

**South Carolina Board of Funeral Service
Board Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, April 25, 2024 at 10:00 am
110 Centerview Dr., Kingstree Building, Lowcountry Conference Room
Columbia, South Carolina 29210

1. Meeting Called to Order

Thoma L. Williams, President, called the meeting of the South Carolina State Board of Funeral Service to order on April 25, 2024, at 10:14am.

Public Notice

Public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the S.C. State Board of Funeral Service office, Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building, Commission website, 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.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Motion: To approve the agenda with any necessary amendments. Motion was made by Mr. Dickerson and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

4. Introductions of Board Members and Persons Attending the Meeting:

Board Members Present

Thoma L. Williams, President, of Sumter
Gregory E. Evans, Vice President, of Newberry
Michelle A. Cooper, of Moncks Corner
Darryl Dickerson, of Goose Creek
Landis D. Price, II, of Leesville
Stoney W. Bachman, of Norway

SCLLR Staff Present:

Kyle Tennis, Esq., Office of Advice Counsel
Alexis Bell, Disciplinary Counsel, Office of Disciplinary Counsel
Donnell Jennings, Chief, Office of Investigations
Robert Dean, Lead Investigator, Office of Investigations
Matalie Mickens, Board Executive
Robert Dean, Lead Investigator, Office of Investigations
Shamone Breazeale, Administrative Assistant
Tori Smith, Office of Investigations

Public Present:

Tina Behles, Court Reporter	Marcus D Brown
Makayla Barr	Adam Birr

Bertha McCrimmon Murphy
Barbara Barr
Erin Whitaker
Justin Baxley
Heather Leigh
Thomas Lee
Chris Burroughs
Brad Stephens
John McAfee
Trish Mattress

Bobby Richardson
Kristen Stephens
Casey Ward
Greg Rollings
Michael Shaffer
Chandler Sheetz
Chris Hamel
Samuel Dowling
Pat Goodwin

5. Approval of Excused Absences

Motion: To approve the absences of Thomas Wright, Dr. D’Michelle DuPre, Wayne Pratt and James Hodge. The motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Price. The motion passed.

6. Approval of Excused Absences of IRC Members

All IRC members were present at the IRC so no action taken.

7. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. February 22, 2024 Board Meeting

Motion: To approve the February 22, 2024 meeting minutes. The motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion carried.

8. President’s Remarks – Thoma L. Williams

Mrs. Williams welcomed everyone to the meeting.

9. Staff Reports

a. **Board Executive Report- Matalie Mickens**

Ms. Mickens gave a breakdown of current funeral license total. She advised that all funeral license renewals were opened on April 2, 2024. She reminded the Board that at the end of this renewal period there will be a 100 percent continuing education (CE) audit completed and that CE audit reminders have begun to go out to licensees.

Financial Report: The cash balance is -\$412,967.90

b. **Office of Inspections Report-Jennifer Stillwell, Chief Inspector**

Mrs. Stillwell presented the Inspection Report for informational purposes. Between February 17, 2024, and April 18, 2024, 34 inspections have been completed. Between

January 1, 2024 and April 18, 2024, a total of 55 inspections were performed.

c. Office of Investigations and Enforcement (OIE) Report- Robert Dean

Mr. Dean presented the Office of Investigations and Enforcement (OIE) Report for informational purposes only. The total complaints received from January 1, 2024, to April 17, 2024, is 34. There are a total of 14 active investigations, and 26 cases have been closed.

d. Investigative Review Conference (IRC) Report – Robert Dean

Because there was not a quorum, the Board was not presented the IRC Report. The report will be presented for approval at the June 27, 2024 Board meeting.

e. Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) Report-Alexis Bell, Esq.

Ms. Bell presented the Office of Disciplinary report and provided that currently there are 29 open cases, 25 cases pending hearings and agreements, and 9 cases closed since January 1, 2024.

10. Application Hearings

a. New Funeral Establishment

1. Shepherd’s Funeral Home – Scranton – Bertha McCrimmon-Murphy

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application is complete and that the request is for the Board to approve the new Facility with Bertha McCrimmon-Murphy as the proposed manager.

Mrs. McCrimmon-Murphy and Ms. Makayla Barr were both sworn in. Both spoke and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To approve the application with Bertha McCrimmon-Murphy as the proposed manager pending final inspection. The motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Price. The motion passed.

b. New Branch Facility

1. Marcus D Brown Funeral Home – Calhoun Falls – Trish Mattress

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application is complete and that the request is for the Board to approve the new branch facility with Trish Mattress as the proposed manager.

Ms. Mattress and Mr. Brown were both sworn in. Both spoke and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To approve application for branch facility pending final Board inspection. Motion was made by Mr. Dickerson and seconded by Ms. Cooper. The motion passed.

