

TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2017

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING HELD**

**STATE OF MINNESOTA)
COUNTY OF DODGE)**

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
MANTORVILLE, MN**

2017-09 C.O.W.

The Dodge County Commissioners met in Committee of the Whole June 13, 2017, in the Commissioner's Room at the Dodge County Government Services Building, Mantorville, MN, at 9:00 a.m. CDT. Chair Tim Tjosaas opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. CDT.

Meeting Convened

The Chair acknowledged those present:

Those Present

Members present:	Tim Tjosaas	District #2
	Rodney Peterson	District #3
	Rhonda Toquam	District #4
	David Kenworthy	District #5
Members absent:	John Allen	District #1
Also present:	Jim Elmquist	County Administrator
	Becky Lubahn	Deputy Clerk

Assistant Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Peter Lin provided the Board with an Annual Medical Examiner report.

Annual Medical
Examiner Report

Monica Kendall, Supervisor, Death Investigations was available to comment.

The following information was shared with the Board:

The Southern Minnesota Regional Medical Examiner's Office investigates sudden, violent, unexpected, and suspicious deaths that occur in Dodge, Fillmore, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Wabasha, and Winona counties in southeastern Minnesota. The Office of the Medical Examiner certifies death after investigation and postmortem examination and issues the death certificate as required by law. Complete findings of the death investigation are distributed to families and law enforcement agencies as appropriate.

The main duties of the Office of Medical Examiner are to determine the cause and manner of death, and certify deaths that are reported to the medical examiner. The cause of death is the disease process or injury that resulted in death. There are thousands of diseases and injuries that may result in death. The manner of death is a classification in which a determination is made regarding whether the death resulted from natural causes, homicide, suicide, or an accident. On occasion, the manner of death is classified as indeterminate.

Information collected during the investigation helps clarify the circumstances, such as the sequence of events prior to death. Evidence collected during an investigation and/or postmortem examination may help lead to the arrest or successful conviction of a suspect in a homicide case. Because deaths occur around the clock, medical examiner staff members are available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

The death scene investigation reports filed by the Investigators are very thorough and supply comprehensive information to the Medical Examiners.

Annual Medical Examiner Report - Continued

Mayo Clinic Medical Examiner Investigators also extend their duties to the living by answering questions and addressing concerns regarding deaths within the county. Medical Examiners Investigators frequently make personal contact with family members of a deceased and assist them by providing appropriate answers regarding the circumstance of the death. Medical Examiner Investigators are supplied with a pamphlet for distribution to families. The information provides answers to common questions and facts about autopsies and also provides resource information pertaining to grief counseling.

Commissioner Peterson and County Attorney Paul Kiltinen arrived to the meeting at 9:02 a.m. CDT.

Commissioner Peterson & County Attorney Arrived to Meeting

Dr. Lin shared the following 2016 Dodge County statistics with the Board:

Annual Medical Examiner Report - Continued

Population (2016)	20, 506
Cases Reported to the Medical Examiner	73
A. Number of deaths certified after postmortem examination	9
1. Number of Medical Examiner Cases with Complete Autopsy	9
2. Number of Medical Examiner Cases with External Examination	0
3. Number of Medical Examiner Cases with Limited Examination	0
B. Number of deaths certified without postmortem examination	19
C. Number of deaths not certified by Medical Examiner's Office after investigation	45

Commissioner Peterson stated because there are no hospitals in Dodge County accident victims from our county might be transported to Olmsted County for treatment and may pass away from their injuries in Olmsted County, therefore their deaths would then be reported in Olmsted County statistics. Mr. Peterson indicated he was interested in receiving more detailed information on the all deaths that occurred as a result of accidents which take place in Dodge County, regardless of whether or not the victims died in Dodge County.

Ms. Kendall indicated they have the ability to go back and look at these types of results and adjust the reports to reflect more accurate statistics for each of the counties. Ms. Kendall noted their office has no jurisdiction over deaths that occur in areas outside of Olmsted County; therefore it may be difficult to obtain information for Dodge County accident victims that pass away in a county other than Olmsted County.

Dr. Lin shared with the Board statistics regarding deaths related to poison/drug overdoses.

Commissioner Peterson wanted to know how Dodge County looks compared to other counties in relation to drug related deaths.

Dr. Lin stated Dodge County drug overdose statistics are similar to other counties statistics.

Dr. Lin reviewed deaths by natural causes.

Annual Medical
Examiner Report -
Continued

Commissioner Peterson wanted to know if the Medical Examiner's Office looks at the difference cancers that have caused deaths in Dodge County and if there's any connection between them.

Dr. Lin reported there are a variety of cancers that have caused deaths in Dodge County and that they have not found any evidence that would lead them to believe there is a cancer cluster in Dodge County.

Commissioner Peterson wanted to know if there were any radon related cancers.

Dr. Lin stated there is nothing that jumped out at them that would indicate there were radon related cancer concerns in Dodge County.

The Board thanked Dr. Lin and Ms. Kendall for the update.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:17 a.m. CDT.

Meeting Adjourned

ATTEST:

**TIM TJOSAAS
CHAIR, COUNTY BOARD**

**BECKY LUBAHN
DEPUTY CLERK**

DATED: