

South Carolina Board of Funeral Service
Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 19, 2025 at 10:00 am
110 Centerview Dr., Kingstree Building, Lowcountry Conference Room
Columbia, South Carolina 29210

Meeting Called to Order

Gregory Evan, President, called the meeting of the South Carolina State Board of Funeral Services to Order at 10:05am

Public Notice- Public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the S.C. Board of Funeral Service office, Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building, and on the Board 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.

Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the Agenda

Motion: To approve the agenda with a correction to the city for item 11.a.2 and removal of item 9. Motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Pratt. This motion passed.

Introduction of the Board Members and Persons Attending the Meeting

Board Members Present

Gregory Evans, President, of Newberry
Wayne Pratt, Sr. Secretary/Treasurer, of Newberry
Lan Price of Leesville
James Hodge of Anderson
Timothy Cox of Williamston
Stoney Bachman, of Norway
Douglas Hawkins, of Florence
Megan Driggers, of Summerville
Darryl Dickerson, of Goose Creek

SCLLR Staff Present

Brandy Duncan, Advice Counsel
Matalie Mickens, Board Executive
Shamone Breazeale, Administrative Assistant
Alexis Bell, Disciplinary Counsel, Office of Disciplinary Counsel
Robert Dean, Lead Investigator, Office of Investigations

Tori Smith, Investigator
Byron Ray, Investigator

Public Present:

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| Annie Brown | Rion Rampey |
| Odislen Bomar, | Delrika McManus |
| Travis Ricks | Adam Birr |
| Amber Littman | |
| Cassandra Backus | |
| Allison Rodriguez | |
| Henry Sharpe | |

Approval of Excused Absences: Thomas Wright, IV

Motion: To approve the absence of Board Member Wright. The motion was made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Hawkins. The motion passed.

Approval of Excused Absences of IRC Members

All IRC Members were present

Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. December 4, 2024 Board Meeting

Motion: To approve the December 4, 2024 meeting minutes with one correction as to LLR staff present. The motion was made by Mr. Hodge and seconded by Mr. Pratt. The motion passed.

President's Remarks- Gregory Evans

Mr. Evans greeted and welcomed everyone to the meeting and spoke about the Mid-Winter Conference

Staff Reports

Board Executive- Matalie Mickens

Ms. Mickens presented the reports of the licensee totals, change of manager report. Ms. Mickens also informed Board Members of their statement of economic interest forms in their packets and also the deadline to submit without penalty.

Financial report: The cash balance is \$-123,539.84.

Office of Inspections Report- Jennifer Stillwell

Ms. Stillwell presented the Inspection Report. For the time between November 27, 2024, to December 31, 2024, 59 inspections were performed. For the year total of 2024, 561 inspections were performed. Between January 1, 2025, to February 13, 2025, a total of 76 inspections were performed.

Office of Investigations and Enforcement (OIE) Report- Robert Dean, Lead Investigator

Mr. Dean presented the Office of Investigation and Enforcement (OIE) Report. For the year total of 2024, 154 complaints were received and 119 closed. The total number of complaints received from January 1, 2025 to February 13, 2025 is 9. There are a total of 21 active investigations, 4 cases have been closed.

Investigative Review Conference (IRC) Report - Robert Dean, Lead Investigator

Mr. Dean presented the IRC report for the Board's review. There were 2 cases recommended for dismissal, 14 cases recommended for formal complaints, and three cases were recommended for letters of caution.

Motion: To approve the IRC Report. Motion made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Hodge. The motion passed.

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

Ms. Bell presented the Office of Disciplinary report and provided that as of February 14, 2025 there are 18 open cases; 15 pending hearings & agreements; a total of 6 cases have been closed since the prior Board meeting. Since January 1, 2024, a total of 30 cases have been closed.

Application Hearing - Funeral Establishment

A. New Facility

1. Alston Funeral Home, LLC-Kingstree- Fredericka Alston

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application is complete and that the request is for the Board to approve the new faculty application.

Fredericka Alston and Alex Randolph Alston were both sworn in. Both spoke 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 Mr. Hawkins. The motion passed.

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

Motion: To approve the application for the new facility pending final inspection. Motion was

made by Mr. Dickerson and seconded by Mr. Hawkins. The motion passed. Also, staff was instructed to administratively correct the typographical error on the initial date of licensure under item #6 on the application.

2. Rick's Funeral Services and Cremations, LLC- Greenville- Odislen Bomar
Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the application is complete and that the request is for the Board to approve the new faculty application.

Mr. Odislen Bomar, Travis Ricks, Amber Littman were all sworn in. All spoke and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To go into Executive Session for legal advice. Motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

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

Motion: To table the application for resubmittal until all paperwork is complete was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Hawkins. The motion passed.