2. Midlands Affordable Cremation-Newberry- Erin Whitaker

[Mr. Evans recused himself from this hearing]

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application was complete and that Ms. Whitaker is

asking for the Board to approve the new branch facility with Erin Whitaker as the proposed manager.

Ms. Whitaker and Mr. Baxley were both sworn in and responded to questions from the Board.

Motion: To go into executive session for legal advice. Motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Dickerson. The motion passed.

Motion: To exit Executive session during which legal advice was sought and no votes were taken. Motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Ms. Cooper. The motion passed.

Ms. Whitaker and Mr. Baxley answered additional question from the Board.

Motion: To go into executive session for legal advice. Motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Bachman. The motion passed.

Motion: To exit executive session during which legal advice was sought and no votes were taken. Motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Price. The motion passed.

Motion: Ms. Cooper made a motion to approve the branch facility pending an updated list of hours of operation that conform with the law, that a manager is present at least 35 hours a week, as well passing final Board inspection. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion. The motion passed.

[Mr. Evans returned to the meeting.]

Break

c. Change of Ownership & Name

1. Callaham-Hicks & Leaside Funeral Home –Spartanburg – Thomas Lee

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application was complete and that Mr. Lee is asking for the Board to approve the change of ownership & name with Steven Holmes as the proposed manager.

Mr. Lee was sworn in and responded to the Board's questions.

Motion: To go into executive session for legal advice. Motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

Motion: To exit executive session during which legal advice was sought and no votes were taken. Motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

Motion: To approve the change of ownership and name with Stephen Holmes as the proposed manager, pending a favorable letter from the Department of Consumer Affairs regarding preneed records. Motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Price. The motion passed.

2. J.M. Ford Funeral Directors-North Augusta-James Ford

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application was complete and that Mr. Ford is asking for the Board to approve the change of ownership & name with himself as the proposed

manager.

Mr. Ford was sworn in, testified, and responded to the questions from the Board

Motion: To approve the change of ownership and name with James Ford as the proposed manager, pending final Board inspection and a favorable letter from the Department of Consumer Affairs regarding preneed records. The motion was made by Ms. Cooper seconded by Mr. Price. The motion passed.

d. Change of Ownership

1. Gray Mortuary-Pelzer- John F. McAfee

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application was complete and that Mr. McAfee. is asking for the Board to approve the change of ownership with himself as the proposed manager.

Mr. McAfee was sworn in, testified, and responded to the questions from the Board

Motion: To approve the change of ownership with John McAfee as the proposed manager, pending final Board inspection. The motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

[The next 2 application hearings were heard together]

2. Myrtle Beach Funeral Home – Myrtle Beach – Brad Stephens

3. Myrtle Beach Crematory-Myrtle Beach- Brad Stephens

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that both applications were complete and that the applications were seeking the Board to approve the change of ownership with Mr. Stephens as the proposed manager for both establishments, as well as a name change for the crematory.

Mr. Brad Stephens and Mr. Christopher Burroughs were both sworn in, testified, and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To approve the change of ownership for both establishments as well as the name change for the crematory to “Myrtle Beach Crematory” with Mr. Stephens as the proposed manager pending final Board inspection and a favorable letter from the Department of Consumer Affairs regarding preneed records. The motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Price. The motion passed.

[The next 2 application hearings were heard together]

4. Barron Funeral Home– Chester – Michael Shaffer

5. Dantzler-Baker Funeral Home-Great Falls - Michael Shaffer

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that both applications were complete and that Mr. Shaffer is asking for the Board to approve the change of ownership with Mr. Shaffer as the proposed manager for both establishments.

Mr. Greg Rollings and Michael Shaffer were both were both sworn in and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To approve the change of ownership for both facilities with Mr. Shaffer as the proposed manager pending final Board inspection. The motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

6. Culler McAlhany Funeral Home – North- Chandler Sheetz

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application was complete and that Mr. Sheetz is asking for the Board to approve the change of ownership with Mr. Sheetz as the proposed manager.

Mr. Greg Rollings and Chandler Sheetz were both were both sworn in, testified, and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To approve the change of ownership for Culler McAlhany with Mr. Sheetz as the proposed manager pending final Board inspection. The motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

7. Floyd Funeral Home-Olanta-Patrick Goodwin

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application was complete and that Mr. Goodwin is asking for the Board to approve the change of ownership with Mr. Goodwin as the proposed manager.

Mr. Greg Rollings and Mr. Goodwin were both were both sworn in, testified, and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To approve the change of ownership with Mr. Goodwin as the proposed manager pending final Board inspection and a favorable letter from the Department of Consumer Affairs regarding preneed records. The motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

[The next 2 application hearings were heard together]

8. Pee Dee Crematory and Cremation Care- Florence - Samuel Dowling

9. Stoudenmire- Dowling Funeral Home – Florence – Samuel Dowling

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that both applications were complete and that Mr. Dowling is asking for the Board to approve the change of ownership with Mr. Dowling as the proposed manager for both.

