

**GEORGIA BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICE**  
**Board Meeting Minutes – June 18, 2024**  
Professional Licensing Boards Division of the Secretary of State  
237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217

**Members Present:**

- Tommy Davis, President
- Felicia Wimberly
- Bryant Hightower
- Bradley Anderson
- Nancy Kennedy
- Shanna Jackson Sheats \*
- Joe Westbury

**Others Present:**

- Brad Coman, Executive Director
- Melanie Foster, Licensing Supervisor
- Kristin Mitchell, Board Support Specialist
- Robyn Henley, Licensing Analyst
- Tommy McNulty, Senior Assistant Attorney General \*
- Craig Pake, Assistant Attorney General \*
- Dowlin Ryals, Assistant Attorney General \*
- Giovanna Franchi Souza, Assistant Attorney General \*

\* *via teleconference*

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

Tommy Davis, President noted that a quorum was present, called the meeting to order at 10:07 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 June 18, 2024 meeting agenda.

**Minutes**

Joe Westbury moved, Bradley Anderson seconded, and the Board voted to approve the May 14, 2024 Open Session minutes and Executive Session minutes.

**Ratification List**

Licenses Issued 5/10/2024 – 6/13/2024 (Total – 45): Joe Westbury moved, Bryant Hightower 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
FSA007144	Lamar Walker Threatt	EMB026589	Kinzley Allena Harris
EMB026584	Alexia Guadalupe Sanchez	FD009766	Pharis Daniel Bennett
FSA007146	Darryl John Adams	FSA007152	Deborah Squire
EMB026582	Gene Brannon Martin Jr	FSA007156	Marron Olivia Casto
EMB026583	William Hayes Wright	FD009763	William Hayes Wright
FUNCE000047	Valerie Wages	EMB026580	Jeri Leanne Schofill
FUNCE000049	Vanessa Brown	FD009761	Michael D. Murray
FSA007143	Lewis Tyson McLane	FSA007147	Brent Cleveland Tiller
EMB026579	Robert Short Lovein III	EMB026581	Michael D. Murray
FEST002145	Max Daniel Cochran	FD009760	Jeri Leanne Schofill
FD009758	Robert Short Lovein III	FD009762	Gene Brannon Martin Jr
FSA007150	James Matthew Carlson	FSA007148	Sara Grace Lawson
FSA007151	John Thomas Hanley III	FD009764	Alexia Guadalupe Sanchez
		FSA007149	Erin Lee Williams

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License #	Licensee	License #	Licensee
FUNCE000048	Matthew Johnson	FD009759	Lee Van Evans
EMB026587	Hannah Alyss Noe	CREM000193	Max Daniel Cochran
FD009767	Hannah Alyss Noe	CREM000192	Gabriel Michael Cochran
FSA007155	Phillip Edward Langford	EMB026585	Syreeia Evans Magee
FSA007145	Danielle Denise Jackson	FD009765	Syreeia Evans Magee
FEST002144	Gabriel Michael Cochran	FSA007153	Edward Garrett Sikes
FEST002143	Tommy Wayne Jordan	FD009769	Kinzley Allena Harris
FEST002141	Laura Moore	EMB026586	Pharis Daniel Bennett
FEST002142	Eric Thomas Smith	FSA007154	Ashley Dean Mattox

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Joe Westbury moved, Bryant Hightower seconded, and the Board voted to enter Executive Session at 10:08 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, Tommy Davis, 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 4:16 p.m. No votes were taken during Executive Session.

**OPEN SESSION**

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

**Appointments**

Appearance # 4050265 – S.F.H. – Change of FDFCC – Approved, pending receipt of Georgia driver’s license and two grace period requests, with a public Consent Order for FDFCC to include a \$500 fine for failing to disclose arrest history. Public Consent Order for facility to include fine of \$1,000 for unlicensed practice.

Appearance # 4109545 – Elliott Sons Funeral Home – Change of FDFCC from Michael Morisette to Kevin McNeill Sr. – Approved pending receipt of a 90-day Grace period request.

Appearance # 4063330 – Logan Funeral Home and Chapel – Change of FDFCC from Herbert Logan to Maci Kiker – Approved.

Appearance # 4108836 – FL Sims Funerals & Cremations Paulding Chapel – New Establishment with Stacy Estis-Thurman as FDFCC – Approved.

