



MIDWEST REGIONAL FORENSIC LABORATORY  
AN ASCLD/LAB-INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITED TESTING LABORATORY SINCE 2014  
A PARTNERSHIP OF ANOKA, SHERBURNE, & WRIGHT COUNTIES

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13301 HANSON BLVD. NW ANDOVER, MN 55304  
TEL: (763) 324-5097 FAX: (763) 324-5080

**Midwest Regional Forensic Laboratory  
Advisory Board Meeting  
Agenda**

**Anoka County Sheriff's Office  
Community Room  
13301 Hanson Blvd NW  
Andover, MN 55304**

**January 14, 2020 @ 2:00 p.m.  
Original date was: November 19, 2019**

1. Approval of August 27, 2019 Minutes – *See attachment*
2. Staffing Update
3. Casework Update
4. Grant Update
5. Proposed 2020 Meeting Dates
  - a. April 28, 2020 – Wright County
  - b. August 25, 2020 – Sherburne County
  - c. November 27, 2020 – Anoka County
6. Other

Next Proposed Meeting: April 28, 2020 @ 2:00 p.m.  
**Wright County Sheriff's Office**



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**Midwest Regional Forensic Laboratory  
Advisory Board Committee Meeting Minutes  
August 27, 2019 @ 2:00 p.m.**

**Sherburne County Sheriff's Office  
13880 Business Center Drive NW, EOC Room  
Elk River, MN 55330**

**PERSONS PRESENT:**

**Anoka County:** Commissioner Julie Braastad, Chief Deputy Kevin Halweg, Assistant County Attorney Bryan Frantz, Director Scott Ford, Q/A Manager Shawn Gallagher, Budget Director Patti Hetrick, and Sheriff's Secretary Kelly Haigh

**Sherburne County:** Commissioner Felix Schmiesing, Sheriff Joel Brott

**Wright County:** Commissioner Christine Husom, Sheriff Sean Deringer, County Attorney Tom Kelly

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the previous meeting of April 16, 2019 were offered for approval. Motion was made by Commissioner Schmiesing and seconded by Commissioner Husom to accept the minutes. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.
2. **Staffing Update:** Director Ford provided the following:
  - a. **Latent Print Examiner:** Scientist Ryan Coller has turned in a medical retirement effective July 19. The job posting closes on August 28.
  - b. **Biology Scientist:** Forensic Scientist I Jessica Slater started on June 3 and was signed off to do independent Serology case work on August 23. Scientist Erin Moriarity resigned effective August 16. The job posting closes on September 4.
  - c. **Propert Room Technicians:**
    - Debra Olson to start on July 29. NOTE: Debra resigned without proper notice, effective September 23.
  - d. **Volunteer:**
    - Bobbi Beberg started on August 8 and is working Tuesday and Thursday 9 to 11 a.m.



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**3. Casework Submissions:** Director Ford provided an overview:

Discipline	Turn Around Times	Casework Update Compared to 2018
Biology	Priority – 90 Days Non-priority – 8 Months	Similar
Drug Chemistry	49 days	10% increase
Toxicology	25 days	Similar
Latent Print	Priority – 40 days Non-priority – 75 Days	10% decrease

**4. Grant Update:** Director Ford provided an update:

- a. **2017 DNA Backlog Grant** ~ \$150,000. Purchased epMotion 5075 robot and has been installed; training occurred at the end of March; internal validation is ongoing, and projected to be completed by the end of 2019
- b. **2018 DNA Backlog Grant** ~ \$150,000. Hired FSI Biology Scientist, Jessica Slater.
- c. **2018 Efficiency Improvement & Capacity Enhancement Program** ~ \$182,395. Competitive Grant. Funds to be used towards validating and implementing a Y-screen process to more quickly process sexual assault kits. Instrumentation and validation package has begun.
- d. **2019 DNA Backlog Grant** ~ \$195,000  
Purchasing two additional epMotion Robots and Biology external FBI QAS audit.
- e. **2019 Coverdell Grant** ~ \$25,801  
Our lab, Minneapolis, and St. Paul take turns every 3 years. This year, we were awarded funds, and we plan to finish space for future Drug Chemistry lab.
- f. **2020 DNA Backlog Grant** ~ Applied for 2 more years for Forensic Scientist I Jessica Slater.

