

GEORGIA BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICE
Board Meeting Minutes – September 19, 2023
Professional Licensing Boards Division of the Secretary of State
237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217

Members Present:

- Felicia Wimberly, President
- Tommy Davis
- Joe Westbury
- Bryant Hightower
- Bradley Anderson
- Nancy Kennedy

Others Present:

- Brad Coman, Executive Director
- Melanie Foster, Licensing Supervisor *
- Kristin Mitchell, Board Support Specialist
- Clarissa Thomas, Licensing Analyst
- Tommy McNulty, Assistant Attorney General *
- Justin Cotton, Assistant Attorney General *
- Brian Pelon, Assistant Attorney General *

Members Absent:

- Shanna Jackson Sheats

Note: Visitors are excused during Executive Session unless scheduled for a personal appearance.

Felicia Wimberly, President noted that a quorum was present, called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m., and declared the meeting to be “open” pursuant to the Open and Public Meeting Act, O.C.G.A. §§50-14-1 et seq.

OPEN SESSION

Agenda

Joe Westbury moved, Nancy Kennedy seconded, and the Board voted to approve the September 19, 2023 agenda as amended.

Minutes

Joe Westbury moved, Bryant Hightower seconded, and the Board voted to approve the August 8, 2023 Open Session minutes and Executive Session minutes.

Ratification List

Licenses Issued 8/4/2023 – 9/14/2023 (Total – 34): Joe Westbury moved, Tommy Davis seconded, and the Board voted to ratify the licenses issued between meetings by application and reinstatement in accordance with Board Rules and Policies.

License #	Licensee	License #	Licensee
CREM000187	McNeill Funeral Home and Central Savannah River Crematory	FD005862	Kristen Deanna Stephens
		FD005863	Steven Todd Zittle
CREM000188	Burden's Funeral Home & Crematory	FD005864	Payton Alexander Vaughn
EMB005459	April Michelle Williams	FD005865	Ashley Joan Mote
EMB005460	Kade Neal Stewart	FD005866	Freddie Deangelo Stewart
EMB005461	Kristen Deanna Stephens	FD005867	Tiffany Delois Cole
EMB005462	Steven Todd Zittle	FD005868	Deron Shane Presgraves
EMB005463	Payton Alexander Vaughn	FEST002129	Boston's Funeral & Cremation Service
EMB005464	Ashley Joan Mote	FEST002130	McNeill Funeral Home and Central Savannah River Crematory
EMB005465	Freddie Deangelo Stewart	FSA007055	Wesley James Thompson, III
EMB005466	Tiffany Delois Cole	FSA007056	Darius Brandon McKenzie
EMB005467	Deron Shane Presgraves	FSA007057	James Randall Muncie
FD005860	April Michelle Williams	FSA007058	Jameria SaTees Heard
FD005861	Kade Neal Stewart		

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License #	Licensee	License #	Licensee
FSA007059	Karrian Lynn Brown	FSA007063	Caleb Antron Arnold
FSA007060	Ashton Roen Long	FSA007064	Bria Donnette Cheney
FSA007061	Danika Annadira Manning	FSA007065	Clarence Edwin Hicks, II
FSA007062	Chad Deval Whitehead	FSA007066	Derricka Litrica Moore

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Joe Westbury moved, Tommy Davis seconded, and the Board voted to enter Executive Session at 10:07 a.m. in accordance with O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19(h) and 43-18, for the purpose of conducting applicant interviews, discussing and reviewing applications and complaints, and to hear the Attorney General’s report.

At the conclusion of Executive Session, Felicia Wimberly, President, declared the meeting to be “open” pursuant to the Open and Public Meeting Act, O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-1 et seq., at 1:58 p.m. No votes were taken during Executive Session.

OPEN SESSION

Joe Westbury moved, Tommy Davis seconded, and the motion was carried by the Board to ratify the following recommendations made during the Executive Session:

Appointments

Appearance # 3115517 – Forest Lawn Funeral Home and Memorial Gardens – Change of FDFCC from Terry A Watson to Lashonda Howard – Approved.

Appearance # 3112103 – Jefferson Stinson Memorial LLC – New Establishment with H. William Lee as FDFCC – Approved.

Appearance # 3090221 / 3090223 – C.S.P. – Appeal for Denial of Reinstatement of Embalmer and Funeral Director – Uphold denial for unlicensed practice and fraud or deceptive practices.

Appearance # 3109542 – W H Mays Mortuary – Change of FDFCC from Augustus Palmer, III to Darlene Robinson – Approve pending receipt of 90-day grace period request.

Appearance # 3115264 – Gamble Funeral Service – Change of FDFCC from Blair Carson to Hannah Miller – Approved.

Appearance # 3116411 – Revival Funeral Service – New Establishment with Erma Heyliger as FDFCC – Approved.

Appearance # 3115807 – Hart’s Mortuary at the Cupola - Change of FDFCC from Billy Ray Wheeler to Ricky Blackburn – Approved.

Applications

Application # 3110673 – Allen and Allen Funeral Home – Change of FDFCC from Darrel Allen to James Dukes – Approved.

Application # 3109308 – Lee Van Evans – Funeral Director by Endorsement – Approved.

Application # 3113492 – La’Keeshire Bateaste – Embalmer and Funeral Director by Endorsement–Approved.

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Application # 3095368 – Steve Elliott Rushton – Embalmer and Funeral Director by Endorsement – Approve.

Application # 3107159 – Charles McDonald – Funeral Service Apprentice – Approved.

Application # 3107076 – P.M. – Funeral Service Apprentice – Schedule applicant interview.

Application # 3115515 – Caldwell and Cowan Funeral Home Inc. – Change of FDFCC from James Richard Posey to Lewis Caldwell – Approved.