B. Change of Ownership

1. Cremation Society of SC – Brown Funerals & Golden Circle Cremation Services – Seneca, SC –Annie B. Brown

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the applications are complete and that the request is for the Board to approve the Change of Ownership, Change of Facility Name, and Change of Manager application for both Cremation Society of SC – Brown Funerals and Golden Circle Cremation Services.

Ms. Brown was sworn in. She spoke and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To go into Executive Session for legal advice. Motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Hawkins. The motion passed.

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

Motion: To approve the application for Change of Ownership, Change of Facility Name, and Change of Manager. The motion to approve change of ownership, ownership, and manager pending final inspection and favorable letter from consumer affairs was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

C. Change of Manager- Extension Request

1. Backus Funeral Home

[Mr. Hawkins recused himself from this hearing]

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that Backus Funeral Home requested an extension to have a licensed manager on file. Ms. Mickens informed the Board that because Backus Funeral Home had already received one extension the current request cannot be approved at staff level and would require Board approval.

Ms. Cassandra Backus was sworn in. She spoke and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To go into Executive Session for legal advice with Ms. Mickens included. Motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Hodge. The motion passed.

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

Motion: To temporarily suspend the funeral home permit pending Backus Funeral Home locating a new manager and appearing with the newly proposed manager at the next Board Meeting on Thursday, April 24, 2025.

[Mr. Hawkins returned to the meeting]

Application Hearings- Funeral Director and/or Embalmer Applications

a. Licensure by Endorsement

1. Delrika Lasonya McManus

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that Ms. McManus has not been licensed in the state of North Carolina for 5 years and therefore had to be approved by the Board for licensure.

Ms. McManus was sworn in. She spoke and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To go into Executive Session for legal advice. Motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

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

Motion: To approve the application for licensure pending passing the South Carolina Law Exam. The motion was made by Mr. Hodge and seconded by Mr. Hawkins. The motion passed.

b. Acceptance of Funeral Director Apprenticeship

1. Barbara McGill

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that Ms. McGill completed her apprenticeship more than 5 years ago and that she was seeking an extension of time to take her Funeral Director license exam.

Ms. McGill was sworn in. She spoke and responded to questions from the Board.

Motion: To go into Executive Session for legal advice with Ms. Mickens. Motion was made by

Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

Motion: To exit executive session where 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 accept the apprenticeship and grant permission for Ms. McGill to sit for the National Board Exam and South Carolina Law Exam. The extension is granted for 1 year from today's date of February 19, 2025. The motion was made by Mr. Hodge and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

c. Extension of Apprenticeship

1. Allison Rodriguez

Mr. Price recused himself from this hearing.

Ms. Mickens informed the Board that the request to extend the apprenticeship certificate could not be approved at the staff level, due to Ms. Rodriguez having already held an apprentice certificate for the initial 2-year period allowed by law and the three one-year extensions also allowed by law.

Ms. Rodriguez and Mr. Henry W. Sharpe, III were sworn in. They both spoke and responded to the questions from the Board.

Motion: To go into Executive Session for legal advice with Ms. Mickens. The motion was made by Mr. Dickerson and seconded by Mr. Hodge. The motion passed.

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

Motion: To deny the extension of the apprenticeship based on S.C. Code §40-19-240(B), where a certificate may not be renewed more than three times. The motion was made by Mr. Hodge and seconded by Mr. Cox. The motion passed.

Break

Mr. Price returned

Approval of Cremation FAQ's

Order of Priority

What can be done if there is a disagreement about whether to cremate a deceased person's remains?

S.C. Code §32-8-320 sets out the order of priority for persons that may serve as a deceased person's agent for purposes of determining whether cremation will take place, assuming a preneed cremation authorization was not in place. If a dispute arises regarding cremation of the deceased person's remains among people of equal priority, then the matter must be resolved by the Probate Court as required by S.C. Code §32-8-320(E). The Funeral Board has no authority to stop or mandate the cremation of a deceased person's remains.

Motion: To approve the Cremation FAQ to be posted on the website. The motion was made by Mr. Hawkins and seconded by Mr. Taylor. The motion passed.

Apprentice to Sign Contracts

Motion: To go into Executive Session for legal advice with Ms. Mickens. The motion was made by Mr. Hodge and seconded by Mr. Price. The motion passed.

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

Motion: To go into Executive Session for legal advice. Motion was made by Mr. Cox seconded by Mr. Hodge. The motion passed.

Motion: To come out of Executive Session where legal advice was sought and no votes were taken. Motion was made by Mr. Hawkins and seconded by Mr. Hodge. The motion passed.

Motion: To table discussion on apprentices being able to sign contracts due to the topic noting being listed with enough detail to comply with the Freedom of Information Act's requirement that all agenda items be provided at least 24 hours prior to a meeting beginning.

Board Training-Recusal Refresher

Ms. Duncan presented the Recusal Refresher Training

Public Comments- None

Adjournment

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