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Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

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Forensic Science Oversight Board (FSOB) Meeting
Friday, January 10, 2025
Via Microsoft Teams

I. Roll Call

Undersecretary Collins brought the meeting to order at 10:04am. Karen Anderson from WCVB noted that the meeting was being recorded.

Forensic Science Oversight Board - Attendance		
Name	Present	Absent
Undersecretary Kerry Collins, Chair	X	
Sabra Jones, PhD	X	
Dr. Robin Cotton	X	
Richard Lempert, PhD	X	
Gina Papagiorgakis		X
Dr. Ann Marie Mires	X	
Clifford Goodband	X	
Professor Timothy Palmbach	X	
Lucy Davis	X*	
Adrienne Lynch, Esq.	X	
AAG Gabriel Thornton	X	
Lisa Kavanaugh, Esq.	X	
Justice Nancy Gertner		X
*Left at 11:50		

II. November Meeting Minutes

The approval for the November meeting minutes was tabled to the next scheduled meeting to address the transcribing process and consider the use of recording of meetings in the future for public access.

III. September Meeting Minutes

The approval for the September meeting minutes was tabled to the next scheduled meeting to address the transcribing process and consider the use of recording of meetings in the future for public access.

IV. Springfield Audit

Robin Cotton and Timothy Palmbach discussed the audit report and their findings to the board while noting that this report should not be expected to be compared to the MSP or BPD Crime Labs as the Springfield Lab is smaller, and this is an overview. Further, the board discussed how this report could be a starting point/model for looking at other labs in the future. The board supported the following recommendations for the Springfield Police Department Identification Division:

- Accreditations
- Annual Proficiency Testing Requirements
- Adequate Working Space
- Review of the Division's Return Rate
- Transcript Reviews

Additionally, the board explored the possibility of future discussions with the Legislature to have a sponsor for a bill that would address some of the concerns that the board has for future audits. Undersecretary Collins noted that this report is a great starting point for other police and entertained a motion for adoption of the report with the inclusion of stylistic and formatting edits. The board approved the report unanimously.

Springfield Police Dept. Audit Report - Vote		
Name	Yes	No
Undersecretary Kerry Collins, Chair	N/A	N/A
Sabra Jones, PhD	X	
Dr. Robin Cotton	X	
Richard Lempert, PhD	X	
Gina Papagiorgakis	Absent	Absent
Dr. Ann Marie Mires	X	
Clifford Goodband	X	
Professor Timothy Palmbach	X	
Lucy Davis	X	
Adrienne Lynch, Esq.	X	
AAG Gabriel Thornton	X	
Lisa Kavanaugh, Esq.	X	
Justice Nancy Gertner	Absent	Absent

V. Subsection (g) Report

Undersecretary Collins provided the board with an overview of what is required under subsection (g) of the board's governing statute. Lucy Davis then reviewed the subsection (g) report in detail to the board. Undersecretary Collins then posed a few questions to the board regarding the report for consideration. First, if the board believed that Springfield Police Dept. would fall into this purview of reporting and if the answer to that is yes, would it be just the fingerprint comparisons or would it be crime scene services as well? Second, if they're offering both of those, then the department should report to the board what the status is. Lastly, would this apply to all departments that offer forensic services? After

discussion, the board agreed that as with the Springfield Police Dept. Audit report, the report structure of the Subsection (g) report would be a starting point.

Undersecretary Collins then entertained a motion for adoption of the report with the inclusion of a cover page along with stylistic and formatting edits. Gabriel Thornton submitted the motion, seconded by Robin Cotton. The board approved the report unanimously.

Subsection (g) Report - Vote		
Name	Yes	No
Undersecretary Kerry Collins, Chair	N/A	N/A
Sabra Jones, PhD	X	
Dr. Robin Cotton	X	
Richard Lempert, PhD	X	
Gina Papagiorgakis	Absent	Absent
Dr. Ann Marie Mires	X	
Clifford Goodband	X	
Professor Timothy Palmbach	X	
Lucy Davis	X	
Adrienne Lynch, Esq.	X	
AAG Gabriel Thornton	X	
Lisa Kavanaugh, Esq.	X	
Justice Nancy Gertner	Absent	Absent

After the vote, Undersecretary Collins noted that the board has satisfied subsections (e), (f), (g), (h), and (i) of the board's governing statute.

VI. December 2024 FSOB Social Law Library Presentation Update, Subsection (f)

Anne Goldbach led the board discussion on the December 2024 Social Law Library presentation and stated that the presentation was recorded and is available on the FSOB website. Further, the board noted that this presentation will be a valuable tool moving forward, like the Springfield Police Dept. Audit Report it will be a template for future educational and outreach purposes for the board's stakeholders. It was mentioned that Senator Brownsberger attended the webinar and provided a synopsis of the legislative process, including why the board was developed the way it is as he was one of the original drafters of the legislation establishing the FSOB. The board discussed how a few different agendas have since merged, and now the board has the data to support potential amendments to the board's governing statute to authorize the board to investigate and enforce participation. Additionally, the board expressed a desire to host future webinars on specific topics.

