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Report on the Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

May 10, 2016

Jeanette Merrill, Legislative Financial Analyst
Cirilhen Francisco, Unit Head

Finance Division

Latonia McKinney, Director
Regina Poreda Ryan, Deputy Director
Nathan Toth, Deputy Director
Paul Scimone, Deputy Director
Emre Edev, Assistant Director

Executive Budget Summary

- **Expense Budget Overview.** The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME or the Office) is housed in the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH or the Department). OCME's Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget totals \$68.3 million, an increase of \$3.9 million, or six percent, compared to the \$64.4 million Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget. OCME expenditures represent approximately five percent of the Department's \$1.49 billion Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget.
 - City tax-levy (CTL) accounts for the entirety of the Office's \$68.3 million Fiscal 2017 expense budget. CTL also comprised the entirety of the Office's Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget. Due to the staff-intensive nature of the Office's work, Personal Services (PS) account for 76 percent of the total OCME budget at \$52 million and Other Than Personal Services (OTPS) account for 24 percent of the budget at \$16.5 million.
 - The Department's headcount increased by 27 positions between the Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget and the Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget to 668 positions, a four percent increase.
- **Executive Budget Changes.** The Executive Budget includes \$1.8 million for OCME new needs in Fiscal 2017 and more than \$178,000 in deductions for other adjustments. The Office's new needs include:
 - **\$233,000** for fentanyl testing to regularly test for the presence of the synthetic opioids in the OCME Toxicology Lab;
 - **\$616,000** for forensic toxicology to increase staffing and supplies and improve laboratory operations; and
 - **\$964,000** for mortuary security to increase the Office's security contract.
- **Capital Budget.** The Fiscal 2017 Executive Capital Commitment Plan includes \$57.7 million for Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, representing approximately 16 percent of DOHMH's \$367.8 million Fiscal 2016-2020 Plan. The Office's funding supports improvements to OCME facilities and IT infrastructure Citywide. The Fiscal 2017 Plan increases funding for the following projects:
 - **\$5.3 million** to upgrade OCME Queens Hospital Campus infrastructure; and
 - **\$262,000** to upgrade the OCME Manhattan Evidence Unit heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system.

OCME Overview

This report reviews the Office's Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget. The following section details changes to the agency's budget during the course of Fiscal 2016, followed by a review of the significant budget actions introduced in the Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget. The report then provides analyses and highlights of the Office's expense budget and Capital Commitment Plan for the Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget. The appendix outlines changes to the Fiscal 2016 and Fiscal 2017 Budgets since the adoption of the Fiscal 2016 Budget. For additional information on the Office's budget and its various programs, please refer to the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget Report for OCME at: <http://council.nyc.gov/html/budget/2017/pre/816%20OCME.pdf>

OCME Spending	2014	2015	2016	Executive Plan		*Difference
	Actual	Actual	Adopted	2016	2017	2016 - 2017
<i>Dollars in Thousands</i>						
Personal Services						
Full-Time Salaried - Civilian	\$38,482	\$39,561	\$43,711	\$46,659	\$45,177	\$1,466
Additional Gross Pay	2,305	2,745	256	1,704	1,447	1,192
Amounts to be Scheduled	0	0	1,676	0	1,392	(284)
Fringe Benefits	162	167	18	178	160	142
Overtime - Civilian	2,776	4,531	1,952	2,503	3,584	1,632
Unsalaries & Other Salaried	166	99	1,337	1,340	98	(1,239)
TOTAL	\$43,891	\$47,104	\$48,950	\$52,383	\$51,857	\$2,907
Other Than Personal Services						
Contractual Services	\$5,432	\$4,737	\$3,689	\$7,577	\$4,326	\$637
Other Services & Charges	8,037	7,352	7,888	7,785	6,621	(1,267)
Property & Equipment	2,722	2,358	246	1,957	496	250
Supplies & Materials	5,698	4,962	3,588	5,743	5,014	1,426
Fixed & Misc. Charges	27	26	8	10	8	0
TOTAL	\$21,916	\$19,436	\$15,419	\$23,072	\$16,465	\$1,046
Funding						
City Funds			\$64,369	\$64,375	\$68,322	\$3,953
Federal - Other			0	9,651	0	0
Other Categorical			0	15	0	0
State			0	1,416	0	0
TOTAL	\$65,806	\$66,540	\$64,369	\$75,455	\$68,322	\$3,953
Full-Time Salaried Civilian	554	569	641	667	668	27

*The difference of Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget compared to Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget.

The City's Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget totals \$82.2 billion, \$2.1 billion more than the Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget of \$80.1 billion. City funds (City tax-levy and non-tax revenues) total \$59.4 billion, when compared to the Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget amount of \$56.9 billion. The Office's Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget of \$68.3 million is \$3.9 million greater than the Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget of \$64.4 million, which is attributable to a \$2.9 million increase in Personal Services (PS) and a \$1 million increase in Other Than Personal Services (OTPS).

