

**Illinois Forensic Science Commission
 Training and Career Development Subcommittee
 Open Meeting
 Tuesday, September 3, 2024, at 11:00 a.m.
 Meeting Minutes**

- I. Call to Order
 - a. Meeting called to order at 11:08 a.m. by Caryn Tucker

- II. Roll-call

Subcommittee Member	Present (X)
Jillian Baker, Commission Member	X
Jeff Buford, Commission Member	
Judge Art Hill (ret.), Commission Member	X
Jodi Hoos, Commission Member	X
Phil Kinsey, Commission Member	X
Jeanne Richeal, Commission Member	X
Caryn Tucker, Commission Member, Subcommittee Chairperson	X
Amy Watroba, Executive Director-Forensic Science Commission	X
Bill Demuth, Illinois State Police	X

- III. Approval of Minutes
 - a. August 12, 2024, meeting minutes: Phil Kinsey made motion to approve minutes. Second by Art Hill. Minutes adopted by unanimous vote.

- IV. New Business
 - a. Ms. Watroba provided an update on the first informational video. She is working with PIO on the B-roll and voice over, which will be recorded next week. Hopefully video will be available for subcommittee and U of I to review soon.

 - b. Ms. Baker suggested the subcommittee think about ways in which it can assist forensic scientists. She suggested re-visiting the topic of producing a recorded training module on ethics that could be posted and used annually by laboratories to provide ethics training for scientists. She noted that forensic scientists receive annual training on myriad topics, including topics such as laboratory safety, and that a universal ethics training video could be utilized in the same manner. The ethics document created by the subcommittee addressed what topics a lab should include in any ethics training and, as such, a recorded video would go a step further by providing substantive ethics training that all labs could access. Ms. Tucker agreed that an ethics video would be worthwhile and useful. Ms. Richeal noted that

it is important for the subcommittee to at some point focus on ways to provide support for forensic scientists by providing opportunities for scientists to stay current and maintain contacts with the larger forensic science community, which will provide the resources they need for career development and succession planning. Ms. Watroba observed that discussion of the subcommittee working on an ethics video and other ways to support career development for forensic scientists should be part of the larger conversation of subcommittee project prioritization.

V. Old Business

- a. The subcommittee continued its discussion from the last meeting on strategic planning for educational programs for external stakeholders such as lawyers and judges. Ms. Watroba reached out to her contact from Arizona with the subcommittee's follow-up questions about the Arizona Forensic Science Academy. She reported that the Arizona Academy did both a pre-course survey of participants to assess their interests and levels of experience and a post-course survey which reported favorable results to the question of whether the course was beneficial to the participants' practice. The course instructors all incorporated the issue of lab submissions as part of their presentations. Participants were not surveyed on the topic of lab communication, but anecdotal information suggested that attorneys were more comfortable communicating with forensic scientists after taking the course. Ms. Watroba indicated that CLE submission rules and requirements differ by state. Illinois has detailed rules and procedures for obtaining CLE credit approval for programs offered both by established CLE providers and other organizations. Given the fact that the Commission is not an established CLE provider at this time and does not have a budget, if the Commission were to collaborate on a CLE program for attorneys Ms. Watroba suggested that the University of Illinois College of Law (UICL) could hopefully handle the logistics of obtaining CLE approval and credit for attendees.
- b. The topic of how to proceed at the full Commission meeting on September 16th regarding potential collaborative educational initiatives was discussed. The upcoming meeting will be the first time the full Commission hears about the possible collaborative projects. The idea of providing the Commission members with background material or a summary of the subcommittee's conversations on the topic thus far was discussed. It was observed that, if the Commission agreed to collaborate in some manner on a project, the Training and Career Development subcommittee would likely be the subcommittee that would handle any work involved. However, the importance of the full Commission hearing and discussing details regarding any proposed projects and the possible level of Commission involvement was stressed. Concerns about the workload for any forensic scientists involved in any collaborative project, especially considering the existing subcommittee projects, were discussed. Judge Hill suggested inquiring as to the flexibility of the timeline for any ISP/UICL program that might include Commission involvement.

- c. The subcommittee members agreed that they want full Commission feedback on this topic. The subcommittee has assessed the information they have thus far about the two types of programs proposed but has questions and concerns that they would like to discuss with the full Commission. The subcommittee also has alternative thoughts on how it could be involved in a collaborative external education project. Specifically, the subcommittee discussed the idea of recorded modules that would be available via open access on the Commission's website. The modules could be presented as the product of a collaboration between the Commission, UICL, ISP, DuPage Lab and NIRCL, and not attributable to a single entity or person(s). This open-access concept is consistent with the Commission's commitment to transparency and would be a lighter lift logistically for the subcommittee/Commission both in creating the modules and conducting annual reviews of the module content. The idea of creating 1 or 2 pilot modules was discussed as a means of figuring out the logistics of the project and gauging interest in the modules. Ms. Watroba stated that she is not aware of any state-level commission or board that has embarked on a similar open-access video project that addressed the fundamentals of the core forensic science disciplines.
- d. The subcommittee discussed the importance of identifying what ISP/UICL are asking for as far as Commission involvement in their collaborative project(s). Once the Commission knows what it is being asked to do, it can discuss if the Commission can/will do what is being asked, ways in which the Commission could be involved in the projects, and if there are limitations to Commission involvement.
- e. Ways to compile/convey recommendations based on the information currently available to the subcommittee for the full Commission were discussed. One option for recommended next steps is to propose delaying the time frame for both programs to enable the Commission to consider more involvement once the details of the programs are worked out between ISP and UICL and for the Commission to complete its work on current projects. If the timeframes are not flexible, then the second option for next steps would be to recommend that the Commission's level of involvement would be to only review the content of material for the programs. The third option for next steps is for the Commission to explore a collaborative project to create modules that would be available to the public on the Commission's webpage. A timeline would need to be established for this option and the recommendation is to start with a pilot program involving 1-2 video modules. There are topics and issues that the subcommittee would like to discuss in a full Commission meeting related to all three options, especially once more details regarding what the ask is of the Commission with respect to the two programs being contemplated by ISP/UICL. The subcommittee and Commission can do a better assessment once more information is available but in the meantime the subcommittee assessed the information available and identified issues and possible concerns to help inform next steps. Ms. Watroba will work to compile the subcommittee's ideas for next steps prior to the full Commission meeting.

VI. Public Participation

No public comment was offered.

VII. Next Meeting/ Adjournment

- a. Next meeting will be scheduled at a later date after Commission's quarterly meeting.
- b. Motion to adjourn by Caryn Tucker. Seconded by Art Hill. Motion passed.
- c. Meeting adjourned by Chairperson Tucker at 12:23 p.m.