

**MINUTES OF FORENSIC LABORATORY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FLAC)
MEETING**

Wednesday, February 11, 2015, 10:05 A.M. – 11:58 A.M.

Maryland State Police Forensic Sciences Division Laboratory
221 Milford Mill Road
Pikesville, MD 21208

Members in Attendance:

Renee Webster, DHMH, OHCQ, Assistant Director for Patricia Tomsko Nay, M.D., Executive Director, OHCQ (Chairperson)
Yale Caplan, Ph.D., American Academy of Forensic Sciences (2015)
Irvin Litofsky, Director, Baltimore County Police Dept. Forensic Services Section (2015)
Karin Athanas, American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) (2017)
Lilia Mijares, Ph.D., University of Maryland School of Medicine (2016)
Troy Hamlin, ASCLD/LAB for Richard S. Frank, ASCLD/LAB (2016)
Daniel Katz, Director, Maryland State Police Forensic Sciences Division (2017)
Elissa Passiment, American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (2015)
Steve O'Dell, Director, Baltimore City Police Dept. Laboratory (2016)

Quorum was established with 9 of 10 FLAC members in attendance.

Members Unable to Attend:

Robert Myers, Ph.D., DHMH Director of the Laboratories Administration, Ex officio

DHMH Staff:

Theresa DeAngelo, OHCQ Coordinator of Forensic Laboratories Program

Non-Members in Attendance:

Rana Santos, Deputy Director, Baltimore City Police Dept. Laboratory
Pamela Shaw, QA Officer, Baltimore City PD Laboratory
Francis Chiafari, Director, Montgomery County PD Crime Laboratory
Jacqueline Raskin-Burns, QA Manager, Montgomery County PD Crime Laboratory
Wanda Kuperus, Deputy Director, Maryland State Police Forensic Sciences Division
Cassandra Burke, QA Manager, Baltimore County Police Dept. Forensic Services Section
William T. Vosburgh, D.D.S., Director, Prince George's County Police Dept. Forensic Sciences Section
Lynett Redhead, DNA Lab Manager, Prince George's County Police Dept. Forensic Sciences Section
Captain Herbert Hasenpusch, CID Commander, Anne Arundel County PD
Teresa Long, Laboratory Director, Forensic Services Section, Howard County Police Dept.
Det. Jan Ryan, QA Manager, Harford County Sheriff's Office Crime Laboratory
Lt. Richard Miller, CID Lieutenant, Harford County Sheriff's Office

Minutes Organized by Agenda Item

I. Welcome and General Announcements

Theresa DeAngelo, OHCQ Coordinator of Forensic Laboratories Program introduced herself, welcomed

FLAC Committee members and others in attendance and opened the FLAC meeting announcing that a Quorum was established for today's meeting.

Ms. DeAngelo noted that Steven O'Dell, Director of Baltimore City's Laboratory, has been officially appointed to the FLAC as of November 2014. She also noted that Troy Hamlin from ASCLD/LAB was in attendance at today's meeting for Richard Frank. All those in attendance of the meeting introduced themselves.

Discussion/comments about the September 23, 2104 FLAC meeting minutes were opened up to the FLAC Committee. No comments were made. Suggestion was made to have the FLAC Committee approve the minutes. Minutes were approved.

II. Updates on OHCQ's 2014 Laboratory Proficiency Test and Annual Audit Review

As of January 2015, the OHCQ conducted on-site visits to all accredited laboratories located in Maryland, where PT records were examined for the year 2014. Simultaneous with the PT record review, the OHCQ also conducted a review of the laboratories' annual internal audits, which were completed on the same day.

The OHCQ also conducted full surveillance visits for all four (4) non-accredited forensic laboratories in Maryland completed in December 2014.

There were non-compliance issues found in both accredited and non-accredited laboratories. The OHCQ sent out deficiency letters and reports, and those laboratories in non-compliance have sent back to OHCQ plans of corrections. The OHCQ plans to conduct a follow-up visit for a few of these non-compliant laboratories in June 2015 to ensure plans of correction have been implemented.

The OHCQ has received information from all but two out-of-state licensed laboratories regarding PT and annual internal audit reviews for 2014. The two laboratories are in communication with OHCQ, and documentation is expected to be received before March 2015. All of the out-of-state licensed forensic laboratories are currently accredited.

III. Updates on Maryland's 2015 Legislative Session

Theresa DeAngelo gave a quick update on the current Maryland Legislative Session, which began January 14, 2015. Ms. DeAngelo informed the group of several different House and Senate bills which may affect Forensic Labs that are currently proposed for the 2015 session.

