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**Final Minutes**  
**Scientific Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**October 2, 2019**  
**Department of Forensic Science, Central Laboratory, Classroom 1**

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**Committee Members Present**

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Randall E. Beaty  
Maureen C. Bottrell  
Kathleen Corrado, Ph.D. – *Chair*  
Robin W. Cotton, Ph.D.  
Leslie E. Edinboro, Ph.D.  
Linda C. Jackson  
Barry S. Levine, Ph.D. (participated remotely pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3708.2)  
George C. Maha, Ph.D.  
Richard P. Meyers  
Jami St. Clair  
Travis Y. Spinder (participated remotely pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3708.2)  
Kenneth B. Zercie

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**Staff Members Present**

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Wanda W. Adkins, Office Manager  
Jeffrey D. Ban, Central Laboratory Director  
David A. Barron, Ph.D., Deputy Director  
Sabrina S. Cillessen, Physical Evidence Program Manager  
Amy M. Curtis, Department Counsel  
Katya N. Herndon, Chief Deputy Director  
James W. Hutchings, Ph.D., Toxicology Program Manager  
Bradford C. Jenkins, Biology Program Manager  
M. Scott Maye, Northern Laboratory Director  
Jennifer L. Taylor, Forensic Administrative Specialist  
Rebecca Wagner, Ph.D., Research Section Supervisor  
Robyn Weimer, Chemistry Program Manager

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**Call to Order**

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Kathleen Corrado, Ph.D., the Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee (“Committee” or “SAC”), called the meeting of the Committee to order at 9:16 a.m. Director Linda Jackson introduced Jennifer Taylor, an Administrative Office Specialist in the Director’s Office, who will serve as the new Secretary to the SAC. Amy Curtis informed the Committee that Barry Levine and Travis Spinder would be participating remotely pursuant to the SAC’s Policy on Individual Participation in Scientific Advisory Committee Meetings by Electronic Means, and in accordance with Virginia Code § 2.2-3708.2. Dr. Levine participated by telephone from Frederick, Maryland, and Mr. Spinder participated by telephone from Missoula, Montana. Both were unable to attend in person because they were scheduled to be in court.

47

48 **Adoption of Agenda**

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50 The Chair asked if there were any additions or changes to the draft agenda for the meeting.  
51 Director Jackson made a motion to amend the agenda to reflect that she would be giving the  
52 Division of Technical Services update and that the Chemistry Program Update would be given by  
53 Robyn Weimer, the new Chemistry Program Manager. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zercie,  
54 and adopted by unanimous vote of the Committee.

55

56 Subsequently, Director Jackson made a motion to amend the agenda to include a Serology Review  
57 Update by Brad Jenkins, Biology Program Manager, as an agenda item separate from the Biology  
58 Program Update, which was seconded by Dr. Maha, and adopted by unanimous vote of the  
59 Committee.

60

61 **Adoption of Minutes of the May 7, 2019 Committee Meeting**

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63 The Chair asked if there were any changes or corrections to the draft minutes from the May 7,  
64 2019 meeting. Being none, Dr. Cotton moved to adopt the minutes, which was seconded by Dr.  
65 Edinboro, and adopted by unanimous vote of the Committee.

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67 **Chair's Report**

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69 None.

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71 **DFS Director's Report**

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73 **Facilities:**

74 Director Jackson reviewed with the Committee a timeline of what has occurred to date for the  
75 Central Laboratory facility project. She shared the location of the site in Hanover County  
76 selected for the new Central Laboratory facility.

77

78 **Agency Initiatives:**

79 Director Jackson updated the Committee on the Forensic Science Training the Department has  
80 been providing for attorneys and judges. Last year, DFS provided, for the first time, a one-day  
81 DNA Training for attorneys and judges in all four regional laboratories. A stakeholder meeting  
82 was held on May 2, 2019 to review the results of a survey of attendees from the 2018 DNA  
83 Trainings, seek input on potential changes to the DNA Training, and discuss potential subjects for  
84 the 2019 trainings. It was decided that DFS would offer the DNA Training again in 2019, and then  
85 also offer a four-hour DUI/DUID Training, which would cover both Breath Alcohol and  
86 Toxicology. On September 27, 2019, the Department held a DNA Training in the Northern  
87 Laboratory and offered its first DUI/DUID Training in the Central Laboratory. Both trainings will  
88 be provided in all four DFS regional laboratories this fall. The Department plans to expand the  
89 trainings to additional disciplines moving forward.

90

91 Director Jackson reported to the Committee on the PERK Tracking System. Beta testing of the  
92 PERK Tracking System began with a handful of agencies in the Richmond area in June. The

93 system will be rolled out statewide over the next year as legislation mandating that all agencies  
94 use the system goes into effect on July 1, 2020.

