

Coroner's Update

September 8, 2020

9:30 a.m.

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Fund, Commissioner Jackson, County Manager Erik Martin, Megan Eastman, Becky Butler

Guests: Bill Serrahn, KELA

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Coroner Warren McLeod said Lewis County has had 581 cases year to date. He noted that the county reached that total Sept. 17, 2019.

Of the 581 year-to-date cases, Warren provided the following breakdown:

- 2 homicides
- 14 were suicides (Warren noted that there were 20 total suicides in 2019 and 16 total in 2018)
- 35 accidental
 - 18 drug-related
 - 9 meth
 - 4 meth and "other"
 - 3 heroin
 - 1 fentanyl
 - 1 poly
 - 8 traffic collision
- 2 undetermined
- 5 pending

Warren said his office has conducted 60 COVID-19 tests and that all of those tests have come back negative. He said the costs for the tests had been charged to his budget but will be corrected to be billed to Coronavirus Relief Funds. He said the same is true for additional body bags that had been purchased in response to the COVID-19 threat.

Warren said he would like to change his staff members to full-time employees (FTEs). He said he will expand on the request in a future hearing. Warren said area agencies support a move to make the Coroner employees full-time employees.

Megan Eastman discussed deputy coroners' pay in neighboring counties such as Jefferson, Mason and Cowlitz.

Warren said he has submitted a budget amendment totaling \$18,000 for extra help. He said his office is averaging \$3,000 every two weeks for extra help.

Warren said he has submitted a budget amendment totaling roughly \$66,000 for professional services. He said the costs are for autopsies and for decedent removals. He noted that the county had 27 removals in July alone.

Warren said the county is at 44 autopsies YTD.

Meeting ended at 9:57 a.m.