Application # 3106215 – V.R.D.F.H.I. – Change of Location – Deny – FDFCC is not capable of being available and accessible to the community or fulfilling their duties and responsibilities in that role.

Application # 3111053 – Cason Blake Conger - Embalmer and Funeral Director by Endorsement – Approved.

Application # 3111677 – K.R. - Embalmer and Funeral Director by Endorsement/Reciprocity – Deny, applicant does not meet the minimum requirements to qualify for Endorsement or Reciprocity.

Complaints

FUN240010 – Table – Refer to Inspections to obtain statement from FDFCC and additional information.

FUN240011 – Table – Refer to Inspections to obtain a statement from FDFCC.

FUN240014 – Close – Matter resolved.

FUN240017 – Close – No violation / contract dispute.

FUN230160 – Table – Refer to Inspections to obtain additional information.

FUN240005 – Close – Letter of Concern to FDFCC for fraudulent and deceptive practices and unprofessional conduct.

FUN240009 – Table – Refer to Attorney General’s Office for a Public Consent Order for facility to include a \$2,000 fine and 2 years’ probation for fraudulent and deceptive practices.

FUN240003 – Close – Matter resolved.

FUN230165 – Table – Refer to Inspections for update.

FUN240013 – Table – Refer to Inspections to obtain a statement from FDFCC.

FUN240015 – Table – Refer to Inspections to obtain a statement from FDFCC.

FUN230068 – Table – Refer to Attorney General’s Office for a Public Consent Order for FDFCC to include \$2,500 fine and 2 years’ probation for failure to ensure that a written, signed contract is provided to every customer upon completion of the contract negotiation and is available at the establishment for a period of three years.

Attorney General’s Report

The Board reviewed and accepted the Attorney General’s report, which included information on any cases referred for action and requests for advice.

Continuing Education – Joe Westbury moved, Tommy Davis seconded, and the motion carried by the Board to accept the Continuing Education Committee’s recommendations to approve the following continuing education courses as presented:

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Provider	Course	Points
ICCFA	Crematory Operator Training	7
Colibri Healthcare LLC	Understanding Mental Health and Funerals	1
NFDA	Green Burial: Opportunity or Threat?	1
GFDA	Navigating the Perfect Storm – Now’s the Time to Fly by the Seat of Your Pants!	2
Continuing Vision	Respiratory Protocols - OSHA	1
Continuing Vision	Regaining Your Community's Trust When It Comes to Cremation	1
Continuing Vision	Cremation The New Embalming	2
Continuing Vision	Ethics and Best Practices for Handling Cremated Remains	1
Continuing Vision	Physics of Embalming	1
Continuing Vision	Old School and New School Embalming...Why Both Need Each Other	1
Continuing Vision	Embalming: Dealing with Delayed Cases	1
Continuing Vision	Embalming: Long Term Holds	1
Continuing Vision	Funeral Directors Need to K.I.S.S. with Customer Experience	1

OTHER BUSINESS

90-Day Grace Period Requests

Joe Westbury moved, Tommy Davis seconded, and the Board voted unanimously on the following 2nd 90-day grace period requests:

Type	Decision	License / App #	City	Expiration
Forest Lawn Funeral Home and Memorial Gardens	Deny – Not needed	FEST002058	College Park	n/a
Thortons Funeral Home	Approve	FEST000541	Hazlehurst	11/7/2023

Requests To Lift Probation

The Board reviewed a request to lift probation for Bryan Melton (FD0004841 / EMB004430). Licensee has not complied with all Board requirements. Joe Westbury moved, Tommy Davis seconded, and the Board voted unanimously to deny the request.

The Board reviewed a request to lift probation for Darrel McQueen (FD005825 / EMB005424). Licensee has not complied with all Board requirements. Joe Westbury moved, Tommy Davis seconded, and the Board voted unanimously to deny the request.

Correspondence

The Board reviewed and discussed correspondence from Matthews Environmental Solutions regarding the statutory change to O.C.G.A. § 43-18-72, which was made in 2022 by HB 124, which limits retort inspections to once every 5 years. The representative from Matthews Environmental Solutions noted that this change was reckless and poses a liability. The Board noted that while Board Rules were changed to mirror this statutory change, the statutory change is not one that the Board pursued. The Board also noted that they have no control over statutory changes, as that responsibility lies with the legislature.

Correspondence

The Board reviewed and discussed correspondence regarding the distance of a crematory to a subdivision and whether that distance is measured from the building or the property line. The Board unanimously voted that the Board cannot provide business or legal advice or interpret laws or rules, but noted that the Board relies on the local zoning office to verify zoning compliance.

Petition for Rule Waiver

Kimberly Roberts – Waiver of Rules 250-5-.03 and 250-5-.06, which lists the requirements for licensure as a Funeral Director and Embalmer by reciprocity or endorsement. Bryant Hightower moved, Tommy Davis seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to deny the petition as it did not demonstrate compelling rationale that strict application of the rule would create a unique, substantial hardship to the petitioner.

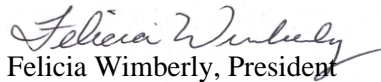
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Executive Director’s Report

The Board reviewed the Executive Director’s report, which provided the Board with statistical data relevant to the processing of applications and complaints/compliance matters.

There being no further business, Felicia Wimberly, President, declared the meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m. The next meeting of the Georgia Board of Funeral Service will be held Tuesday, October 10, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia.

Minutes recorded by: Kristin Mitchell, Board Support Specialist
Minutes reviewed and edited by: Brad Coman, Executive Director
Minutes approved on: October 10, 2023.


Felicia Wimberly, President


Brad Coman, Executive Director