**5. Drug Workgroup Recommendation:** Director Scott Ford informed that several county representatives were invited to attend the Drug Chemistry Workgroup Meeting scheduled for July 23, 2019. The topic was to combat the increase in case submissions that has occurred. Numerous ideas were discussed: adding an additional drug chemistry scientist, eliminating testing of trace amounts of drugs, eliminating testing on non-felony amounts of marijuana, and only completing testing to the highest possible charging limits. The workgroup recommended the following:

- 1) Cease testing of all trace amount drug chemistry cases unless there is a letter from the prosecutor requesting testing.



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- 2) Cease testing of all marijuana drug chemistry cases unless there is a documented court date. Vape pen cartridges would continue to be tested.
- 3) Move forward to remodel the unfinished laboratory workspace to include two additional workstations for the Drug Chemistry Section and an additional instrument room to be funded with \$25,801 of the Coverdell Grant funds and \$45,699 of laboratory budget funds. Total cost of remodel is \$71,500.
- 4) Add a Forensic Scientist I for the Drug Chemistry Section to the 2021 budget. Approximately \$81,000/year (salary + benefits).

A discussion took place regarding the recommendations. Motion was made by Commissioner Husom and seconded by Sheriff Deringer to accept Items 1), 2), and 3); and reserve Item 4) until the approval of the 2021 budget process. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED. See Attachment "A" memo dated August 5, 2019, Summary of Drug Chemistry Workgroup Meeting.

6. **Approval of 2020 Budget:** Director Ford provided an overview of the 2020 Proposed Budget Summary. The difference between the 2019 and 2020 budget is largely due to personnel salaries, benefits, and supplies. A discussion took place regarding salary, budget savings, and the current balance in the Equipment Fund. Motion was made by Commissioner Schmiesing and seconded by Chief Deputy Halweg to approve the 2020 Proposed Budget Summary. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED. See Attachment "B" 2020 Proposed Budget.
7. **Other:** Commissioner Husom inquired whether there have been requests from non-member agencies for testing. Director Ford informed that we have few non-member requests. In 2017 we developed a fee schedule. Fee Schedule to be provided to committee members. *See Attachment "C" Laboratory Fee Schedule.*
8. Motion was made by Commissioner Braastad and seconded by Commissioner Schmiesing to adjourn the meeting at 2:33 p.m. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

**Next meeting to be held on  
November 19, 2019  
at 2:00 p.m.  
Anoka County Sheriff's Office  
Community Room  
13301 Hanson Blvd NW  
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08/05/2019

Re: Summary of Drug Chemistry Workgroup Meeting

Attendees: Scott Ford, Laboratory Director  
Steve Banning Drug Chemistry Section Technical Lead  
Kevin Halweg Anoka County Sheriff's Office  
Bryan Lindberg Anoka County Attorney's Office  
Ben Zawacki Sherburne County Sheriff's Office  
Samuel Wertheim Sherburne County Attorney's Office  
Matthew Treichler Wright County Sheriff's Office  
Brian Lutes Wright County Attorney's Office

The above listed attendees met on July 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss options for the Drug Chemistry Section to combat the increase in case submissions over the past decade (see attachment).

There were numerous ideas discussed including adding an additional drug chemistry forensic scientist, eliminating testing of trace amounts of drugs, eliminating testing on non-felony amounts of marijuana, and only completing testing to the highest possible charging limits.

The entire workgroup had consensus on the following plan to present to the Midwest Regional Forensic Laboratory Advisory Board.

