

**MINUTES**  
**South Carolina State Board of Funeral Service**  
**Board Meeting**

10:00 a.m., August 31, 2023  
Synergy Business Park  
110 Centerview Drive, Kingstree Building  
Midlands Conference Room  
Columbia, South Carolina

**Thursday, August 31, 2023**

**Meeting Called to Order**

James P. Hodge, President, of Anderson, called the meeting of the South Carolina State Board of Funeral Service to order on August 31, 2023, at 10:03 a.m.

**A. Public Notice**

Mr. Hodge announced that public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the South Carolina State Board of Funeral Service office, Synergy Business Park, Kingstree building, and provided to all requesting persons, organizations, and news media in compliance with Section 30-4-80 of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. The meeting will be held via video and teleconference.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Hodge called for a motion to approve the agenda. He informed the Board that Mr. Nelson is unable to attend due to a business obligation.

**MOTION:** Mr. Price made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dickerson, which carried unanimously that the Board approves today's agenda with the modification to item #8.

**3. Introduction of Board Members and Staff Attending the Meeting**

The board members and staff attending the meeting introduced themselves.

**Board Members Present:**

James P. Hodge, President, of Anderson  
Gregory Evans, Secretary/Treasurer, of Newberry  
Michelle A. Cooper, of Moncks Corner  
Darryl Dickerson, of Goose Creek  
Dr. D'Michelle P. DuPre, of Chapin  
Landis D. Price, II, of Leesville  
Thomas J. Wright, of Beaufort  
Stoney W. Bachman, of Norway

**SCDLLR Staff Present:**

Donnell Jennings, Esq., Legal Services, Director of the Office of Investigations and Enforcement  
Kyle Tennis, Esq., Advice Counsel, Legal Services, Office of Advice Counsel  
Alexis Bell, Esq., Disciplinary Counsel, Legal Services, Office of Disciplinary Counsel  
Maggie Murdock, Program Manager,  
Amy Holleman, Board Executive  
Norma McAllister, Program Coordinator  
Shamone Breazeale, Administrative Assistant  
Robbie Dean, Lead Investigator, Legal Services - Investigations and Enforcement  
Jennifer Stillwell, Lead Inspector, Legal Services, Investigations, and Enforcement  
Matalie Mickens, Inspector, Legal Services - Investigations and Enforcement  
William “Buddy” Poole, Inspector, Legal Services - Investigations and Enforcement

**Members of the Public:**

Carmen Woodard  
Austin Woodard  
Henry Chandler  
Fernander Barr  
Jerome Greene  
Clinton Jackson  
Gracie Jackson  
Atu Williams,  
Adam Birr, South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs  
Tina Behles, Capital City Reporting, LLC

**4. Approval of Excused Absences**

Mr. Wayne K. Pratt, Sr. and Ms. Thoma L. Williams were not in attendance.

**MOTION:** Dr. DuPre made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dickerson which carried unanimously that the Board approves the absences.

**5. Approval of Excused Absences for IRC members**

Mr. Charlie “Brad” Evans, Ms. Elizabeth Simmons, and Mr. William B. Horton, Jr., were not in attendance for the IRC meeting.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cooper made a motion, seconded by Mr. Price, which passed unanimously to approve the absence.

**6. Approval of Minutes from the June 28 & 29, 2023 meetings**

The Board reviewed the minutes.

**MOTION:** Dr. DuPre made a motion, seconded by Mr. Evans, which passed unanimously to approve the minutes with the spelling of an applicant’s name corrected.

**7. President’s Remarks – James P. Hodge**

Mr. Hodge welcomed everyone.

**8. Presentation of Service Plaque**

- 1. Eddie J. Nelson

Mr. Nelson was unable to attend due to business obligations. The presentation will be rescheduled.

**9. Administrator’s Remarks – Amy Holleman**

**A. Financial Report**

Ms. Holleman reported that the Board’s cash balance as of June 30, 2023 was \$-135,131.18.

