

**Districts 5 and 24 Medical Examiner Advisory Committee Meeting
May 27, 2026 - DRAFT**

1. **Call to Order** – The Districts 5 and 24 Medical Examiner Advisory Committee meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 27, 2026, at the Sumter County Service Center, 7375 Powell Road, Room 102, Wildwood, FL.
2. **Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum** – Roll call was taken and a quorum was met.

Members Present

Jerry Campbell, Vice-Chair, Hernando County Board of County Commissioners
Holly Davis, Chair, Citrus County Board of County Commissioners
Amy Lockhart, Seminole County Board of County Commissioners
Michelle Stone, Marion County Board of County Commissioners

Members Absent

Jeff Bogue, Sumter County Board of County Commissioners
Leslie Campione, Lake County Board of County Commissioners

In Attendance

Barbara Wolf, M.D., Medical Examiner, Districts 5 & 24 Medical Examiner's Office
Lindsey Bayer, Director of Operations, Districts 5 & 24 Medical Examiner's Office
Kristian Swenson, Assistant County Manager, Seminole County Board of County Commissioners
Kate Latorre, County Attorney, Seminole County Board of County Commissioners
Val Shealey, Senior Assistant County Attorney, Citrus County Board of County Commissioners
Matthew Minter, County Attorney, Marion County Board of County Commissioners
Mounir Bouyounes, County Administrator, Marion County Board of County Commissioners
Amanda Tart, Assistant County Administrator, Marion County Board of County Commissioners
James Banta, Fire Chief, Marion County Fire Rescue
Cassandra Li, Administrative and Financial Services Manager, Marion County Fire Rescue
Beth Jones, Budget and Administrative Coordinator, Marion County Fire Rescue
Pam Doherty, Administrative Staff Assistant, Marion County Fire Rescue

3. **Proof of Publications**

Legal advertisements were published on May 10, 2026, in the Ocala Star Banner Ad #12270418, Orlando Sentinel Ad #63244, Lake Sentinel Ad #63340, and The Villages Daily Sun Ad #01304917. They were also published on May 15, 2026, in the Hernando Sun Ad #7679-343519 and the Citrus County Chronicle Ad #C2022-L3333

Motion: Commissioner Stone made a motion to approve the proof of publications and Commissioner Lockhart seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

4. **Review and Approval of February 19, 2026, Minutes**

The minutes from the February 19, 2026, Districts 5 and 24 Medical Examiner Advisory Committee meeting were submitted for approval.

Motion: Commissioner Stone made a motion to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Lockhart seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

5. Old Business

5.1 FY 25/26 2nd Quarter Budget Report

Cassandra Li, Administrative and Financial Services Manager, Marion County Fire Rescue, presented an overview of the 2nd Quarter FY 25/26 Budget Report covering revenues and expenditures from January 1 through March 31, 2026.

5.2. FIGG Grant Expenditure and Amendment 2 Discussion

Cassandra Li explained that once the Advisory Committee provided the authority to move forward with the FIGG grant, the executed contract was presented on the Marion County BCC Agenda. After the fully executed contract was received, the budget amendment for the award and corresponding expenditure of \$79,999 was recognized in the budget for the first quarter. This was also recognized in Contractual Services – Other for payment to the authorized vendor. In the 2nd quarter under FIGG grant for Revenues, the payment was received of \$69,993. There was one case not approved by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). While working with Lindsey Bayer, Director of Operations, Districts 5 & 24 Medical Examiner's Office, another case was submitted for replacement and approval by the State was received. The payment will be posted once it is received and the grant will then be paid in full. Cassandra Li distributed a 51-page packet that includes the backup documentation for the FIGG grant, including budget amendments, contracts and invoices paid to date.

5.3. FY 26/27 Medical Examiner Proposed Budget with Updated County Shares

Cassandra Li presented the FY 26/27 Medical Examiner Proposed Budget with Updated County Shares. This was previously presented in the February 19, 2026 meeting with a question pertaining to property insurance premiums. The information will be further addressed in 5.4.

Motion: Commissioner Stone made a motion to approve the FY 26/27 Medical Examiner Proposed Budget as presented, but with a change to remove the General Liability detail of \$15,296. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote of 3-1, with Commissioner Lockhart opposing, based on the Medical Examiner's 5% increase to employees.