Since the adoption of the Fiscal 2016 Budget, several actions have affected the Office's budget and headcount. The Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget included \$2 million to conduct DNA testing of all guns swabbed by the New York Police Department (NYPD) in order to support criminal investigations, allocating 21 new positions for the initiative. In addition, State funding increased by \$1.4 million and federal funding increased by \$9.7 million since Adoption, representing mid-year increases typical for the Office.

New in the Executive Budget

The Office's Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget increased by more than \$1.6 million to \$68.3 million when compared to the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget of \$66.7 million, a two percent increase. The \$1.6 million net increase is attributable to \$1.8 million in new needs funding and \$178,000 in other adjustments reductions. The OCME headcount also increased by six positions between the Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget and the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget to 668 positions. The Executive Budget includes the following new needs.

- *Fentanyl Testing.* The Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget allocates \$233,000 in CTL for fentanyl testing to regularly test for the presence of the synthetic opioid in bodies examined in the OCME Toxicology Lab. DOHMH's Executive Budget includes a total of \$5.5 million in new needs to address the opioid epidemic, including the fentanyl testing component. Fentanyl, which looks like heroin, is a powerful synthetic painkiller that has been laced into heroin but is increasingly being sold by itself—often without the user's knowledge. Fentanyl is up to 50 times more powerful than heroin and up to 100 times more potent than morphine. Special toxicological testing is needed to detect fentanyl in drug overdose deaths, but most coroners and state crime labs did not run those tests unless they had a specific reason.
- *Forensic Toxicology.* The Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget allocates \$616,000 in CTL and six positions to the Forensic Toxicology Laboratory (FTL) to improve laboratory operations. FTL conducts post-mortem analyses to determine the absence or presence of drugs and other toxic substances in human fluids and tissues and evaluates their role as a determinant or contributory factor in the cause and manner of death. The laboratory also analyzes sexual assault and motor vehicle cases submitted by law enforcement agencies to determine the absence or presence of ethanol and other drugs and evaluate their role in modifying human performance or behavior.

Toxicology case completion times rose sharply at OCME for the first four months of Fiscal 2016, when compared to the same period of the previous year, from 38 days to 164 days. The Office reports that these increases were primarily due to the retirement of the Forensic Toxicology Laboratory director and assistant director in late Fiscal 2015 and the hiring of an internationally recognized expert to serve as director. In addition, the Laboratory began an operational improvement project in Fiscal 2016 to reduce case backlogs and turnaround times while maintaining quality.

- *Increased Mortuary Security.* The Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget allocates \$964,000 in CTL to increase the OCME mortuary security contract. OCME changed mortuary operations in June 2015 in order to enhance services to families and improve operational effectiveness. All mortuary services, including autopsies, were transferred and distributed among OCME's three primary, centralized locations in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens. As part of the changes, Bronx mortuary operations were transferred to Manhattan and Queens, and Staten Island mortuary operations were transferred to Brooklyn.

Regarding the current fiscal year, the Executive Budget includes a \$42,500 net decrease in other adjustments in Fiscal 2016, producing negligible effects on the \$75.5 million budget. Financial plan headcount adjustments increased the Fiscal 2016 OCME headcount by 26 positions to 667 positions.

OCME Capital Program

Capital Commitment Plan

The Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget Capital Commitment Plan includes \$367.8 million in Fiscal 2016-2020 for the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (including City and Non-City funds). The Plan allocates \$57.7 million to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, approximately 16 percent of the Department’s budget. The Office’s Executive Commitment Plan for Fiscal 2016-2020 equals the funding scheduled in the Preliminary Commitment Plan; increased funding to improve OCME facilities and infrastructure offset decreases in funding to purchase various equipment and services.

The majority of capital projects span multiple fiscal years; therefore, it remains common practice for an agency to roll unspent capital funds into future fiscal years. In Fiscal 2015, DOHMH committed \$51.5 million, or 66 percent, of its annual capital plan. Therefore, it is assumed that a significant portion of the agency’s Fiscal 2016 Capital Plan will be rolled into Fiscal 2017, increasing the size of the Fiscal 2016-2020 Capital Plan as detailed in the following chart.

DOHMH 2016-2020 Capital Commitment Plan						
<i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Executive Plan	\$95,459	\$68,007	\$129,953	\$48,570	\$25,851	\$367,840
Preliminary Plan	\$113,748	\$129,395	\$47,763	\$40,634	\$25,851	\$357,391
Change	(\$18,289)	(\$61,388)	\$82,190	\$7,936	\$0	\$10,449
Percentage Change	(16%)	(47%)	172%	20%	0%	3%

Source: OMB Fiscal 2017 Executive Capital Commitment Plan

Executive Budget Highlights

- Queens Annex Phase.** The Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget Capital Commitment Plan includes \$5.3 million for the design and construction of the OCME Queens site—to be completed in June of 2021. The Plan allocates \$1 million for design, to be completed in June of 2018, and \$4.3 million for construction through 2020. The Plan includes \$2.5 million for construction in 2020.
- Manhattan Evidence Unit.** The Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget Capital Commitment Plan allocates \$262,000 to upgrade the heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system in the OCME Manhattan Evidence Unit. The Plan provides \$74,000 for design, to be completed in August of 2016, and \$188,000 for construction, to be completed by June of 2017.