**B. Updates – Funeral Establishments**

**Funeral Establishment Change of Managers**

FE#	Name of Funeral Establishment (FE) -location	Name of Former Manager		Name of New Manager		Effective Date
916	GIBERT MORTUARY	KING DAVID GILBERT	FD.1803	JAMES O GILBERT	FD.2427	08/09/2023
252	DIAL-MURRAY FUNERAL HOME	MICHELLE A COOPER	FDE.1997	GAGE STEVEN COOPER	FDE.4429	08/18/2023
328	DIAL-MURRAY FUNERAL HOME	MICHELLE A. COOPER	FDE.1997	GAGE STEVEN COOPER	FDE.4429	08/18/2023

Ms. Holleman informed the Board that since June 29, 2023, staff issued:

<u>Apprentice Certificates</u>			<u>Student Certificates</u>			<u>Licenses</u>		
FDE	FD	EMB	FDE	FD	EMB	FDE	FD	EMB
5	7	3	1	0	0	9	6	0

Amy introduced the newest Funeral Service staff member, Shamone Breazeale.

**10. Reports**

**A. Inspection Report – Matalie Mickens**

Ms. Mickens and Mr. Poole conducted 81 inspections between June 17, 2023 and August 17, 2023.

**B. Investigative Review Committee (IRC) Report**

Mr. Dean presented the IRC recommendations to the Board, which are to dismiss cases 2022-109, 2022-113, 2022-114, 2022-115, 2023-25, 2023-26, 2023-27, 2023-34, and 2023-35; issue a letter of caution for cases 2020-97 and 2020-98.

Mr. Hodge called for a motion in this matter.

**MOTION:** Mr. Price made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dickerson, to approve the IRC recommendations. The motion carried unanimously.

**C. Office of Investigations and Enforcement (OIE) Report**

Mr. Dean presented the report stating that the Office of Investigation and Enforcement received 82 complaints between January 2, 2023 and August 21, 2023. There were twenty-three (23) active investigations; six (6) pending IRC; fourteen (14) closed; eighteen (18) do not open; ten (10) pending further review/information; and eleven (11) pending legal/agreements.

**D. Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) Report**

Ms. Bell presented the ODC report to the Board stating that as of August 24, 2023, there were thirty-nine (39) open cases; thirty-five (35) pending hearings and agreements; eight (8) closed and one (1) appeal.

## Applications

### Application Hearings

#### 11. Funeral Establishment

These proceedings were recorded by a court reporter in order to produce a verbatim transcript should one be necessary.

##### A. Change of Ownership

###### 1. The Serenity Mortuary – Summerville – Andre Lamont Locke

Mr. Dickerson recused himself from this matter. Mr. Andre L. Locke and Mr. Shannon DeLoach appeared before the Board on behalf of Serenity Mortuary, LLC.

Ms. Holleman informed the Board that the application is complete and that Mr. Locke is asking that the Board approve the change of ownership of Serenity Mortuary, LLC with him as the manager of record and that the Board allows the facility to maintain the current license number. Mr. Locke, license number FD.3890, initially licensed on April 28, 2016, resides 9.5 miles from the facility. The owner of the facility is Serenity Mortuary, LLC with member, Shannon N. DeLoach.

Both, Mr. Locke and Mr. DeLoach responded to questions from the Board. After concluding there were no other statements and/or questions, Mr. Hodge called for a disposition in this matter.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cooper made a motion, seconded by Mr. Price which carried unanimously that the Board approves the change of ownership with Mr. Andre Lamont Locke as the manager of record and the facility retaining its current license number pending passing the final inspection.

Mr. Dickerson returned to the session.

##### B. New Crematory

###### 2. Napier Funeral Home & Crematory – Graniteville – Clinton Douglas Jackson

Mr. Clinton Jackson and Ms. Hannah Graci Jackson appeared before the Board on behalf of Napier Funeral Home & Crematory.

Ms. Holleman informed the Board that the application is complete and that Mr. Jackson is asking that the Board approves the new crematory with him as the manager of record. Mr. Jackson, license number FDE.3885, initially licensed on April 10, 2015, resides 4.6 miles from the facility. Napier Funeral Home is the parent facility.

Mr. Jackson responded to questions from the Board. After concluding there were no other statements and/or questions, Mr. Hodge called for a disposition in this matter.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cooper made a motion, seconded by Dr. DuPre which carried unanimously that the Board approves the new crematory with Clinton Douglas Jackson as the manager of record pending the facility passing the final inspection.

