



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

20
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: October 14, 2025

Title of Item: 2026-2027 Medical Examiner Contract

☐ REGULAR AGENDA ☒ CONSENT AGENDA ☐ INFORMATION ONLY	Action Requested: ☒ Approve/Deny Motion ☐ Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>	☐ Direction Requested ☐ Discussion Item ☐ Hold Public Hearing*
Submitted by: Sheriff Dan Guida		Department: Sheriff's Office
Presenter (Name and Title): Sheriff Dan Guida		Estimated Time Needed:
Summary of Issue: 2026-2027 Medical Examiner Services Contract Agreement - River Valley Forensic Services		
Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:		
Recommended Action/Motion: Recommendation to accept the Medical Examiner Agreement for 2026 - 2027 services. Please direct the Board Chair and County Administrator to sign and date on page 6 of the agreement		
Financial Impact: <i>Is there a cost associated with this request?</i> <i>What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$</i> <i>Is this budgeted?</i> ☒ Yes ☐ No ☒ Yes ☐ No <i>Please Explain:</i>		

MEDICAL EXAMINER CONTRACT AGREEMENT

Agreement entered into this 14th day of October, by and between the County of Aitkin, a political subdivision of the State of Minnesota, and River Valley Forensic Services, P.A. for the services of Dr. Kelly Mills, M.D. as Medical Examiner of Aitkin County.

I. Relationship of Parties

- A. Pursuant to County Board action that took place on October 14, 2025 and the authority of Minnesota Statutes Ch. 390, the board of Aitkin County commissioners designates Dr. Kelly Mills, M.D., as Medical Examiner for Aitkin County, hereinafter “the Medical Examiner.”
- B. It is agreed that nothing contained in the Agreement is intended or should be construed as creating the relationship of co-partners, joint ventures or an association or an employer/employee relationship between Aitkin County and Dr. Kelly Mills, M.D., River Valley Forensic Services, P.A., or their employees or designee. River Valley Forensic Services, P.A. is an independent contractor, and neither River Valley Forensic Services, P.A. it, its officers, agents or employees shall be considered agents or representatives of the County. The County is interested only in the results to be achieved. The manner and means of conducting the works are under the control of the Medical Examiner, except to the extent they are limited by statute or regulation and the express terms of this Agreement. None of the benefits provided by the County to its employees, including, without limitation, unemployment insurance, workers’ compensation insurance, retirement and deferred compensation plans, vacation and sick leave, are available from the County to the Medical Examiner, River Valley Forensic Services, P.A., or the employees, agents or contractors of either. No civil service status shall attach to the Medical Examiner, Medical Staff, agent of contractors of the Medical Examiner or River Valley Forensic Services, P.A. and the County shall make no deductions from sums payable under the terms of this Agreement for state or federal income taxes, FICA, PERA or other payroll type deductions which are associated with an employer-employee relationship.

II. Personnel

- A. The Medical Examiner will designate Dr. Kirstin Howell, Dr. Victor Froloff and Dr. Butch Huston to assist in performing the contract and shall be under the control and supervision of the Medical Examiner. Dr. Howell, Dr. Froloff and Dr. Huston shall not be considered employees of the County, nor have a contractual relationship with the County. The County shall be notified prior to the effective date of any changes thereto.
- B. The non-medical personnel necessary to support the Medical Examiner in

the performance of his duties under this Agreement shall be provided through the County Sheriff's Department. The compensation, benefits, and other terms of employment of these non-medical personnel shall be determined and paid solely by the county.

III. **Scope of Duties**

- A. The Medical Examiner shall be responsible for conducting a modern medico-legal investigative system for Aitkin County applying the standards of the National Association of Medical Examiners, as they may be amended from time to time. The Medical Examiner shall periodically consult with the County Attorney's Office, police agencies, and others concerned with forensic pathology to review procedures and formats for preparing medical reports and protocols. The Medical Examiner shall perform all duties imposed by Minnesota Statutes Chapter 390, as well as the duties imposed by other statutes applicable to the Medical Examiner's activities. The Medical Examiner shall testify, as required, at inquests, hearings and trials.
- B. The Medical Examiner shall be responsible for the final determination of the cause and manner of death, and the signing of certificates attesting the cause and manner of death. During the temporary absence of the Medical Examiner, a qualified person designated by the Medical Examiner may make the final determination of death, and sign a certificate attesting to the cause and manner of death.
- C. The Medical Examiner shall be entitled to perform other gainful activities which do not interfere with the performance of her duties hereunder.

IV. **Compensation**

- A. All payments made under this agreement for services rendered by or at the designation of Dr. Kelly Mills, M.D., shall be made to River Valley Forensic Services, P.A.
- B. The County will be responsible for the payment for each complete autopsy or external examination performed by Dr. Kelly Mills, M.D., or her assistants, as the Medical Examiner pursuant to this agreement and billed to Aitkin County upon completion of each examination in keeping with the past practice of the County Medical Examiner's Office.
- C. Compensation for the services under this contract shall be \$250.00/month plus the following on a per service basis: (1) complete forensic autopsy with basic toxicology, at approximately \$3,000, and (2) external examination with basic toxicology at approximately \$1000.

