

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Sheriff - Coroner	(2) MEETING DATE 6/18/2013	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Ian Parkinson 781-4540	
(4) SUBJECT Request for approval of renewal contract with Microcorre Diagnostic laboratory for forensic pathology services, including autopsies and medical inspections, for Fiscal Years 2013-14 and 2014-15 in the amount of \$200,000 annually.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that your Board approve and direct the Chair to sign a two year contract with Microcorre Diagnostic Laboratory to provide forensic pathology services to the Sheriff-Coroner's Office.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) General Fund	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$200,000.00	(9) BUDGETED? Yes
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. ___) <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. ___)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input type="checkbox"/> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) 19001294		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: N/A <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5th's Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Date: <u>July 12, 2011</u>	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW Geoff O'Quest, Administrative Analyst			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts -			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Sheriff - Coroner / Ian Parkinson
781-4540

DATE: 6/18/2013

SUBJECT: Request for approval of renewal contract with Microcorre Diagnostic laboratory for forensic pathology services, including autopsies and medical inspections, for Fiscal Years 2013-14 and 2014-15 in the amount of \$200,000 annually.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that your Board approve and direct the Chair to sign a two year contract with Microcorre Diagnostic Laboratory to provide forensic pathology services to the Sheriff-Coroner's Office.

DISCUSSION

The Sheriff-Coroner has the mandated responsibility to determine the method and manner of certain reportable deaths. Medical procedures must be fulfilled by a forensic pathologist who is specially skilled and licensed to determine the cause of death and interpretation for court proceedings.

In August 2005, Dr. Walker, the previous forensic pathologist, exercised his right to terminate his agreement with the Coroner's Office, resulting in a search for a replacement licensed forensic pathologist certified by the American College of Forensic Examiners. At that time Gary Walter, M.D., doing business as Microcorre Diagnostic Laboratory, was identified as the only licensed forensic pathologist within 150 miles of San Luis Obispo who was willing to accept Coroner pathology contract work. Dr. Walter's primary workload and office is in Tulare. The Sheriff-Coroner's Department and the District Attorney's Office inquired into Dr. Walter's qualifications and reputation and found Dr. Walter very qualified to conduct the required services. A recent review of Dr. Walter's license status determined his licensure is current and in good standing, and for the past seven and a half years he has provided excellent service to the County.

Recent inquiry was made to determine if other suitable forensic pathology services are available locally. The result of this inquiry determined the existence of one pathology group located within San Luis Obispo County; however this group does not provide forensic pathology autopsy services. During previous discussions with this group they indicated they would not agree to provide services which could lead to the need for their testimony in court.

The number of investigations has fluctuated from 2009 through 2012. In 2009, the Coroner's Office investigators handled 1,269 reportable deaths which resulted in 261 investigations. Of these cases, 147 required autopsy, 63 required medical inspections and 51 required review of medical records. In 2010, the Coroner's investigators handled 1,441 reportable deaths which resulted in 281 investigations. Of these cases 186 required autopsy, 59 required medical inspections and 36 required a review of medical records. This represents a 14% increase in total reportable deaths to the Coroner in 2010 over 2009. The total number of investigations accepted by the Coroner for the same period increased by 8%. The number of autopsies performed increased by about 27%, while the number of medical inspections decreased by 7% and the number of medical records reviews decreased by 30%.

The total number of deaths reported to the Coroner in 2011 was 1,468 which represent a 1.9% increase from 2010. The

following represent increases and decreases in the various categories from 2010 to 2011. 276 cases resulted in investigation, a decrease of 1.8%; 178 autopsies were performed, a decrease of 4.5%; 62 medical inspections were conducted, an increase of 5%; and 36 medical records were reviewed, which remained the same. The total number of deaths reported to the Coroner in 2012 was 1,376, a decrease of 6.3% from 2011. The following represent the increases and decreases in the various categories from 2011 to 2012. 256 cases resulted in investigation, an 8% decrease; 159 autopsies were conducted, a decrease of 10.8%; 66 medical inspections were conducted, representing an increase of 6.5%; and 17 medical record reviews were conducted which represents a 53% decrease. Because the utilization of pathology services is dictated by the circumstances of each individual investigation, the fluctuation in the number of autopsies versus medical inspections versus medical records reviews cannot be predicted. The County needs to have this contract in place at the level specified to ensure the fulfillment of these mandated services at a known cost.

Year	Reportable Deaths	Investigations	Autopsies	Medical Inspections	Records Reviews
2009	1,269	261	147	63	51
2010	1,441	281	186	59	36
2011	1,468	276	178	62	36
2012	1,376	254	159	66	17

From January 1, 2013 to the present the Coroner's Office has had the same number of reportable deaths as the same period in 2012. The number of cases which have resulted in investigations has increased 11.1% for the same period of time.

The term of the contract is for two (2) years, beginning July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015, unless terminated earlier as provided in the terms of the contract. To fulfill the mandated responsibilities of the Coroner's Office, it is requested that the attached two year contract be approved.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

County Counsel has reviewed the contract and approves it as to form and legal effect, and the District Attorney's Office concurs with this recommendation.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Under the proposed contract, the County agrees to pay Microcorre \$200,000 annually to perform required autopsies, medical inspections and medical record reviews requested by the Sheriff-Coroner's Office. The initial contract with Microcorre limited the number of autopsies and medical inspections that could be performed under the agreement. When that limit was exceeded the Sheriff's Office then paid a premium for each additional procedure. The proposed contract removes this limit. Beginning in FY 2011-12, no additional expenditures were paid to Microcorre beyond the contract amount, regardless of the number of procedures performed.

Funding for this contract is included in the Sheriff-Coroner's FY 2013-14 proposed budget and, due to the mandated nature of the work, is not at risk from future reduction due to cuts in funding from Federal, State, or local sources.

RESULTS

The contracted forensic pathologist will perform all required autopsies, medical inspections and medical record reviews requested by the Sheriff-Coroner's Office. This represents a status quo renewal, extending the prior contract at the same cost.

This contract meets the County's Community-wide Results for a **Safe Community**: "The County will strive to create a community where all people—adults and children alike—have a sense of security and well being, crime is controlled, fire and rescue response is timely, and roads are safe."

ATTACHMENTS

1. Microcorre FY 13-14 and 14-15 renewal contract