95  
96 Director Jackson provided an update on the grant-funded Lean Six Sigma project. A Request for  
97 Proposals was issued for the Lean Six Sigma project, and then had to be re-issued without the  
98 requirement for forensic science laboratory experience and without project assistance. Due to time  
99 constraints with the grant period, the Department will ask for the funds to be reallocated for another  
100 purpose before the end of the grant period in December 2019. The project may be re-initiated at a  
101 later time.

102  
103 Director Jackson advised the Committee about a DFS Policy Change Notice Regarding Marijuana  
104 Field Tests and Changes to the Department's Analytical and Reporting Scheme for Marijuana and  
105 Marijuana Byproducts that was disseminated to DFS user agencies on May 23, 2019. The Notice  
106 explained recent changes in federal and state law regarding marijuana and industrial hemp and  
107 their impact on the use of marijuana field tests, and the Department's analytical and reporting  
108 scheme for marijuana and its byproducts.

109  
110 Director Jackson gave an overview of the industrial hemp laws passed during the 2019 General  
111 Assembly Session in response to the Federal Farm Bill enacted in 2018, as well as the potential  
112 issues created for the Department in determining whether an item is marijuana or industrial  
113 hemp. Director Jackson explained that the current Duquenois-Levine field tests cannot  
114 differentiate between marijuana and industrial hemp. The Department is validating a field test  
115 kit that will evaluate the ratio of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD)  
116 concentrations to assist law enforcement in differentiating marijuana plant material from hemp  
117 plant material. The Department purchased more than 16,000 of these Cannabis Typification kits  
118 for distribution to law enforcement agencies with grant funding from the Department of Criminal  
119 Justice Services. Director Jackson also reviewed the Department's progress in validating new  
120 methods for plant material, a semi-quantitative screening method and THC quantitation method.

121  
122 Budget:

123 Director Jackson presented the DFS FY20 Budget to the Committee.

124  
125 Grants:

126 Director Jackson shared a list of current and pending grants with the Committee.

127  
128 She reviewed statistics on the kits tested under the National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI)  
129 Grant, which covers kits collected between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2016. The Office of the  
130 Attorney General had identified 1,232 unsubmitted kits from that time-period. As of September  
131 30, 2019, 919 of those kits have been submitted to the private laboratory for analysis, 747 kits have  
132 been testing completed and/or data received by DFS, and 555 kits have had data reviews completed  
133 by the Department.

134  
135 Workload/Backlog:

136 Director Jackson provided the Committee with an update on statistical trends in each of the  
137 scientific disciplines through the quarter that ended June 30, 2019. Director Jackson informed the

138 Committee that finalized quarterly statistics for the quarter that ended September 30<sup>th</sup> will be  
139 available on October 7, 2019.

140

141 **Program Area Updates**

142

143 Division of Technical Services (DTS) Update:

144 Director Jackson provided the Committee with a DTS update. She informed the Committee that  
145 Scott Maye is now the Northern Laboratory Director, and she introduced Robyn Weimer who is  
146 now the Chemistry Program Manager.

147

148 Director Jackson informed the Committee that the Department hosted an Assessor class in August  
149 where 21 Department employees attended. DFS is actively transitioning to ISO/IEC 17025:2017  
150 and AR 3125. The offsite surveillance is complete. On-site surveillance will be in May 2020.

151

152 Director Jackson reported on the Forensic Training Section. The 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Forensic  
153 Science Academy will occur in December 2019 and that the 100<sup>th</sup> Academy class will graduate in  
154 April 2020. The Forensic Science Academy Alumni Association Annual Retraining Seminar was  
155 held in August and was attended by 165 Academy alumni.

156

157 Forensic Biology Program Update:

158 Brad Jenkins, Forensic Biology Program Manager, provided the Committee with an update on  
159 staffing levels for the Forensic Biology program area, including examiners in training and  
160 positions in recruit, for each regional laboratory. Mr. Jenkins noted that there is one examiner in  
161 relationship training, and ten examiners in the initial phase of Y-STR training.

162

163 Mr. Jenkins provided an update on the status of various validation projects, including STRmix  
164 software, Y-STR on the 3500 instrument, the new Real Time PCR instruments, the grant funded  
165 evaluation of the automated differential extractions, and the Casework Direct extraction kit.

166

167 Mr. Jenkins shared with the Committee some of the new exercises and information presented in  
168 the DNA Training for Attorneys and Judges that DFS is conducting.

169

170 Chemistry Program Update:

171 Robyn Weimer, Chemistry Program Manager, provided the Committee with an update on the  
172 status of trainees in the Trace Evidence and Controlled Substances Sections in each laboratory.

173

174 The Trace Evidence Section has tentatively scheduled its statewide section meeting at the Central  
175 Laboratory in January 2020. A one-day Foray Training for Fire Debris examiners is tentatively  
176 scheduled for December 2019.

177

178 Ms. Weimer updated the Committee on the NIJ grant DFS received for a “A Foundational Study  
179 of Fire Debris Interpretation Using Quantitative Measures of Chromatographic Features with the  
180 Application of ACE-V Methodology”.