All current proposed House and Senate Bills and any updates for 2015 can be viewed on the Maryland General Assembly website at <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frm1st.aspx?tab=home>.

Also on the same website anyone can set up their email for tracking bills and any updates that may occur during the 2015 session.

The listing of current proposed bills provided with a short summary as of 02/11/2015 is as follows:

HB 105- Criminal Law- Drug Paraphernalia Possession with Marijuana- Civil Offense

Altering the penalty for the possession or use of drug paraphernalia involving the use or possession of less than 10 grams of marijuana; making the use or possession of drug paraphernalia under specified circumstances a civil offense; establishing that a person who violates the Act may be issued a specified citation; requiring the court to summon a specified person to appear in court under specified circumstances; etc.

Judiciary Hearing set for 02/24/2015 at 1 P.M.

HB 382- Sexual Assault Survivors' Right to Know Act

Requiring a health care provider that performs a sexual assault evidence collection kit exam on a victim of sexual assault to provide the victim or the victim's representative with specified contact information; requiring a law enforcement agency that receives a sexual assault evidence collection kit to provide specified information, except results that include identifying information, within 30 days after a request by a specified victim or victim's representative; etc.

Judiciary Hearing set for 02/24/2015 at 1 P.M.

HB 462- Public Safety - Statewide Accounting of Sexual Assault Evidence Kits

Requiring a specified law enforcement agency or other State or local agency to conduct an inventory of specified sexual assault kit evidence on or before January 1, 2016; requiring a specified agency to prepare a report regarding untested sexual assault evidence collection kits on or before March 1, 2016; requiring the report to be submitted to the Attorney General; and requiring the Attorney General to prepare and submit to the General Assembly a specified report and specified recommendations on or before December 1, 2016.

Judiciary Hearing set for 02/24/2015 at 1 P.M.

SB 168- Criminal Procedure- Expungement- Marijuana Possession

Authorizing a person to file a specified petition for expungement if the person was convicted of a specified crime involving the use or possession of less than 10 grams of marijuana; and excluding specified charges involving less than 10 grams of marijuana that arise from the same incident, transaction, or set of facts as another charge from a specified unit for the purposes of a specified petition for expungement.

Judicial Proceedings Hearing set for 02/19/2015 at 1 P.M.

SB 427- Criminal Procedure- Victims of Crime- Notification Regarding DNA Profile

Requiring a specified law enforcement agency or unit, under specified circumstances, to give a specified victim or victims' representative timely notice as to specified matters relating to a DNA profile of a specified alleged perpetrator or perpetrators; requiring the State Board of Victim Services to develop pamphlets to notify victims and victims' representatives of how to request information regarding an unsolved case; etc.

Judicial Proceedings Hearing set for 03/04/2015 at 1 P.M.

SB 456- Criminal Law- Marijuana and Drug Paraphernalia- Medical Necessity

Requiring a court to dismiss a specified possession of marijuana charge if the court finds that the person used or possessed marijuana because of medical necessity; requiring a court to dismiss a specified possession of drug paraphernalia charge related to marijuana if the court finds that the person possessed the drug paraphernalia related to marijuana because of medical necessity; etc.

Judicial Proceedings Hearing set for 03/04/2015 at 1 P.M.

SB 531- Marijuana Control and Revenue Act of 2015

Repealing specified criminal and civil prohibitions against the use and possession of marijuana; establishing specified exemptions from prosecution for specified persons for using, obtaining, purchasing, transporting, or possessing marijuana under specified circumstances; establishing exemptions from prosecution for specified retailers, marijuana product manufacturers, marijuana cultivation facilities, and safety compliance facilities under specified circumstances; establishing a specified affirmative defense; etc.

Judicial Proceedings Hearing set for 03/04/2015 at 1 P.M.

SB 583- DNA Evidence - Postconviction Review

Expanding the group of persons who may file a specified petition for postconviction DNA testing or a database or log search.

Judicial Proceedings Hearing set for 03/12/2015 at 1 P.M.

