

**Texas Forensic Science Commission
Minutes from October 29, 2007 Meeting in Austin, Texas**

Members Present: Eisenberg, Bassett, Hamilton, Natarajan, Adams and Hampton
Members Absent: Levy (excused due to capital trial)

Amanda Bilnoski and Christie Davidson of SHSU provided information and forms regarding travel reimbursements, etc.

It was decided by a unanimous vote that TFSC should have a full time legal assistant employee, level 2 or higher. **Hampton** and **Hamilton** agreed to provide Ms. Davidson/SHSU with a position/job description so that they could begin to coordinate a search and posting for the position through SHSU. The home office for TFSC will be located at SHSU. It was also decided unanimously that the position would be a full time position. Further, **Hamilton** and **Hampton** agreed to act as liaisons with the human resources person(s) at SHSU to interview, etc. It was discussed that is acceptable, for purposes of the Open Meetings Act, for commission members to review applications/resume's but discussions of personnel decisions should be made in commission meetings only.

It was discussed that the TFSC needs its own website. **Eisenberg** has agreed to work with SHSU staff and the SHSU "webmaster" to get information on what is needed and how long it will take to get a website up and running.

It was also discussed that we should have a toll free phone number.

There was discussion of open meetings act/open records act training.

There was a lengthy discussion of procedures, etc. for moving forward with the substantive work. The enabling statute for TFSC was reviewed. Much work needs to be done regarding the "process" for TFSC to initiate for the review and handling of complaints so that our work can begin in earnest in 2008. **Bassett** agreed to work with **Levy** to draft a process by which we might handle the screening of complaints as soon as possible. This process should be discussed, modified and approved by the full TFSC at future meetings. A representative from the Innocence Project attending the meeting agreed to provide the TFSC with information regarding other similar entities and their processes (i.e. New York, Minnesota).

The issue of the efficacy of TFSC without subpoena power, etc. – was discussed. It was determined that if TFSC could investigate and/or attempt to investigate a claim or claims – the experience of our initial investigation may provide persuasive facts to lobby the Legislature in 2009 to expand TFSC powers to compel cooperation by laboratories and/or individuals under investigation.

Eisenberg agreed to talk to Pat Johnson of DPS regarding the accreditation process and the census on accredited labs in Texas.

Natarajan agreed to work on the contracting for outside bids process/budget for TFSC. He also agreed to contact Doris Scott at the Governor's office regarding outstanding appointment(s) to TFSC.

Bassett agreed to send out copies of the existing complaints that have been received by TFSC to members of the commission prior to the next meeting.

Eisenberg reported on his attendance at the House Committee on General Investigation and Ethics meeting in Houston on August 20, 2007. Discussion of the appointment of a Special Master followed.

Barbara Deane of the AG's office attended and agreed to update TFSC on the vacancy on TFSC (note: since the meeting, Ms. Deane has reported that the AG appointed Dr. Richard Ward of SHSU).

The next meeting is to be held in Houston on December 7, 2007, beginning at 9:30 a.m.