5.4. Property Insurance Premium Update

Cassandra Li advised that Marion County is requesting in the line item of Insurance Premiums to remove the General Liability portion from the Property Insurance Premiums, in the amount of \$15,296 and leave the Property Insurance amount that Risk Management provided to the Budget Department. This is the amount which is placed in all of the different funds for the entire county. Cassandra Li noted that General Liability has not been used or paid for anything in the previous fiscal years. The budget will be reduced by removing this portion. Dr. Wolf agreed with this change and advised that the Medical Examiner has insurance on everything, except the building. Commissioner Lockhart asked if the premiums have been included in the Operating Expenses where the 5% administrative fee was paid to Medicus Forensics, P.A. (Dr. Wolf's Company). Cassandra Li advised that they are included, but when the county shares are broken down, Dr. Wolf's contractual amount is the one-line item on page five of the agenda backup. All county shares are paid into the Medical Examiner's Fund and anything over or above the balance of the entire fund is balanced in the Capital Improvement Funding line item, so it is still in the Medical Examiner's Fund. Commissioner Lockhart added that if the Liability Insurance has been included as part of the Operating Expenditures, and the counties are paying 5% of the total Operating budget, then everyone was paying 5% of something that was not incurred. Cassandra advised that

if there is direction to remove that General Liability, then the cost share will change. She also noted that since the amounts have not been used, they have gone back into the Capital Improvement Funding line item. Commissioner Lockhart mentioned that if the 5% Administrative Fee is paid based on Operating costs, and the Operating budget continues to increase even though it is not utilized, then it should be reviewed. She also added that it is going to Capital and 5% is not paid to Capital, as it is paid to Operating, so the Committee needed to make sure it was not paying an additional surcharge on something that was not necessary.

5.5. Vehicle Cost Allocation and True-Up Discussion

James Banta, Fire Chief, Marion County Fire Rescue, commented on the original Agreement for Payment of Startup Costs for Medical Examiner Services between Seminole County and Medicus. Exhibit A in the Agreement lists items paid for by Seminole County for start-up costs. Seminole County owns all the vehicles and provides the vehicles that the Medical Examiner's staff utilizes for Seminole County cases, moving forward. Medicus Forensics, P.A., does not have an agreement with First Call, but the vendor still provides the services on an as needed basis, and this is covered by the Medical Examiner in Contractual Services.

5.6. First Call Contract

This is discussed in 5.5 Vehicle Cost Allocation and True-Up Discussion.

5.7. MDI Log Bid Exemption

Chief Banta is requesting the Advisory Committee approve the bid exemption for the software vendor and direct staff with the implementation of MDI Log.

Motion: Commissioner Stone made a motion to approve the request to continue with the MDI Log software request and to approve the bid exemption. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

6. New Business

6.1 Notation for Record: Four Letters Dated October 16, 2025, March 6, March 10, and March 24, 2026.

Commissioner Davis advised that the four letters were presented to the Medical Examiner's Advisory Committee and duly noted. Commissioner Davis added that the two letters provided by Sumter County are two letters that are needed by Citrus County.

Commissioner Lockhart asked why these letters were chosen and if they were specific or just Medical Examiner communication over a period of time. Amanda Tart, Assistant County Administrator, Marion County Board of County Commissioners, explained that the letters presented contain all the correspondence from the counties represented here that Marion County has received, based on the reassignment of Lake and Seminole County.

6.2 Survey Responses from Commissioner Lockhart, Seminole County Board of County Commissioners; Kristian Swenson, Assistant County Manager, Seminole County Board of County Commissioners; William Scheiner, State Attorney 18th Judicial Circuit, Brevard and Seminole Counties; and Sheriff Dennis Lemma, Seminole County Sheriff's Office

Chief Banta discussed the attached survey responses from Seminole County for Dr. Wolf's services. In addition, he passed out a two-page letter dated December 19, 2025, written by Robert Kruger, Deputy Chief of EMS, Marion County Fire Rescue, that was referenced in one of the surveys.

Dr. Wolf mentioned that there have been a few misconceptions associated with these survey responses that she would like to address. These began two meetings ago when Commissioner Lockhart announced that Sheriff Lemma expressed that his office was dissatisfied with the Medical Examiner services. Thinking she had a problem to solve, Dr. Wolf called Sheriff Lemma. Sheriff Lemma adamantly denied saying such a thing and indicated that he was very pleased with the Medical Examiner services being provided. Dr. Wolf explained how the surveys are sent out. Every three years, the Florida Medical Examiners Commission sends out surveys to a third of the offices in the Commission asking for favorable or unfavorable ratings, and comments if marked unfavorable. This year, Seminole County was chosen for inclusion in this round of surveys. Commissioner Lockhart sent her response back as unfavorable and advised that this was discussed with the Seminole County Board of County Commissioners. The Medical Examiners Commission staff asked Commissioner Lockhart for documentation, but did not receive it, so they went through Seminole County's Board of County Commissioner meetings. There were discussions regarding the proposed Medical Examiner's building being expensive, but there were no discussions on unfavorable responses to the Medical Examiner's services. A second answer to the survey came in from Mr. Swenson who reiterated that the Sheriff's office had concerns.