- D. Additionally, the County will be responsible for court related preparation / consultation and out of office charges, billed on an hourly basis of \$300/hr., including travel to and from Aitkin County in order to provide testimony in legal proceedings arising out of the duties of the Medical Examiner.

V. **Facilities**

The facility, together with all the necessary equipment, the supplies, shall be the responsibility of Dr. Kelly Mills, M.D. It is represented by Dr. Kelly Mills, M.D., and understood by the County that Ramsey County Morgue shall be available to Dr. Kelly Mills, M.D., for the performance of this agreement.

VI. **Insurance and Indemnification**

- A. River Valley Forensic Services, P.A. agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the County of Aitkin, its officials, employees and agents from any and all liability, loss or damage, that the County of Aitkin, its officials, employees and agents may suffer as a result of claims, demands, costs of judgments, including without limitation reasonable attorney's fees arising out of the provision of professional services by Dr. Kelly Mills, M.D., as the Medical Examiner of Aitkin County pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Ch. 390, provided, however, that this indemnification shall be limited to the extent of such claims, demands, costs or judgments, including, without limitation, reasonable attorney's fees are covered by insurance.
- B. The County of Aitkin agrees to indemnify and hold harmless River Valley Forensic Services, P.A., Dr. Kelly Mills, M.D., its and their agents, officers or employees from any and all liability, loss or damage, it, he, its agents, officers or employees may suffer as a result of claims, demands, costs or judgments, including without limitation reasonable attorney's fees, arising from the Medical Examiner's or his agents' performance of his or their duties under this Agreement.
- C. River Valley Forensic Services, P.A. shall obtain and keep in effect the following insurance coverage:
- 1) Comprehensive General Liability Insurance:
 - (a) Minimum Combined Single Limit
 - \$2,000,000 per occurrence
 - \$4,000,000 aggregate
 - (a) The following coverage must be specifically insured and certified with no internal sublimits.

1. Independent Contractors' Contingent Liability
2. Products/Completed Operations Liability
3. Contractual Liability
4. Personal Injury Liability including claims related to employment and coverage (a) through (e).
5. Broad Form Property Damage Liability, or deletion of the "Care, Custody and Control" Exclusion
6. Aircraft Liability (if applicable)
7. Watercraft Liability (if applicable)

(b) The Contractual Liability is to be either on a blanket basis for all written and oral contracts or specifically endorsed to acknowledge the contract between the insured and the County.

2. Professional Liability Insurance

Minimum Limits

\$2,000,000 per occurrence

\$4,000,000 aggregate

3. Automobile Liability Insurance on Vehicles Owned by River Valley Forensic Services, P.A., or Kelly Mills, M.D., Kirstin Howell, M.D., Victor Froloff, M.D., or Butch Huston, M.D.

- D. All certificates of insurance shall provide that the insurance company shall give the County thirty (30) days prior written notice of cancellation, non-renewal or any material changes in the policy.
- E. The above subparagraphs establish the minimum insurance requirements, and it is the sole responsibility of River Valley Forensic Services, P.A.. to purchase and maintain additional insurance that may be necessary in connection with this contract.
- F. The Medical Examiner shall provide a certificate of insurance to the County in a form acceptable to Aitkin County. All insurance policies shall be submitted to the County upon written request.
- G. Nothing in this contract shall constitute a waiver by the County of any statutory limits or exceptions on liability.

VII. Transportation

- A. Transportation of the deceased bodies from Aitkin County to the Ramsey County Morgue shall be the responsibility of Aitkin County.

VIII. Miscellaneous Provisions

- A. The Medical Examiner and all the members of the Medical Staff must be licensed to practice in Minnesota, with the Medical Examiner holding certification by the American Board of Pathology.
- B. At the termination of this Agreement, the Medical Examiner shall return all files, records and objects related to cases completed, or in progress, to the County upon written request.

IX. Term and Termination

- A. This agreement shall continue for a period ending 12/31/2027 unless terminated sooner pursuant hereto.
- B. This Agreement may be terminated by either party on forty-five (45) days written notice to the other.
- C. This Agreement may be renewed on an annual basis upon agreement of both parties.

X. Entire Agreement, Modification

- A. It is understood and agreed that the entire Agreement of the parties is contained herein, and that this Agreement supersedes all oral agreements and negotiations between the parties relating to the subject matter hereof, as well as any previous Agreements presently in effect between the parties relating to the subject matter hereof.
- B. This Agreement shall be altered, varied, modified or amended only in writing duly executed by the parties and attached hereto.

COUNTY OF AITKIN

(date)

By _____
Aitkin County Board Chair

(date)

By _____
Aitkin County Administrator

(date)

Kelly Mills, M.D.
Medical Examiner

River Valley Forensic Services, P.A.

(date)

By _____
Kelly Mills, President