The following chart outlines the OCME capital projects included in the Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget Capital Commitment Plan.

Project ID description	FY 16-10 Executive	FY 16-10 Preliminary	Change
Borough Security Installation	\$2	\$2	\$0
City Council Fund for Toxicology Equipment	\$2,855	\$2,855	\$0
Equipment	\$695	\$695	\$0
Evidence Unit HVAC Upgrades at 421 E. 26th St, Manh	\$262	\$0	\$262
Forensic Biology Laboratory Equipment	\$8,321	\$11,436	(\$3,115)
Histology Department Laboratory Equipment	\$664	\$664	\$0
IT Upgrade of Computers for OCME Sites	\$169	\$169	\$0
Laboratory Information Management System	\$901	\$1,106	(\$205)
Molecular Genetics Equipment Replacement	\$695	\$695	\$0
New Medical Examiner Facility	\$25,659	\$25,921	(\$262)
Purchase of IT Equipment & Services	\$6,969	\$8,922	(\$1,953)
Purchase of Robotics and Sequencing Systems	\$239	\$239	\$0
Queens Annex Phase	\$5,273	\$0	\$5,273
Replacement of Forensic Lab Cyclers and Spectrometers	\$844	\$844	\$0
Replacement of Forensic Statistical Software for FBI	\$507	\$507	\$0
Replacement of Sandy Damaged IT Equipment	\$38	\$38	\$0
Upgrade of Core Network Switch at 599 Winthrop St, BK	\$83	\$83	\$0
Upgrade of VoIP System for OCME Sites	\$337	\$337	\$0
Vehicles Replacement	\$3,231	\$3,231	\$0
Total	\$57,744	\$57,744	\$0

Appendix 1: OCME Fiscal 2017 Budget Actions since Fiscal 2016 Adoption

<i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	FY 2016			FY 2017		
	City	Non-City	Total	City	Non-City	Total
OCME Budget as of 2016 Adopted Budget	\$64,369	\$0	\$64,369	\$64,531	\$0	\$64,531
New Needs						
OMCE - Gun Testing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,031	\$0	\$2,031
Other Adjustments						
Fiscal 2016 November Plan	\$84	\$7,393	\$7,477	\$101	\$0	\$101
Anthropology	14	-	14	-	-	-
Communications	37	-	37	-	-	-
Decedent Disposition	11	-	11	-	-	-
Emergency Management	30	-	30	-	-	-
Environmental Sanitation	37	-	37	-	-	-
Evidence	82	-	82	-	-	-
Facilities	25	-	25	24	-	24
Finance and Administration	68	-	68	-	-	-
Financial Plan Savings	(2,251)	-	(2,251)	-	-	-
Forensic Biology, Pathology	(331)	-	(331)	-	-	-
Health and Safety	25	-	25	-	-	-
Histology	40	-	40	-	-	-
Homeland Security Grants	-	1,000	1,000	-	-	-
Identification	43	-	43	-	-	-
Information Technology	87	-	87	-	-	-
Materials, Records Management	39	-	39	-	-	-
Medical Legal Investigations	184	-	184	-	-	-
Molecular Genetics	29	-	29	-	-	-
Mortuary Operations	197	-	197	-	-	-
Motor Pool	152	-	152	-	-	-
National Institute of Justice	-	2,590	2,590	-	-	-
Not in Use, Other	26	-	26	-	-	-
Office of General Council, Director	61	-	61	-	-	-
Paul Coverdell State Grant	-	43	43	-	-	-
Photography	23	-	23	-	-	-
Security	1,223	-	1,223	-	-	-
Toxicology	128	-	128	-	-	-
World Trade Center	21	-	21	-	-	-
X-Ray	18	-	18	-	-	-
Subtotal, Other Adjustments	\$19	\$3,633	\$3,652	\$24	\$0	\$24
TOTAL, All Changes	\$103	\$11,026	\$11,129	\$125	\$0	\$125
OCME Budget as of Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Plan	\$64,472	\$11,026	\$75,498	\$66,687	\$0	\$66,687
New Needs						
Fentanyl Testing	-	-	-	\$233	-	\$233
Forensic Toxicology	-	-	-	616	-	616
Increased Mortuary Security	-	-	-	964	-	964
Subtotal, New Needs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,814	\$0	\$1,814
Other Adjustments						
Collective Bargaining Adjustments	\$31	-	\$31	\$33	-	\$33
Heat, Light and Power	(127)	-	(127)	(220)	-	(220)
Lease Adjustment	-	-	-	9	-	9
Other Adjustments	-	54	54	-	-	0
Subtotal, Other Adjustments	(\$97)	\$54	(\$43)	(\$178)	\$0	(\$178)
TOTAL, All Changes	(\$97)	\$54	(\$43)	\$1,636	\$0	\$1,636
OCME Budget as of Fiscal 2017 Executive Budget	\$64,375	\$11,080	\$75,455	\$68,322	\$0	\$68,322