



Commission on Forensic Science

March 14, 2025

Division of Criminal Justice Services

80 South Swan Street
Room 118
Albany, NY 12210

John Jay College of Criminal Justice

524 West 59th Street
Room L.61
New York, NY 10019

9:15 AM – 12:42 PM

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Commission Members in Attendance:

Lt. Col. Nicholas Banbury
Pasquale Buffolino, Ph.D.¹
James Chithalen, Ph.D.²
Lydia de Castro
Steven Epstein, Esq.
William Fitzpatrick, Esq.
Jessica Goldthwaite, Esq.
Michael Marciano, Ph.D.
Beverly Rauch
Rossana Rosado¹
Michelli Schmitz

DCJS Staff in Attendance:

Taylor Aaron
Dean DeFruscio
Janine Kava
Natasha Harvin-Locklear Esq.
Katherine Mayberry
Shelley Palmer
Joseph Popcun

¹ In accordance with a resolution and related procedures regarding the use of videoconferencing under extraordinary circumstances, which were adopted by the Commission on Forensic Science on June 9, 2023, and added to its bylaws, Pasquale Buffolino and Rossana Rosado participated by videoconferencing from private locations due to extraordinary circumstances.

² Representative of Commission Member James V. McDonald, M.D.

Brianna Robinson
 Lindsey Rockwell
 Matthew Schrantz, Esq.
 Elizabeth Suparmanto

Other Attendees:

Bradley Adams – NYC OCME, Forensic Anthropology Unit
 Julia Becker – New York State Police Crime Laboratory
 Jamie Belrose – New York State Police Crime Laboratory
 Jill Dooley – New York State Police Crime Laboratory
 Nichole Hurbanek – New York State Police Crime Laboratory
 Michael Jankowiak – New York State Police Crime Laboratory
 Jennifer Lady – NYPD Latent Print Section
 Thomas Leach – New York State Police Crime Laboratory
 Kyra McKay – NYC OCME, Department of Forensic Biology
 Craig O'Connor – NYC OCME, Department of Forensic Biology
 Jennifer Odien – NYC OCME, Forensic Anthropology Unit
 Julie Pizziketti – New York State Police Crime Laboratory
 Angela Soler- NYC OCME, Forensic Anthropology Unit
 Jeff Suckow- NYPD Police Laboratory
 Paul Stasaitis- Westchester County Department of Public Safety Crime Laboratory
 Tiffany Vasquez – NYC OCME, Department of Forensic Biology
 Christian Westring – Niagara County Sheriff's Office Forensic Laboratory

*Approximate
 video times*

Prior to the start of the meeting, Ms. Palmer notified members that Chair Rosado was able to listen in virtually, and that Ms. Palmer would run the meeting in her absence. Ms. Palmer proceeded to take a roll call as members were in attendance in Albany, New York City, and virtually. A quorum was established with 8 voting members (Banbury, de Castro, Epstein, Fitzpatrick, Goldthwaite, Marciano, Rauch, and Schmitz); one member participated and voted from a private location due to extraordinary circumstances (Buffolino³).

A request was made to discuss topics from the previous meeting regarding adherence to OSAC standards and the differences between the New York State Department of Health standards for clinical laboratories and standards utilized for publicly funded accredited DNA laboratories. It was determined that both items would be discussed during Old Business.

Ms. Palmer then requested a motion to approve the March 14, 2025, agenda. The motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Epstein, seconded by Ms. de Castro, and approved with 9 votes (Banbury, Buffolino, de Castro, Epstein, Fitzpatrick, Goldthwaite, Marciano, Rauch, and Schmitz).

00:00:05
 00:00:31

Ms. Palmer requested a motion to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2024, Commission meeting. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Epstein, seconded by Ms. de Castro. The motion was approved unanimously.

00:00:32
 00:01:05

³ See FN 1.