### C. New Branch and/or Embalmer Applications

#### 1. Ocean View Funeral Home and Beach Crematory, North Strand Chapel – Little River – Atu Jamal Williams

Mr. Atu Jamal Williams appeared before the Board on behalf of Ocean View Funeral Home and Beach Crematory.

Ms. Holleman informed the Board that the application is complete and that Mr. Williams is asking that the Board approve the new branch facility of Ocean View Funeral Home and Beach Crematory with him as the manager of record. Mr. Williams, license number FDE.2478, initially licensed on September 18, 1998, resides 25 miles from the facility. The owners of the facility are Ocean View Funeral Home & Cremation Service, LLC with members Atu J. Williams, and Tammy Gore Williams.

Mr. Williams addressed the Board and responded to questions. After concluding there were no other statements and/or questions, Mr. Hodge called for a disposition in this matter.

**MOTION:** Mr. Dickerson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wright which carried unanimously that the Board approves the new branch with Mr. Atu Jamal Williams as the manager of record pending passing the final inspection.

### 12. Funeral Director/or Embalmer Application

These proceedings were recorded by a court reporter in order to produce a verbatim transcript should one be necessary.

#### A. Licensure by Endorsement

##### 1. Henry Lee Chandler

Mr. Chandler appeared before the Board on his own behalf without legal representation.

Ms. Holleman informed the Board that the application is complete and that Mr. Chandler is asking that the Board approve his Funeral Director's licensure by endorsement application. Mr. Chandler initially licenses in North Carolina as a Funeral Director on February 16, 2021. He served his North Carolina Resident Trainee (apprenticeship) from February 2018 through July 2016 and completed 68 cases in 2018 and 62 cases in 2019. On August 12, 2019, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Fayetteville, NC awarded Mr. Chandler a Diploma in Funeral Service Education.

Mr. Chandler addressed the Board and responded to questions from the Board.

After concluding there were no other statements and/or questions, Mr. Hodge called for a disposition in this matter.

#### **Executive Session**

**Motion:** Mr. Dickerson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Cooper, to go into Executive Session to receive legal advice. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Return to Public Session**

**Motion:** Dr. DuPre made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dickerson that the Board comes out of Executive Session. The motion, carried unanimously.

Mr. Hodge noted, for the record, there were no votes taken during Executive Session and called for a disposition in this matter.

Mr. Hodge stated for the record Mr. Chandler had to be excused from the hearing due to an emergency at his business in North Carolina while the Board was in executive session.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cooper made a motion, read by the Advice Counsel, and seconded Mr. Dickerson, which passed, that the Board conditionally grants Mr. Chandler's funeral director licensure by endorsement application upon him completing a six (6) month South Carolina apprenticeship and that he must report general funeral directing activities for each of the six months. Mr. Chandler must also take and pass the South Carolina State Board of Funeral Service's law exam.

The Board recessed for 20 minutes.

Mr. Hodge called for a motion to go into a closed session due to state and federal confidentiality laws.

**MOTION:** Mr. Price made a motion, seconded by Dr. DuPre, which passed unanimously that the Board move into a closed session.

## **B. Funeral Director and/or Embalmer by Examination**

### 1. Carmen Laughlin Woodard

Mr. Wright recused himself. Ms. Carmen Laughlin Woodard appeared before the Board on her own behalf without legal representation. Ms. Woodard addressed the Board and responded to questions from the Board.

After concluding there were no other statements and/or questions, Mr. Hodge called for a disposition in this matter.

### **Executive Session**

**Motion:** Mr. Price made a motion, seconded by Dr. DuPre, to go into Executive Session to receive legal advice. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Return to Public Session**

**Motion:** Mr. Dickerson made a motion, seconded by Dr. DuPre that the Board comes out of Executive Session. The motion, carried unanimously.

Mr. Hodge noted, for the record, there were no votes taken during Executive Session and called for a disposition in this matter.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cooper made a motion, seconded by Dr. DuPre, which carried unanimously that the Board accepts Ms. Woodard's apprenticeships of twenty (20) months of funeral director and nineteen (19) months of embalmer. The Board approves her application to become license upon the completion of her apprenticeships and passing the South Carolina State Board of Funeral Service's law exam. The South Carolina statute does not allow any exceptions or discretion by the Funeral Board as to the twenty-four (24) months required for the completion of an apprenticeship.