IV. Review Requirements Imposed by the Maryland Health General Article §17-2A and COMAR 10.51

A. Survey Monkey Outcome from FLAC Members' Responses

Theresa DeAngelo informed the group of the previous meeting's discussions and the "Survey Monkey" sent out to the FLAC regarding changes to COMAR 10.51. After a short discussion regarding some of the changes, a final vote was taken by the FLAC for finalizing language for the changes. (Please reference previous FLAC meeting minutes from September 2014 for any previous discussion topics)

The following list is the final proposed language for changes to be made to COMAR 10.51 at this time: (The final proposed language is listed 1st in **Bold**, with original language listed 2nd in *Italics*)

- **10.51.05.01 K Quality Assurance General**

K. Establishes a mechanism to address unresolved discrepant conclusions between an analyst and the technical reviewer.

10.51.05.01 K1-2 Quality Assurance General

K. Establishes a mechanism to:

- (1) Address unresolved discrepant conclusions between an analyst and the technical reviewer; and
- (2) Require that unresolved discrepancies are documented in:
 - (a) The case record; and
 - (b) Any other laboratory document as determined by the director.

• **10.51.05.02 A1 Quality Assurance- Specific**

A. A licensee shall develop, establish, maintain, implement, and follow quality assurance policies and procedures that ensure that the laboratory's quality system is maintained.

- (1) A licensee shall ensure that the laboratory has a clear procedure describing the process to uniquely identify evidence;

10.51.05.02 A1 Quality Assurance- Specific

A. A licensee shall develop, establish, maintain, implement, and follow quality assurance policies and procedures that ensure that the laboratory's quality system is maintained.

- (1) A licensee shall ensure that the laboratory has a clear procedure describing the process to:
 - (a) Uniquely identify evidence;
 - (b) Determine and identify workflow; and
 - (c) Assign and prioritize work.

• **10.51.05.02 B Licensee Handling Evidence**

B. Identifying and Handling Evidence. A licensee shall:

- (1) Ensure that each item of evidence received by the forensic laboratory:
 - (a) Is permanently marked and includes a unique identifier either on the:
 - (i) Evidence itself; or
 - (ii) Proximal container of the evidence; and
 - (b) Has a documented record that includes the:
 - (i) Identity of the evidence submitter;
 - (ii) Date the item of evidence was submitted; and
 - (iii) Description of the item of evidence submitted;
- (2) Establish and follow a procedure to identify evidence that cannot be marked or identified as set forth in §B(1) of this regulation;
- (3) Ensure all items produced during a forensic analysis or examination are:
 - (a) Marked with a unique identifier that can be traced back to the original evidence;

- (b) Appropriately packaged;
- (c) Documented in case notes, reports, and the evidence tracking system; and
- (d) Packed with the original evidence when applicable or a disposition will be noted;
- (4) Ensure documentation of the date of receipt of each test item and evidence;
- (5) Establish, maintain, and follow a procedure to define proper packaging and sealing of evidence requiring that:
 - (a) Evidentiary seals:
 - (i) Are initialed or marked by the person sealing the evidence; and
 - (ii) Prevent the evidence from being removed, lost, altered, or contaminated; and
 - (b) Evidence is protected from:
 - (i) Loss;
 - (ii) Cross-contamination; and
 - (iii) Any harmful change; and
- (6) Consider evidence containers properly sealed only if:
 - (a) The contents cannot readily escape; and
 - (b) Entering the container results in obvious damage or alteration to the container or the container's seal.

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 - (b) Evidence is protected from:
 - (i) Loss;

- (ii) *Cross-contamination; and*
- (iii) *Any harmful change;*

(6) *Consider evidence containers properly sealed only if:*

- (a) *The contents cannot readily escape; and*
- (b) *Entering the container results in obvious damage or alteration to the container or the container's seal; and*

(7) *Clearly mark an item that is not evidence but is stored in an evidence storage area.*

- **10.51.05.04 A6(b)iii Quality Control Program**

A. A licensee shall:

(6) Ensure that a reagent used for a forensic analysis:

- (a) Is tested for reliability before being put into use;**
- (b) Is identified with the:**
 - (i) Name of the reagent;**
 - (ii) Lot number or date the reagent was prepared; and**
 - (iii) Expiration date;**

(Note no change to current 10.51.05.04 A6(b)iii Quality Control Program)

- **10.51.05.05 C3 Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOPM)**

C. A licensee shall develop, establish, maintain, implement, and require that technical procedures meet the following:

(3) A document control procedure to determine when a technical procedure has been discontinued or retired;

10.51.05.05 C3 Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOPM)

C. A licensee shall develop, establish, maintain, implement, and require that technical procedures meet the following:

(3) All discontinued technical procedures are signed by the laboratory director when the technical procedure is retired and include the date of discontinuance;

- **10.51.05.07 C4 Validation and Performance Checks**

C. A licensee shall ensure that performance checks, if applicable, are performed:

(4) As needed as determined by the laboratory director or the laboratory director's designee.