- 1) Cease testing of ALL trace amount drug chemistry cases unless there is a letter from the prosecutor requesting testing.
- 2) Cease testing of ALL marijuana drug chemistry cases unless there is a documented court date. Vape pen cartridges would continue to be tested.
- 3) Move forward with remodel of currently unfinished laboratory workspace to include two additional workstations for the Drug Chemistry Section and an additional instrument room. To be funded with \$25,801 of Coverdell Grant funds and \$45,699 of laboratory budget money. Total cost of remodel is \$71,500.
- 4) Add a Forensic Scientist I for the Drug Chemistry Section to the 2021 budget. Approximately \$81,000/year (salary + benefits).

**Attachment A**

**MIDWEST REGIONAL FORENSIC LAB BUDGET SUMMARY 2020**

Updated July 2019

**Personnel**

**Cost Sharing Breakout**

<b>Anoka</b>	<b>Sherburne</b>	<b>Wright</b>
65.09%	15.13%	19.79%

Property Room Technician	65,089			
Forensic Scientist III Drug	120,111			
Forensic Scientist II Drug	99,643			
Forensic Scientist II Drug	99,580			
Forensic Scientist III Latents	119,789			
Forensic Scientist II Latents	88,247			
Forensic Scientist II Latents	95,935			
Forensic Scientist III - DNA	119,789			
Forensic Scientist II - DNA	101,680			
Forensic Scientist II - DNA	101,557			
Forensic Scientist II - DNA	94,056			
Quality Assurance Manager	127,057			
Lab Director	145,155			
Special Project Pay	26,690			
Variable Salary Adj (2020 merit increases)	52,807			
10% Administrative Fee	<u>145,718</u>	\$94,842	\$22,044	\$28,830
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,602,903</b>	<b>\$1,043,266</b>	<b>\$242,487</b>	<b>\$317,134</b>

**Capital Equipment**

Codis Server Upgrade	15,000			
Instrumentation replacement allotment	22,000			
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>\$24,082</b>	<b>\$5,597</b>	<b>\$7,320</b>

**Departmental Expenses**

Includes: DNA Supplies	214,700			
Includes: Drug Chemistry & Latent Supplies	156,150			
printing; forms; uniforms; supplies				
small equip; R&M equip.; training & related				
Books; software, dues; etc.				
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>370,850</b>	<b>\$241,371</b>	<b>\$56,102</b>	<b>\$73,373</b>

**Operational Expenses**

Includes: Space Allocation;	73,669			
network and pc support; waste displ.				
telephone; etc				
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>73,669</b>	<b>\$47,948</b>	<b>\$11,145</b>	<b>\$14,575</b>

**Contracts and Fees**

Includes: External Expert Testimony Exp.	4,000			
Software Maintenance Fees & Lic.	<u>17,500</u>			
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>21,500</b>	<b>\$13,993</b>	<b>\$3,253</b>	<b>\$4,254</b>

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b><u>2,105,922</u></b>	<b><u>\$1,370,661</u></b>	<b><u>\$318,584</u></b>	<b><u>\$416,657</u></b>
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<u>Biology</u>			
<u>Biology Serology</u>	<u>Serology - Non CSC per item</u>	<u>Serology - CSC per item</u>	<u>Reference Sample</u>
Cost to Laboratory	\$150	\$300	\$90
<u>Biology DNA</u>	<u>DNA - Non CSC per item</u>	<u>DNA - CSC per item</u>	<u>Reference Sample per item</u>
Cost to Laboratory	\$1,400	\$1,700	\$650

<u>Drug Chemistry</u>	<u>Marijuana per item</u>	<u>General Drugs per item</u>	<u>Methamphetamine Purity per item</u>
Cost to Laboratory	\$100	\$250	\$750

<u>Toxicology</u>	<u>Per Item</u>
Cost to Laboratory	\$225

<u>Latent Prints</u>	
<u>Latent Print Processing</u>	<u>Per Item</u>
Cost to Laboratory	\$250
<u>Latent Print Analysis</u>	<u>Per Item</u>
Cost to Laboratory	\$350