Mr. Rollings and Mr. Dowling were both were both sworn in, testified, and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To approve the change of ownership for both facilities with Mr. Dowling as the proposed manager for both, pending final Board inspection and a favorable letter from the Department of Consumer Affairs regarding preneed records. The motion was made by Ms. Cooper seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

e. Licensure by Endorsement

1. Kristen Deanna Stephens – Georgia – Funeral Director/Embalmer

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application was complete and that Ms. Stephens is asking for the Board to approve licensure by endorsement as a funeral director and embalmer. Ms. Stephens was initially licensed in Georgia on August 22, 2023.

Ms. Stephens was sworn in and testified and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To go into executive session for legal advice. Motion was made by Mr. Dickerson and seconded by Ms. Cooper. The motion passed.

Motion: To exit executive session during which legal advice was sought and no votes were taken. Motion was made by Mr. Dickerson and seconded by Mr. Price. The motion passed.

Motion: To approve the application for endorsement for funeral director and embalmer pending passing the South Carolina Law exam. Motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Dickerson. The motion passed.

2. Alexandra Rose Kyllonen – New Jersey – Funeral Director/Embalmer

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application was complete and that Ms. Kyllonen is asking for the Board to approve licensure by endorsement as a funeral director and embalmer. Ms. Kyllonen was initially licensed in New Jersey on January 11, 2024.

Ms. Kyllonen was sworn in and testified and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To go into executive session for legal advice. Motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Dickerson. The motion passed.

Motion: To exit executive session during which legal advice was sought and no votes were taken. Motion was made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Price.

Motion: To approve the application for endorsement for funeral director and embalmer pending passing the South Carolina Law exam. Motion was made by Ms. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Bachman. The motion passed.

11. New Business

a. Online Cremation Services

Mr. Tennis advised the Board that Board staff have been receiving questions regarding online cremation services. Staff is seeking Board guidance on when a licensed funeral director must be a part of the transaction and if there were any parameters with respect to offering cremation services online. Discussion ensued. The Board provided that in order to engage in the practice of funeral service, which includes making arrangements for cremation, the individual must be licensed. Further, a licensed funeral director needs to be involved in any online cremation service and it cannot be done purely online with no licensed funeral director involvement. Additionally, such online services must be provided through the website of a licensed establishment because the practice of funeral service, which includes making arrangements for cremation, may be engaged in only at a licensed establishment. As such, the arrangement of cremation services on the website of

an unlicensed establishment or company would be violative of S.C. Code Ann. § 40-19-260.

b. Delegation of Authority to Executive to Approve Applications

Mr. Tennis explained that the recent restructuring of LLR has led the agency to further review current processes, including what authority has been delegated to the Board executive with respect being able to approve applications as compared to requiring applicants to appear before the Board for review. Discussion ensued.

Motion: To go into executive session to include Board Executive Matalie Mickens. Motion made by Mr. Price and seconded by Ms. Cooper. The motion passed.

Motion: To exit executive session where legal advice was sought and no votes were taken. Motion made by Mr. Dickerson and seconded by Mr. Price. The motion passed.

Motion: To revisit the Delegation of Authority topic at the June meeting to allow staff to research and provide more information. Motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Ms. Cooper. The motion passed.

12. Board Executive Travel Approval

a. CLEAR 2024 Annual Meeting

Ms. Mickens asked the Board for approval to attend the CLEAR 2024 Annual Meeting that will be held in Baltimore, Maryland from September 16 to September 19, 2024.

Motion: To approve the travel for Ms. Mickens to attend the CLEAR 2024 Annual Meeting from September 16 to 19, 2024 in Baltimore, Maryland. Motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Dickerson. The motion passed.

13. Legislative Update

Mr. Tennis advised that H4116 (Practice Act, Preneed, and Safe Cremation Act changes) has passed both the House and the Senate and on March 28, 2024, a conference committee was created to further discuss the mileage radius for managers. Additionally, there are two other bills that failed to make it past the cross over date of April 10, 2024, and would need to be refiled: H4615 (Funeral Processions) and H4823 (Expedited Licensing Process).

14. Agenda Topics for Future Meetings

No one had agenda topics to add for the next meeting at this time.

15. Public Comments

Adam Birr, an attorney for the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs advised the Board of a free webinar the Department will be hosting May 13, 2024. The webinar will be discussing preneed law.

16. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting. Motion was made by Mr. Dickerson and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

The next scheduled Board meeting for the South Carolina State Board of Funeral Service is **June 26-27, 2024.**