussed pushing out educational materials to law enforcement agencies in Illinois and making recommendations related to FIGG. ED Watroba noted that the subcommittee also discussed the possibility of carving out separate recommendations or educational materials specific to unidentified human remains (UHR).

## VII. **Issues for Discussion**

1. Discussion and possible action on Quality System Subcommittee Annual Report on Significant Non-Conformities of 2023: Ms. Dragovich reported that the subcommittee completed the annual report. There were no questions. The report was accepted by unanimous vote and will be released on the Commission's website.
2. Discussion and possible action on Recommendation and Training Documents prepared by training and Career Development Subcommittee: ED Watroba explained that the Commission already approved the three underlying training documents and that the subcommittee drafted a recommendation to accompany the training documents. If approved, the recommendation and training documents would be published as one packet on the Commission's website. ED Watroba noted that the recommendation also gives the subcommittee the ability to update references and citations in the training documents and archive older versions without bringing the documents back to the Commission. Ms. Dragovich noted that one such citation already needs updating. The motion to approve the recommendation passed unanimously.
3. Discussion and possible action related to previous Commission recommendation regarding DUI-cannabis statutes: ED Watroba provided an update on the legislation that was pending at the time of the last meeting related to the DUI-cannabis statute and summarized the recommendation the Commission previously made related to the definition of Delta-9 THC. ED Watroba confirmed that the Commission was comfortable with her taking

continued action in support of the Commission's recommendation, despite the change in the status of particular bills.

4. Discussion on website development: ED Watroba shared the updates added to the Commission's web site since the last Commission meeting and outlined her plan for future additions to the website including photographs, bios, and content.

#### VIII. **Public Comment**

Timothy Ruppel stated that Kane County will be moving forward with post and ante mortem toxicology in the future and will eventually move forward with oral fluid testing.

Chairperson Kelly outlined the history of the Commission and suggested that a next step in the evolution of the Commission would be to establish a mechanism by which the Chairperson of the Commission would change at a regular interval, even though the Illinois State Police will continue to provide administrative support pursuant to statute. Chairperson Kelly suggested changing chairperson by the end of the calendar year. ED Watroba indicated that she is working on drafting additional policies and protocols for the Commission to consider as part of the by-laws or a separate document to build out more procedures for things like subcommittees, election of Chairperson, etc. to help create more of a framework for the Commission and to assist with any transition in Commission membership or staff. ED Watroba also noted that the Commission members' terms are staggered based on each member's starting date.

#### IX. **Meeting Schedule**

The next meeting is scheduled at 10:00 a.m., on Monday, September 16, 2024, at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology, located at 1206 W. Gregory.

#### X. **Adjournment**

Chairperson Kelly adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:46 a.m. on June 18, 2024.