

Update with Coroner

December 18, 2018

1:31 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Fund, Commissioner Jackson, Coroner Warren McLeod, Dawn Harris, Jason Baker, Chelsie Wilson, Sandy Peck, Lorinda Wilson, Stephen Wilson, Nolan Heminger and Micah Galvez

Guests: Commissioner-elect Gary Stamper, Cody Neuenschwander

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Warren gave the following year-to-date statistics: three homicides, 16 suicides, 15 accidentals, three undetermined and 21 pending. He said there have been three agency assists, two department assists and two public assists. He said his department has performed 54 autopsies year to date.

Warren said he had been denied funding for 25 toxicology cases per year but that \$4,000 had been approved for his dig class.

Warren said private lab will not bill private parties for toxicology reports. He said WACME has negotiated toxicology tests down to \$131 instead of \$217. He noted that the county averages 25 tests annually.

Warren said his department sees a lot of turnover due to low pay. He said he addressed the issue when he spoke to the commissioners on Sept. 27, 2018, and was told to submit a resolution to increase pay in his department. He noted that he had the positions scored and that they landed in the 16 and 17 range.

Warren said his staff is highly trained and that employees pay for their own uniforms and training. He noted that deputy coroners are on the same pay scale as individuals mowing lawns, etc.

Dawn Harris questioned the depth and detail of the Sept. 27 minutes.

Commissioner Fund noted that resolutions for pay increases generally would come from Human Resources. Archie Smith discussed the PAF and resolution processes.

Becky reviewed email exchanges between Warren and County Manager Erik Martin. She noted that the pay increases weren't submitted as a budget request for the 2019 budget. She said the Sept. 27 meeting ended with instruction for the Coroner and County Manager to meet and further discuss the request and that a meeting scheduled for Nov. 21 did not take place.

Becky said Warren emailed about the positions on Nov. 1 and that he emailed the resolution on Nov. 5. She noted again that the scheduled Nov. 21 meeting did not take place.

Commissioner Fund discussed some of the unfunded mandates affecting the county's finances.

TO-DO LIST / RECAP

Warren: Review with County Manager Erik Martin the request for pay increases.

Warren said it's possible that abandoned remains may not qualify as indigent remains. He noted that RCW 68.50.160 indicates that the next of kin is responsible for costs. Warren reviewed steps that could take place, including involving the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, to recover costs.

Warren reviewed his 2019-20 strategic plan.

Meeting ended at 1:57 p.m.