Ms. Palmer then requested a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters relating to a current investigation or matters that may lead to the appointment, promotion, demotion, discipline, or suspension of a particular person. The motion was made by Ms. de Castro and seconded by Dr. Buffolino. The motion was approved unanimously. The Commission adjourned into Executive Session at 9:19 am.

0:01:07
0:02:03

The Commission reconvened the open meeting at 10:44 am. Due to technical difficulties the opening of the meeting was not recorded; as such Ms. Palmer confirmed attendance for the record and noted the March 14, 2025, meeting agenda and December 13, 2024, meeting minutes had been voted on and approved. It was then indicated that the Commission took no formal action during Executive Session. A motion was made by Ms. Goldthwaite to send a letter to the Office of Chief Medical Examiner requesting certain records and information pertaining to the investigation of a complaint by a Working Group of the Commission, which were previously requested by the Working Group but have not yet been supplied. The motion was seconded by Mr. Epstein. The motion was approved unanimously.

0:02:08
0:04:01

Next, the Commission reviewed the Accreditation/Laboratory Updates. Matters regarding the following laboratories were considered: Erie County Medical Examiner's Office Forensic Toxicology Laboratory, New York City OCME Department of Forensic Biology, New York City OCME Department of Forensic Toxicology, New York City OCME Forensic Anthropology Unit, New York City Police Department Police Laboratory, New York State Police Crime Laboratory, and Niagara County Sheriff's Office Forensic Laboratory. Representatives from the laboratories were available in person or via Zoom to respond to members' questions.

00:04:03
00:07:33

The next agenda item was Old Business. Ms. Palmer gave a verbal update on the Familial Search Policy.

00:07:35
00:08:25

Ms. Palmer stated that in response to the Commission's request, the DNA Subcommittee voted at their February 28th meeting to create a subgroup of three members to review and provide a written position statement on the NIST Human Factors report. The DNA Subcommittee also voted at their February 28th meeting, in response to a request from the Commission at their September 2021 meeting, to request updated probabilistic genotyping validation records and create a subgroup to review the documents and provide guidance to the New York State DNA Laboratories on the NIST report titled *DNA Mixture Interpretation: A NIST Scientific Foundation Review*.

00:08:27
00:14:43

Ms. Schmitz provided an update, in response to Dr. Marciano's request, on adherence to OSAC standards by New York State laboratories. Most laboratories in the State view the standards as guidance documents and have reviewed the documents and begun to or plan to implement appropriate and practicable recommendations outlined in the documents.

00:15:03
00:23:06

Ms. Palmer then discussed the differences between New York State Department of Health standards for their clinical laboratory program and standards utilized for publicly funded accredited forensic DNA laboratories. Ms. Rauch provided additional background information regarding the Department of Health's standards.

0:23:07
0:26:21

The next agenda item was New Business. Ms. Rockwell gave a verbal update on the 2024 Annual Laboratory Summaries provided to the members.

*Approximate
video times*

0:26:22

0:28:42

The Commission then reviewed laboratory disclosures from the Erie County Central Police Services Forensic Laboratory, Erie County Medical Examiner's Office Forensic Toxicology Laboratory, Monroe County Crime Laboratory, Monroe County Office of the Medical Examiner Forensic Toxicology Laboratory, Nassau County Office of the Medical Examiner Division of Forensic Toxicology, New York City OCME Department of Forensic Biology, New York City Police Department Latent Print Section, New York State Police Crime Laboratory, Suffolk County Crime Laboratory, Westchester County Department of Laboratories and Research Division of Forensic Toxicology, and Westchester County Department of Public Safety Crime Laboratory were reviewed. Representatives from the laboratories were available in person or via Zoom to respond to members' questions.

0:29:13

1:59:35

Commission member Dr. Buffolino left the meeting at 11:56 am.

Ms. Palmer stated that the next meeting of the Commission will take place on June 13, 2025. Mr. Fitzpatrick made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. de Castro and approved unanimously.

01:59:39

02:00:06

Note:

Videos of the open meeting are available on YouTube.