181

182 Ms. Weimer shared information on HPLC training and the new analytical scheme to be used for  
183 the identification of marijuana in the Controlled Substances Section. Ms. Weimer also provided

184 an update on the NMS Outsourcing Project. To date, the Department has outsourced  
185 approximately 2,000 cases, and the average turnaround time for NMS in these cases is 20 days.  
186

187 Ms. Weimer concluded with an update on the nine compounds recommended to the Board of  
188 Pharmacy (BoP) for scheduling via the expedited regulatory process since the last SAC meeting.  
189 The compounds were considered at BoP's meeting on September 25, 2019 and are pending final  
190 approval.  
191

192 Physical Evidence Program Update:

193 Sabrina Cillessen, Physical Evidence Program Manager, provided the Committee with an  
194 overview of staffing for the Firearms & Toolmarks, Latent Prints & Impressions, and Digital &  
195 Multimedia Evidence (DME) Sections, including positions in recruit and positions in training at  
196 each laboratory.  
197

198 Ms. Cillessen discussed the LatentSleuth project and reported that results of the research were  
199 presented at the August IAI meeting in Reno, Nevada.  
200

201 Ms. Cillessen shared information about the Firearms & Toolmarks Statewide Section meeting held  
202 in August. She also discussed the validation of the Cadre 3D imaging equipment and the ATF site  
203 visits for the Minimum Required Operating Standards.  
204

205 Ms. Cillessen gave an overview of the Virginia Cybercrime Initiative, which the DME Section  
206 will be participating in and is the first-ever statewide cybercrime conference that is planned for  
207 March 2020. She also reported on new capabilities and innovations for the DME Section.  
208

209 Toxicology Update:

210 Dr. James Hutchings, Toxicology Program Manager, provided a staffing update for the Toxicology  
211 and Breath Alcohol Sections.  
212

213 Dr. Hutchings discussed the Society of Forensic Toxicologists Annual meeting, which will be held  
214 in October 2019, and the fact that DFS will have two individuals presenting at the meeting. He  
215 also shared that the Toxicology Section's annual statewide meeting is scheduled for December 4,  
216 2019, and reviewed the topics that will be covered.  
217

218 Dr. Hutchings reported on the new Hamilton Automated Liquid Handling Systems, which have  
219 been installed. He also gave an overview of methods recently implemented, as well as methods in  
220 development. He anticipates that a Toxicology Subcommittee Meeting will be held before the  
221 next SAC meeting to review various methods.  
222

223 Dr. Hutchings discussed the Breath Alcohol Section's online recertification course for Breath  
224 Alcohol operators and the instructor recertification. He also updated the Committee on status of  
225 the Breath Alcohol instrument enhancement.  
226

227 Dr. Hutchings concluded by sharing information about the topics being covered in the DUI/DUID  
228 Training for Attorneys and Judges that DFS is now offering.  
229

230 Serology Case Review:

231 Mr. Jenkins gave an update on the Serology Case Review. He shared observations of some of the  
232 routine practices from the cases reviewed (e.g., results for known reference samples were not  
233 reported when no typing results were obtained for the evidence samples), as well as specific issues  
234 observed (e.g., a case where the controls had failed and the typing results for the evidence were  
235 not reported, but were documented in the case file). The initial review of selected cases by two  
236 scientists is nearly complete. DFS plans to have a group of three scientists (the Biology Program  
237 Manager and two DFS scientists who previously served as serologists) recommend final actions  
238 (to include notifications) in reviewed cases. The independent, external reviewer will then review  
239 the recommendations. DFS anticipates reporting on the Serology Case Review, including  
240 information on any notifications, to the Scientific Advisory Committee and the Board at their April  
241 2020 meetings.

242

243 New Business

244

245 Subcommittee Meetings for Spring 2020:

246 The Committee reviewed the membership for the Subcommittees that DFS anticipates will be  
247 meeting prior to the full SAC in the spring, including the DNA, Toxicology, and Controlled  
248 Substances Subcommittees. DFS will reach out to the Subcommittee members to schedule these  
249 meetings.

250

251 Amendments to Policy on Individual Participation in Scientific Advisory Committee Meetings by  
252 Electronic Means

253 Amy Curtis, Department Counsel, informed the Committee that the Code section that permits  
254 members of public bodies to participate in meetings by electronic means has changed, and  
255 presented an amendment to the SAC policy to reflect the new statutory citation. Dr. Maha made  
256 a motion to amend the policy to reflect the correct statutory reference, which was seconded by Mr.  
257 Zercie and passed by unanimous vote.

258

259 Public Comment

260 None.

261

262 Future Meeting Date

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264 The Scientific Advisory Committee will meet on April 14, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

265

266 Adjournment

267

268 Dr. Corrado asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Mr. Zercie made a motion to adjourn the  
269 meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee, which was seconded by Ms. St. Clair, and passed  
270 by unanimous vote.

271

272 The meeting adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

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