

MONTANA CORONERS' ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MAY 6, 2018

The Montana Coroners' Association Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 5:00 P.M. by President Greg Kirkwood at the Yogo Inn in Lewistown. Members present were President Greg Kirkwood, Vice President Bob Rosipal, Past President Dick Burrows, Secretary-Treasurer Terry Bullis, Dick Brown, Verne Burekle, Trenton Harbaugh, Steve Holton and Dan Whitted. Unable to attend was Al Jenkins. Wynn Meehan was present as a representative from the Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association, Dr. Rob Kurtzman was present as a guest as well as Lewis and Clark County Coroner Brian Backeberg.

A motion was made and seconded to forego reading the minutes of the March 24, 2018 Board meeting (after Joan reported she had included the changes made by Dr. Kurtzman regarding his presentation prior to the meeting) since all members had received copies previously.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Terry reported the checking account balance is \$34,232.06 and the estimated cost of the 2018 convention is \$16,000. Dick Burrows made a motion the Treasurer's report be approved and Wynn Meehan seconded the motion, which unanimously carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Legislative Issues:

Wynn Meehan reported there had been a meeting with representatives from the Coroners' Association and the Montana Sheriff and Peace Officers Association concerning the consolidation of the coroner's job with the Sheriff's Office. The county commissioners are trying to consolidate the two to save money, but neither the current coroners and sheriffs of the counties affected are wishing to do this. The problem arises as who will handle inquests if all the independent coroners are eliminated. The Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers have formed a subcommittee to revamp some of the laws, which are vague. They also wish to get an opinion from the Attorney General. In addition, they want to obtain the definition of a coroner and duties of this job. It is felt the county commissions are overstepping by not knowing the coroner laws. Dick Brown, who was also in attendance at this meeting, said we do not want new legislation—we just want to get clarification of the laws and then have another meeting. Bob Rosipal felt the inquest issue was the first priority, and then the coroner laws should be reviewed and find what needs revising.

There was a discussion about seeing if POST would change the way they count the CME hours to a calendar year. Currently some of the coroners' hours expire shortly before the MCA annual meeting, which sends that person scrambling to find some training to stay certified. There was also a discussion of some coroners having to go to basic training 3 times. This has happened when

a coroner has 16 hrs training, then transfers to a different unit and is no longer coroner for a couple of years. He then changes back to be a coroner and has to take he 40 hrs of basic training again. This is an expensive and redundant practice. Most of these laws have not been adjusted since 1974.

Dick Brown stated POST keeps track of the training hours, but questioned if they have the authority to pull a coroner's certificate. It was brought up that the Crime Control Board originally handled the training, but it was turned over to POST and now Perry Johnson sends the coroners their certificates and POST now governs the coroners. Dick Brown feels POST is the record keeper and they don't pay for the education MCA provides for coroners. Bob Rosipal suggested we bring this up to the Attorney General when the MSPOA meets with the inquest issue and get his legal opinion.

Web Site

Steve reported he had one update to put into the directory at this time.

Scholarships:

Dick_Brown reported that there were three applicants, one from Malta, Inverness and Melstone respectively. These applications will be reviewed and two chosen tomorrow.

NEW BUSINESS:

2018 Convention:

The raffle items are a Go-Pro, Yeti cooler, hydroflask and camera. Gifts for attendees are duffle bags with the MCA logo, which will hold items for scene investigations. The cost for these was \$3,000.

Nominating Committee:

Steve Holton's term will expire in 2018, and he agreed to another term. Terry Bullis also agreed to another term. Vern Beurkle will be retiring and we need a replacement. Greg stated Deputy Coroner Sibley Jankovial from Wolf Point was willing to take this position. Bob Rosipal will move to President and Vice President will be open. Wynn Meehan expressed interest in this position. This will be reported at the annual meeting.

2019 Convention:

The 2019 convention is scheduled for May 5, 6 and 7.

Dick Brown made a motion to have the 2019 convention at the GranTree in Bozeman. Dick Burrows seconded the motion, which unanimously carried. Steve Holton, Trenton Harbaugh and Dan Whitted volunteered to be on a committee to find speakers.

Other:

Mileage was taken (Dick Burrows 350, Bob Rosipal 218, Trent Harbaugh 600, Greg Kirkwood 270, Dan Whitted 400, Steve Holton 634 and Joan Farmer 218).

Wynn Meehan made a motion the bills be paid and Bob Rosipal seconded the motion which unanimously carried.

There was a question about having everyone register and pay on-line for next year's convention. Terry stated 30% of the counties don't have credit cards, and we'd have to set up pay-pal to do them through the computer. This can be done for those that do have credit cards.

Trent said regarding the ABMDI training, the \$50/year per coroner every year is too much. The Board felt we should get a vote from the membership regarding the proposal of everyone having to have ABMDI training.

Dan Whitted made a motion the meeting be adjourned. Wynn Meehan seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Farmer

Recording Secretary