Dr. Wolf feels that the differences between the districts have morphed into a personal attack on her, creating documented public records. She hopes the counties can all get past this and continue their working relationship until such time Seminole County separates.

Commissioner Lockhart stated that this is not personal and there is no vendetta. Everything listed is from the minutes of these meetings. There are no personal opinions and they are facts, unless the minutes are not accurate. Seminole County's choices were "favorable," "unfavorable" or "no opinion." She would have included "needs improvement" if there was a choice. Commissioner Lockhart stated she chooses not to get into a back-and-forth discussion and feels the perceptions and discussions were not accurately relayed. Commissioner Lockhart advised she never said the Sheriff's office was unhappy with Dr. Wolf's services. She explained there were extended wait times and that was true at the time. There were concerns and the Sheriff looked into them. Commissioner Lockhart advised that this is not personal, this is business. She looks at numbers, what is said and what is done. She reads contracts to see if the Committee was abiding by them. Commissioner Lockhart stated that she has the complete support from the Sheriff and State Attorney moving forward. She noted she was asked to give an opinion based on her experience with the facts before the committee.

Commissioner Davis explained that when all this came up, Dr. Wolf called her, as the Chair of this Committee. Commissioner Davis immediately called the Citrus County Sheriff and asked him to call the Seminole County Sheriff. The Seminole County Sheriff thinks Dr. Wolf is doing a fantastic job. There were no complaints with the Citrus County Sheriff or the Seminole County Sheriff. If there are positive suggestions for improvement, they should be brought to this meeting. Commissioner Davis noted her opinion was that making a paper trail for an unfavorable rating is outrageous given how well things have been.

Kate Latorre, County Attorney, Seminole County Board of County Commissioners, added that District 24's survey comments specifically are limited to be the representations of District 24 and not to represent any opinions of District 5, as stated in the written survey response.

6.3 Medical Examiner Contract Discussion

Chief Banta noted the need to discuss realigning the Interlocal Agreement with the actual practices. Matthew Minter, County Attorney, Marion County Board of County Commissioners, passed out the 17-page Interlocal Agreement between Citrus County, Hernando County, Lake County, Marion County, Seminole County, and Sumter County for Cost Share of Medical Examiner Services and Related Matters, and the 2-page First Amendment to Interlocal Agreement for Cost Share of Medical Examiner Services between Citrus County, Hernando County, Lake County, Marion County, Seminole County, and Sumter County. He added that the committee previously acknowledged that even though the contract stated that Seminole County was covering its cremation costs, they really were not. The draft handout discusses Section 6 – Seminole’s Responsibilities, which is just a proposal, eliminating verbiage of processes that were not being done. From a contract standpoint, provisions should not be in the agreement if they are not the way the current practice operates. Mr. Minter noted if Subsections B, C and D are eliminated from Section 6, the situation where all the expenses are being apportioned amongst all the counties, then there would not be any special treatment for Seminole County in the contract.

Mr. Minter requested the handouts be taken to each of the County Attorneys for their feedback. Mounir Bouyounes, County Administrator, Marion County Board of County Commissioners, advised that this First Amendment to the Interlocal Agreement will be on the next agenda for approval, modifying Section 6 – Seminole’s Responsibilities, thereby eliminating the conditions that Seminole County pays directly for services to the Medical Examiner. These services are being provided by the Medical Examiner and included in the total cost that is allocated across all six counties by population cost share. Mr. Minter noted that the only change is pertaining to Section 6 – Seminole’s Responsibilities in the Interlocal Agreement.

6.4 Update on Potential Separation

It was noted that this was added as a place holder for the Medical Examiner Advisory Committee for discussions. Mr. Minter and Kate Latorre have not heard from Melanie Marsh, County Attorney, Lake County Board of County Commissioners, regarding any updates on their position with merging with Seminole County or the Medical Examiner building.

7. Next Meeting Date

The next Districts 5 and 24 Medical Examiner Advisory Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 12, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. at the Sumter County Service Center, Room 102, 7375 Powell Road, Wildwood, FL.

- 8. Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:41 p.m.

Holly Davis, Chair

Date