

Coroner Update

February 7, 2023

11:31 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Brummer, Commissioner Swope, Warren McLeod, Stephen Wilson, Nic Scott, Becky Butler

Guest(s): Brandon Svenson

Recorder: Tammy Martin

Public Comment: None.

Warren said 2022 had 953 cases including:

- 3 homicides
- 16 suicides
- 7 undetermined deaths with 3 cases pending
- 34 drug overdoses with 3 cases pending.
- 69 autopsies
- 35 external reviews

Warren said there have been 98 cases year-to-date and 7 deaths within the last 24 hours that have included:

- 7 deaths within the last 24 hours
- 1 homicide
- 3 suicides
- 0 accidental
- 0 undetermined
- 6 pending toxicology that are believed be drug related overdoses
- 10 autopsies and 7 of those autopsies have occurred within the last three days

Warren says his office performs presumptive tests to determine the accuracy of their testing procedures. Warren advised the Board there has been a large usage of Xylazine, also known as “tranq”. Warren said Xylazine is a sedative and does not respond to Narcan. Xylazine is a non-schedule anesthetic according to Commissioner Pollock that is used treat animals and is used by veterinarians. This is predominantly misused along the East Coast, but has begun to spread out west.

Warren said his office has been following SB 5523.

Warren said if cases are pending non-toxicology results, they are sent to WSP and this isn't a billable expense. If the case is pending toxicology results, it gets sent to a private lab and then is verified by WSP and then is billed.

Indigent remains are held for 90 days to allow for continuation to find family. Warren says holding the remains does not stop the decaying process and ties up space. Warren says he is looking to have indigent remains being held reduced from 90 days to 30 days.

Warren said the hydraulic lift in his office stopped working. Facilities has tried fixing the lift. Replacing the lift can cost up to \$10,000. Warren said they are borrowing a pneumatic lift from Newell-Hoerling's Mortuary as a temporary replacement. Warren said Department of Emergency Management Director Ross McDowell is helping Warren apply for grant funding for new lift equipment.

Meeting ended at 11:54 a.m.