

# HOUSE BUDGET REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE ON JUSTICE, PUBLIC SAFETY, & JUDICIARY (H)

## Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the 2023 Regular Session

February 28, 2023

### Call to Order and Roll Call

The 3rd meeting of the House Budget Review Subcommittee on Justice, Public Safety, & Judiciary (H) was held on February 28, 2023, at 12:00 PM in Room 169 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Patrick Flannery, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

### Present were:

Members: Representative Patrick Flannery, Chair; Representative Jennifer Decker, Representative Nima Kulkarni, and Representative Scott Sharp.

Guests: Dr. Bill Ralston, Chief Medical Examiner, Office of the State Medical Examiner; and Rebecca Norton, Budget Director, Justice and Public Safety Cabinet.

LRC Staff: Zach Ireland, Perry Papka, and Benjamin Thompson.

### Approval of Minutes

Representative Sharp made the motion to approve the minutes from the February 21, 2023, meeting of the subcommittee. Representative Decker seconded the motion and the minutes were approved without objection.

### Update - Office of the State Medical Examiner, Staffing Issues and Northern Kentucky Office

Dr. Ralston and Ms. Norton provided a brief update on staff recruitment and retention as well as the status of the closed northern Kentucky branch of the Office of the State Medical Examiner (OSME).

In response to questions from Chair Flannery, Dr. Ralston noted that salary increases in 2022 Regular Session House Bill 1 allowed the OSME to hire five additional autopsy technicians. Dr. Ralston noted that there is a shortage of forensic pathologists across the country, heightening competition for their services. The OSME has been able to retain all existing pathologists since the salary increase went into effect, while successfully recruiting one additional pathologist. Ms. Norton stated that the OSME is working with Northern Kentucky University (NKU) to modify an existing building on the NKU campus to accommodate a northern Kentucky office for the OSME. Ms. Norton said that there was no estimated completion date for renovations.

### Adjournment

There being no further business before the subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:11 PM.