10.51.05.07 C4 Validation and Performance Checks

*C. A licensee shall ensure that performance checks, if applicable, are performed:
(4) As needed as determined by the technical leader.*

• **10.51.05.08 C1-2 Examination and Analysis**

C. Examinations and Analysis by Subcontractors.

(1) All subcontractors shall be licensed as a forensic laboratory in the State, regardless of location, unless a waiver has been obtained for a rare or unique test as required by COMAR 10.51.03.01A(4).

(2) A licensee shall ensure:

- (a) The customer who ordered the analyses is notified of the laboratory's intention to subcontract specific services for testing;**
- (b) All subcontractors issue reports only to the forensic laboratory that ordered the testing; and**
- (c) All remaining evidence is returned to the forensic laboratory by the subcontractor.**

(Note no change to current 10.51.05.08 C1-2 Examination and Analysis)

• **10.51.05.09 C4 Test Reports- General**

C. A licensee shall ensure that test reports:

(4) Utilize a page numbering system that includes either the total number of pages or a mark to signify the end of the document.

10.51.05.09 C4 Test Reports- General

C. A licensee shall ensure that test reports:

(4) Utilize a page numbering system that includes the total number of pages.

• **10.51.05.09 D2-4 Test Reports- General**

D. A licensee shall ensure that amended reports:

- (2) Reference the original report;**
- (3) Are placed or associated with the original report in the case file; and**
- (4) Are provided to the customers.**

10.51.05.09 D2-4 Test Reports- General

D. A licensee shall ensure that amended reports:

- (2) Reference the date of the original report;*
- (3) Are placed or associated with the original report in the case file; and*
- (4) Are provided to the customers.*

- **10.51.05.10 B5 Employee Training and Competency**

10.51.05.10 B5 Employee Training and Competency will be REMOVED

10.51.05.10 B5 Employee Training and Competency

B. A licensee shall ensure that available to all technical employees is a discipline-specific training program that includes:

- (5) Expectations of job performance;*

- **10.51.05.12 B2 Case Records**

B. In regard to examination documents, a licensee shall ensure that:

- (2) If examination documents consist of multiple pages, a page numbering system that includes either the total number of pages or a mark signifying the end of the document is used;**

10.51.05.12 B2 Case Records

B. In regard to examination documents, a licensee shall ensure that:

- (2) If examination documents consist of multiple pages, a page numbering system that includes the total number of pages is used;*

- **10.51.05.15 A3 Facilities**

10.51.05.15 A3 Facilities will be REMOVED

10.51.05.15 A3 Facilities

A. Facility Administration. A licensee shall ensure that a laboratory:

(3) Has a fire detection system;

- **10.51.05.15 C3-8 Facilities-Safety**

C. Safety. A licensee shall:

- (2) Designate an employee as the safety officer with responsibilities defined by the licensee;**
- (3) Have appropriate safety policies and procedures;**
- (4) Demonstrate appropriate safety policies and procedures;**
- (5) Have appropriate safety devices and equipment available and in close proximity to the appropriate areas; and**
- (6) Be in compliance with all federal, State, and local regulations regarding the handling and disposal of infectious materials, chemicals, radioactive materials, sharps, and glassware.**

10.51.05.15 C3-8 Facilities- Safety

C. Safety. A licensee shall:

- (2) Designate an employee as the safety officer with responsibilities defined by the licensee;*
- (3) Have safety devices and equipment, e.g., goggles, gloves, face protectors, ear protectors, and fire extinguishers, available and in close proximity to the appropriate areas;*
- (4) Have a safety shower, eye washes, and exhaust hoods available in close proximity to the appropriate areas;*
- (5) Have appropriate equipment and materials available for handling and storing hazardous and toxic substances and remediating spills of those substances;*
- (6) Ensure first aid kits and employees trained in first aid are available;*
- (7) Ensure adequate space is provided for the safe storage of volatile, flammable, explosive, and otherwise hazardous materials; and*
- (8) Be in compliance with all federal, State, and local regulations regarding the handling and disposal of infectious materials, chemicals, radioactive materials, sharps, and glassware.*

- **10.51.06.07 B11 Director—Specific Duties and Responsibilities**

A forensic laboratory director shall:

B. Ensure that:

(11) A case file is maintained for a minimum of 10 years

COMAR 10.51.06.07 B11

A forensic laboratory director shall:

B. Ensure that:

(11) A case file is maintained for a minimum of 10 years after the case is officially closed

• **10.51.06.14 A-B Forensic Analysis Employees- Requirement**

A licensee shall ensure:

A. The forensic laboratory has at least one individual who meets the employee qualification requirements of this chapter, to perform the functions set forth in this chapter, for the type of forensic tests and examinations performed in the laboratory; and

B. Technical reviews of case files and reports are conducted as determined by the Director or applicable standards.

10.51.06.14 Forensic Analysis Employees- Requirement

A licensee shall ensure that a forensic laboratory has a sufficient number of individuals who meet the employee qualification requirements of this chapter, to perform the functions set forth in this chapter, for the volume and type of forensic tests and examinations performed in the laboratory.