It was noted that while the board had not received any specific feedback on the presentation, it was expected that the Social Law Library will provide their own feedback survey which they commonly produce for such presentations. Adrienne Lynch commented on the subsection report that was done with Nancy Rothstein regarding evidence handling, noting that the board would have to ask for a Grant adjustment (Bloodsworth Grant). She added that she met earlier this week with Danny Flaherty, the

Clerk's office in Middlesex and Sarah de Simone to work out a budget for this. Adrienne explained how in Middlesex County, they had purchased, with grant money, brown paper and gloves so that the evidence in a courtroom would be handled properly. Therefore, an idea for a teaching module for the Social Law Library could be on evidence integrity. She further noted that their office had discussed a ½ day training module that would focus on three forensic topics including a lab tour. The board agreed to explore developing a recorded Webinar that would demonstrate best practices.

During the discussion, Sabra Jones dropped the following into the chat feature of the meeting:

The National Safety Council's Alcohol, Drugs, and Impairment Division has also created a position statement on consensus-based laboratory standards, accreditation, and individual certification. It has been published by the Journal of Forensic Sciences.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1556-4029.15692> It can also be found here:

<https://www.nsc.org/getmedia/cf759f5d-15df-4059-ac79-dcc4bd6eaf22/adid-lab-standards-accreditation-certification.pdf>

VII. Legislative Update on Suggested Revisions to Criminal Justice Reform Act

Ann Marie Mires explained to the board how Ann Goldbach and herself scheduled a meeting with the Chief of Staff of Senator Brownsberger's office in December as a follow up from the conference. Timothy Palmbach, Adrienne Lynch, Lucy Davis and Lisa Kavanaugh were asked to participate in the meeting. Lisa Kavanaugh did not meet but provided questions. The members who were present to the meeting provided background on the evolution of the board and shared the frustrations of the board. Specifically, that the board members are volunteers and do not have a budget or dedicated staff person. Additionally, the Senator was asked if he was open to amending the board's governing statute to reflect the changes that the members addressed.

The attending members were informed that the legislative session would be closing the following week, and that the board should seek someone to sponsor any amendments to the board's governing statute. The board was then informed that Senator Brownsberger had some positive feedback for the board including the suggestion to create a budget for the board that can be presented to the legislature in February.

Undersecretary Collins suggested to have Anne Marie, Lucy and Timothy work on a budget that can be presented to EOPSS for review, possibly to be discussed at the board's February meeting.

VIII. November NAFSB Conference Update

Undersecretary Collins informed the board how she had presented to the conference on what achievements the FSOB have made this year. Specifically, she highlighted the board's work with the Boston Police Department Crime Lab (BPDCL) and the Massachusetts State Police Crime Lab.

IX. Subsection Updates:

Cliff Goodband presented to the board regarding the BPDCL update in response to Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn's complaint submitted to the board. Specifically, Cliff explained how he and Sabra Jones met with the BPDCL and noted the following:

- Sexual Assault Kit turnaround time has met the 30-day requirement;
- BPDCL currently recruiting for a permanent Lab Director;
- BPDCL is recruiting for three open DNA positions, hoping to hire at the same time to facilitate adequate training;
- The position of Lab director has a mandatory residence requirement which is prohibitive to attracting qualified candidates;
- The salary posted for Lab Director is not competitive with national standards, retention of employment is limited; and
- The insufficient lab space needs to be addressed.

Undersecretary Collins noted that BPDCL representatives were present at the meeting and invited any comments they may have on the findings presented to the board. Nina Jefferson, BPD Director of the Firearms analysis unit, addressed the board to largely confirm the findings presented by Cliff Goodband with a few clarifications. First, she noted that there is now both a Quality Assurance Director and a Quality Manager working as a team for the Forensic Division and at all three units the Firearms Analysis Unit and the Latent Print Unit. Next, she explained how the residency requirement is a City of Boston requirement which is out of the lab's control. Lastly, she noted that the officers are overworked, and morale is low yet best efforts are being made to accomplish the tasks at hand. She ended with expressing appreciation for the board following up on the initial visit and would appreciate any feedback the board has to offer.

The board added that the National Institute of Standards and Technology recommends 900 square feet per analyst. Further explaining that the current space at BPDCL was calculated and right now the lab has 175 square feet per analyst, noting that the employees are doing an amazing job with what they have. In conclusion, the board agreed to table the discussion on the update and subsequent report until the February meeting with a draft including additional recommendations. Additionally, the board agreed to send a letter to Councilor Flynn to ensure notice of the pending discussion and inviting him to the February meeting.

X. Next Meeting Dates

Undersecretary Collins proposed a review of the meeting cadence to be discussed at the next meeting. The board confirmed that the next scheduled meeting will take place on February 14th, 2025 between 10:00am and 3:00pm.

XI. Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated Within 48 Hours

Not applicable as nothing was raised by the board.

XII. Public Comment

No further comments were submitted.

XIII. Adjourn

Undersecretary Collins entertained a motion to adjourn with all present in support. The meeting adjourned at 12:32pm.