Mr. Hodge called for a motion to come out of closed session and return to regular session.

**MOTION:** Mr. Price made a motion, seconded by Dr. DuPre, which passed unanimously that the Board returns to open session

Mr. Wright returned to the session.

**13. Act 13 of 2023 (H.3605) Delegation**

Mr. Tennis informed the Board that in May of 2023 the General Assembly passed a law that one of the provisions in the Engine bill, 40-1-80 (B) which states in the statute that the Director must send the name of the complainant unless good cause exist to withhold the name of the complainant. Mr. Tennis asked that the Board devise a method to conduct the “good cause” determination, such as delegating a Board member to review the issue. The Board discussed the matter and determined that the immediate past/former Board President should conduct the “Good Cause” review as needed. The Board’s Advice Counsel will contact the authorized person regarding good cause determination matters.

**MOTION:** Mr. Price made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wright that the Board delegates the authority to the immediate past/former Board President to determine whether good cause exists to withhold a complainant’s name.

**14. Discussion: Embalmer Student Permit**

Ms. Holleman asked that the Board review the questioned posed by Mr. Gantt, that if determined by Piedmont Technical College that such an option is needed, the Board will allow Piedmont Technical College students with a student embalming permit to complete clinical embalming cases at a South Carolina licensed funeral facility. The College relies on donors for embalming cases.

The Board discussed the matter and made a motion regarding this matter.

**MOTION:** Dr. DuPre made a motion, seconded by Mr. Price that the Board approves that Piedmont Technical College-permitted student embalmers shall be allowed to perform his/her clinical embalming cases at a South Carolina-licensed funeral facility as an option, if determined by the College that there is a need for such a service.

**15. Inspection Questions and Concerns – Matalie Mickens**

Ms. Mickens and Ms. Holleman presented inspection concerns to the Board, such as inoperable phones, hearse registration is not current, cleanliness of the embalming room, and contents of the GPLs.

The Board discussed the current inspection report and made the determination to create an Inspection Form Task Force to re-evaluate the current inspection form.

**MOTION:** Mr. Wright made a motion, seconded by Mr. Price that the Inspection Form Re-Evaluation Task Force will consist of the Lead Inspector, Jennifer Stillwell; two Board members, Darryl Dickerson and Thomas Wright; Board’s Advice Counsel; Board Executive; and the inspection staff.

**16. Establishment Extensions Policy**

Ms. Holleman asked that the Board determined the extension policy for funeral establishment applicants. The Board discussed the matter.

**MOTION:** Mr. Price made the motion, seconded by Dr. DuPre that the funeral establishment applicants have two years from the date of the initial board appearance to licensed, if the facility does not become licensed within two years of the initial Board appearance, then the applicant must re-appear before the Board.

The Board asked Mr. Tennis and Ms. Holleman to report the apprenticeship/resident trainee requirements for other states to the Board.

**17. Election of Officers**

Mr. Hodge called for nominations for officers of the South Carolina State Board of Funeral Service.

Mr. Price nominated Ms. Thoma Williams for President of the Funeral Board.

**MOTION:** Mr. Price made a motion, seconded by Ms. Cooper which carried unanimously that the Board approves Ms. Thoma L. Williams as President.

Mr. Price nominated Mr. Gregory E. Evans for Vice-President of the Funeral Board.

**MOTION:** Mr. Price made a motion, seconded by Dr. DuPre which carried unanimously that the Board approves Mr. Gregory E. Williams as Vice-President.

Mr. Price nominated Mr. Thomas J. Wright for Secretary/Treasurer of the Funeral Board.

**MOTION:** Mr. Price made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dickerson which carried unanimously that the Board approves Thomas J. Wright as Secretary/Treasurer.

**18. Executive Session for Legal Advice, if needed**

**19. Public Comments (no votes taken)**

There were no public comments.

**20. Adjournment**

Mr. Hodge called for a motion to adjourn.

**MOTION:** Mr. Price made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wright to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hodge, after ensuring there being no further business to discuss, adjourned the August 31, 2023 meeting for the South Carolina State Board of Funeral Service at 3:01 p.m.

The next scheduled Board meeting for the South Carolina State Board of Funeral Service is October 11, 2023 and October 12, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.