• **10.51.06.17 E Employee Responsibilities- Specific**

E. Be capable of identifying a problem that may adversely affect performance of a forensic analysis or reporting of a forensic analysis result, and follow the laboratory policy and procedure for addressing nonconforming testing.

10.51.06.17 E2 Employee Responsibilities- Specific

E. Be capable of identifying a problem that may adversely affect performance of a forensic analysis or reporting of a forensic analysis result and either:

(1) Correct the problem; or

(2) Immediately notify the quality assurance manager and technical leader or the director that there is a problem.

B. Moving Forward with Some Changes to COMAR 10.51

Renee Webster explained that the proposed changes will take some time to go through the Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive and Legislative Review (AELR) process before the changes are even posted online for public comment.

Karin Athanas asked an approximation of how long this process would take?

Ms. Webster responded with about a 90 day approximation, explaining the changes have to be approved first by our Assistant AG, Paul Ballard, at OHCQ and signed off by OHCQ's Director, Dr. Tricia Nay. Next the changes have to go to the AG's office and then signed off by the Secretary of DHMH, Van Mitchell. Finally, the changes go to the AELR for review, and if no changes need to be made to the language, then it will be posted to the Maryland Register Online website for public comment for 30 days. DHMH OHCQ is responsible for responding back to any public comments made. If there are no significant public comments made (meaning comments do not require an additional language change), then the final changes will be published in the Maryland Register approximately two to three weeks later. If there are public comments which require any changes to the language, then the whole process starts all over again.

Theresa DeAngelo informed the group that she would keep everyone updated via email in regards to where the language change process is for the next few months.

V. Discussion of Director's Qualifications and Possible COMAR 10.51 Changes

Theresa DeAngelo informed the group that an email discussion thread was passed to the FLAC members in January 2015 to come to a census as to whether or not the Director's Qualifications should be changed in COMAR 10.51. In the email there were options to add Master degree types such as Business Management and Criminal Justice. There was even a suggestion to allow the FLAC to vote on a Waiver for an individual's qualifications if that person is in consideration for a Director's position. Ms. DeAngelo informed the group that after a discussion with the OHCQ Assistant AG, Paul Ballard, it was determined that the Waiver option steps beyond the responsibilities that the FLAC were tasked with according to Maryland Health General §17-2A, and would not be an option to pursue.

Comments provided from the FLAC from the email feed are listed below:

- I feel strongly that there should not be any differentiation between biology or chemistry disciplines and pattern evidence disciplines. The major problems identified in the NAS report relating to the pattern evidence disciplines came about because for too long there were no such requirements and police employees without formal scientific education were put into leadership positions. It is expected that there will be backlash from the agencies that are being asked to adapt but that is not a reason to change the qualifications. The smaller agencies need to decide if they want to continue to operate and if so then they are going to have to shell out some money to improve their programs and attract a qualified director. If they decide they would rather drop their programs then more cases will be sent to the state lab (my lab), but I would rather see that than to perpetuate the status quo. The only change that I would consider would be to adding a Business Management graduate degree to Section A. I would not support adding a Criminal Justice graduate degree though. Thanks.
- Disagree, in-fact I would raise the requirement and require ABC Certification in Comprehensive Crimianlistics and more years and some specific definitions for what managing means or supervising.

However, I feel their pain, but I think that if Departments want to run forensic services then they have to meet the standard. I wouldn't be surprised if a move like that might

encourage some departments who get annoyed with ISO criteria to yank the disciplines from the crime lab and put them under sworn so they don't have to meet ISO criteria but instead state license criteria, which isn't going to be the same process.

I think any changes in the direction of lessening criteria is going backwards to what the trend is and what everyone is trying to do in forensic science.

I Echo that, and I would actually also say that if a Master's in Business is added, of any kind, then there should be an addition that the Bachelor's must be in a science.

