



Jami Cook  
SECRETARY

# ARKANSAS STATE CRIME LABORATORY

**LITTLE ROCK**  
#3 Natural Resources Drive  
Little Rock AR 72205  
(501) 227-5747

**LOWELL**  
1120 West Monroe Avenue  
Lowell AR 72745  
(479) 365-8717

**HOPE**  
2500 South Main Street  
Hope AR 71802  
(870) 722-8530



Kermit B. Channell II  
DIRECTOR

## Arkansas State Crime Laboratory Board Meeting July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020

The Following Board members were present (GoToMeeting):

- Chuck Graham
- Josh Farmer
- Judge Brent Davis
- Chief Rick Elliott
- Sheriff Tim Helder
- Gary Smith
- Dr. Ian Birkett
- Dr. Eric Rosenbaum

The following persons were present:

- Director Kermit Channell
- Assistant Director Cindy Moran
- Ryan Black, Quality Assurance Manager
- Dr. Charles Kokes, Chief Medical Examiner
- B. Anne Cameron, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 11:03 a.m. by Chuck Graham. Roll call was taken by Chuck Graham as well. Eight members were present and a quorum was made.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Motion to adopt the minutes was made by Tim Helder and seconded by Josh Farmer. No discussion took place, all were in favor and the motion passed.

### **ASCL Update**

- A. Financial –
  - a. Operating Budget – Funding balances were expounded on by Kermit Channell
    - i. Asset Forfeiture Fund (1VM) - 5% less then FY 2019
    - ii. 788 DNA Special Revenue -
    - iii. ACT65 – 6% less then FY 2019
- B. Caseload Status(COVID-19)
  - a. Forensic Chemistry – Little Rock, Lowell, and Hope Labs – April thru June

- i. Little Rock- Cases decreased by 21% during this time period with about a two month turn around.
    - ii. Lowell – No drastic changes with a 5 month turn around. Transferring Lowell cases to Little Rock to stay on top of backlog. There is a need to hire more Forensic Chemist.
    - iii. Hope – They are down one Chemist and have about a 2 month turn around.
  - b. Toxicology –Little Rock and Lowell Labs
    - i. Little Rock – has less than a thirty day turn around. They are down one toxicologist.
    - ii. Lowell- has about a forty-five day turn around and we are transferring cases to Little Rock for more complex testing.
  - c. Physical Evidence – Little Rock
    - i. Physical Evidence lost 2 analysts to promotions. Slight increase in backlog. Turnaround time on sexual assaults has increased to 30-39 days while homicide turnaround time is about 36 days. Analysts will begin focusing on homicides and sexual assaults due to increase in crime rate and number of analyst to work these cases.
  - d. DNA –Little Rock
    - i. DNA has 3 analysts that will complete training at the end of the month. Slight increase in backlog due to loaning 4 DNA analyst to the Department of Health for COVID-19 testing. They are back now and we have received nothing but praise for their hard work from the Department of Health. Great job!
  - e. Trace – Little Rock
    - i. Doing a great job; focusing on gunshot residue as well as ignitable liquids. Also, 3 analysts are crossed-trained to help work serology cases.
  - f. Firearms –
    - i. Continuing to struggle- 2 analysts in training, focusing on homicides with about a 7 month turnaround.
  - g. Latent Prints –
    - i. Doing a great job! Turnaround time is around thirty days and that is where we want to be.
  - h. Digital Evidence-
    - i. Increase in turnaround time due to losing a supervisor and an examiner.
  - i. CODIS-
    - i. Doing really well. Virtual training coming soon.
  - j. Medical Examiner's -
    - i. Drastic increase in the number of homicides recently; however by consulting more with coroners and law enforcement this is helping to cut back on the number of autopsies' being conducted. ME's is trying to eliminate cases that come in only for an external exam, head exam, or

cases where a medical history that would support a particular cause of death.

- C. Analyst Retention –
  - a. Lost 8 scientists in the first two quarters. Working hard on our culture here at the lab.
  - b. Hopefully will know soon when we can start aggressively recruiting new positions.
- D. Renovating/Construction-
  - a. We are renovating the third floor to give DNA office space and will allow some expansion in Toxicology as well. Expected completion is at the end of August this year.
- E. New Business –
  - a. Merit Performance Pay – DPS made the decision for us here at the lab as to the ratings.
  - b. Covid-19 – We are social distancing, still have some areas with shift work, and we are trying to have fun with our employees to keep up morale.
- F. Meeting Adjourned.