- I concur with changing to **1)** Change to:

A director of a forensic laboratory shall:

A. Hold an earned master's or doctoral degree from an accredited institution in:

- (1) Forensic science;*
- (2) Criminal justice;*
- (3) Business management;*
- (4) A natural science such as chemistry, physics, or biology; or*
- (5) A subspecialty of a natural science such as organic chemistry, biochemistry, or molecular biology; and*

- I agree with the previous comments on the need for a qualified director regardless of discipline. Would it be possible to create various pathways by which that qualification can be evaluated? By that I mean, the higher and more applicable the degree of the candidate, the less experience required. An unrelated Master's degree should have at least a Bachelor's degree in a applicable Science with a much higher amount of experience than that for a candidate holding a doctorate in Forensic or a related field.
- I believe that we should retain some flexibility for exceptional circumstances. I agree with most of the group that we should not have multiple standards for different types of labs, and should retain the current qualifications in the standards. I think there should also be a provision for the FLAC to vote on an individual to waive the requirement in a specific set of circumstances, like the one presented to us at the last meeting.

I think the solution proposed as 2) C would most closely represent my point of view. If the individual has the requisite experience as described in B, the committee could vote to make an exception to the educational requirements expressed in A on a case-by-case basis.

- In general I will defer to the consensus of the group on this, but I am not in favor of granting exceptions to requirements as it opens a door to other requests from licensed laboratories and makes it very difficult for the accreditation bodies to enforce requirements. Additionally, it creates additional issues with overseeing the exception – what if staffing changes and the laboratory no longer complies or a new exception is needed – what will be the turn around? Will licensure be withdrawn during this period, etc.

If the group determines that the current requirements must be broadened, this should be done in the regulations rather than granting a one-time exception. All laboratories should be held to the same requirements and those that foresee issues with complying, must begin now developing a plan and taking action to ensure compliance.

I know this is a hard-line view, but with 2000+ customers, A2LA does not grant exceptions to a requirement for one customer – we make it a universal change or we ask the one customer to take steps to reach compliance.

The group continued to discuss the Director's Qualifications in COMAR 10.51, and how some smaller laboratories may face issues with hiring someone as a Director who has a Master's degree. Also there is the issue that the sunset on the Qualifications in COMAR 10.51 ends December 31, 2018. There is no sunset for anyone who was a Director as of December 31, 2011. The sunset only applies to any position where an

exception was allowed after that date, to give the person time to complete the education or experience required for that position.

Several suggestions were made including recruiting a part time or contractual Director who would be identified in the organizational chart but would still have a full time qualified program manager oversee the daily operations of the laboratory. COMAR 10.51 states the Director, however named or assigned, would be ultimately responsible for all laboratory activities, administration, and issues.

The 2009 NAS report, “Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward” was mentioned again in the meeting, and how the report concluded that disciplines like latent prints, tire tread, shoe wear, and other impression evidence needed to improve their scientific backing. The report was mentioned due to its impact on the forensic community and how forensic/crime labs were forced to look at moving in a complete scientific direction for all forensic disciplines (including the impression evidence areas).

To briefly summarize the NAS report, many recommendations were suggested; some structural (like the creation of an independent federal entity to oversee the field) and some concerned accreditation of crime labs, certification of examiners, and standardization of procedures. Other recommendations were directed at research and specifically the need for scientific validation studies on techniques such as fingerprint examinations and firearms/toolmark exams.

(The full text can be read at this site: www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/228091.pdf)

Overall, the group seemed to agree that the Maryland Forensic Regulations were built to continue in an upward movement for all of forensic science, not to exclude a particular discipline from any regulation or qualifications for staff.

Theresa DeAngelo stated that she would discuss with OHCQ’s Assistant AG over this issue, and to see to what extent COMAR 10.51 covers for a Director to be hired on part-time or as a consultant for a laboratory, in order for that laboratory to remain in compliance with the regulations. Ms. DeAngelo stated that she would continue to inform the group via email of any decisions or determinations resulting from this discussion with the Assistant AG.

At this time there are no proposed changes to the language in COMAR 10.51 regarding the Director’s Qualifications.

VI. Questions/ Issues Not Discussed

There were no additional questions or issues brought up at this time by the group.

X. Goals and Subject of Next Meeting

Theresa DeAngelo and Renee Webster suggested having the next FLAC meeting in May 2015. This meeting would focus on further discussion regarding the Director’s Qualification in COMAR 10.51

XI. Adjournment

A motion was made by to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 11:58 A.M.