Appearance # 4117964 – Pollard and Moore Funeral Home – Change of FDFCC application from J.T Borders Jr. to Phyllis Merkerson – Approved.

Appearance # 4063748 – Wright Memorial Mortuary – Change of FDFCC from La-Mont Smalls to Terrica Shields – Approved.

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Appearance # 4117953 – Striffler Hamby Mortuary Inc – Change of FDFCC from Tommy Fuller to Roger Evans – Approved.

Appearance # 4117820 – Warren Brothers Mortuary – Change of FDFCC from George Turner to Steven Compton – Approved.

Appearance # 41188116 – Tom M. Wages Funeral Service- Lawrenceville – Change of FDFCC from Joseph Ricks to Tom Wages – Approved.

Appearance # 4118132 – Peachtree Cremation – Change of FDFCC from Bryan Rickert to Joseph Ricks – Approved pending completion of application.

Appearance # 4117938 – Cobb Funeral Chapel Inc – Change of FDFCC from Samuel Ware to Tony Entrekin – Approved.

Appearance # 4118081 L.D.R.F.H. – Change of FDFCC – No show – Reschedule for July 9, 2024 Board Meeting.

Appearance # 4051051 – FK Jones Funeral Home – New Establishment with Vickey Dumas as FDFCC – Approved.

Appearance # 4094467 – B.M. – New Establishment – No show – Reschedule for July 9, 2024 Board Meeting.

**Applications**

Application # 4080220 – Christal Laguerra – Funeral Service Apprentice – Approved.

Application # 4047951 / 4047965 – Desmond Martin – Funeral Director / Embalmer by Endorsement – Approved.

Application # 4030357 / 3123233 – Wendell Vaughn – Funeral Director / Embalmer by Reciprocity – Approved.

Application # 4088425 / 4088422 – Marisa Friar – Funeral Director / Embalmer by Reciprocity – Approved.

Application # 4118055 – I.T.H.O.J.F.A.C. Change of FDFCC – Table – Pending receipt of proof of ownership. Schedule for applicant interview.

Application # 4081903 / 4081894 – Derek Wright – Embalmer / Funeral Director by Reciprocity – Approve.

Application # 4066183 / 4066206 – B.G. – Funeral Director / Embalmer – Approved pending receipt of official transcript.

Application # 4108826 / 4109053 – Oh Hyun Sung – Funeral Director / Embalmer by Endorsement – Approved.

Application # 4081847 – DC Rankine Funeral Establishment, LLC – New Establishment with Dominique Rankine as FDFCC – Approved.

Application # 4055071 / 4055095 – Aubrey King – Funeral Director / Embalmer by Endorsement –Approved.

Application # 4105008 / 4105050 – M.A. – Funeral Director / Embalmer by Endorsement – Table – Pending receipt of updated verification of employment and Petition for Rule Waiver or Variance.

Application # 4113753 – Kimberlie Tate-Goodin – Funeral Director / Embalmer by Endorsement –Approved.

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Application # 4123949 – J.W.G. – Reinstatement of Funeral Director – Bryant Hightower recused. Table for CE and passing State Laws and Rules exam results.

**Complaints**

FUN240103 – Close – Lack of information.

FUN240102 – Table – Refer to Investigations to obtain additional information.

FUN240104 – Table – Request additional information/supplemental documents from complainant.

FUN240092 – Close – Letter of Concern to facility regarding potential unlicensed practice.

FUN240097 – Table – Refer to Inspections to obtain a copy of the general price list, signed contract, and statement from the owner and FDFCC candidate regarding complaint.

FUN240051 – Table – Refer to Attorney General’s Office for a public Consent Order for the facility to include a \$500 fine for neglect in the practice of funeral directing.

FUN240061 – Table – Refer to Investigations to obtain additional information.

FUN240052 – Close – No jurisdiction.

FUN240073 – Close – Letter of Concern to facility and FDFCC for not submitting to a closing inspection in violation of Board Rule 250-6-.06(3).

FUN240071 – Table – Refer to Investigations to obtain additional information.

**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.

**Executive Session Other Business**

4118914 / 4121918 – Deny request to waive CE requirements for renewal as licensee has not provided proof of a hardship, disability, illness, or circumstance to prevent the licensee from obtaining the required CE.

**Continuing Education** – Joe Westbury moved, Nancy Kennedy seconded, and the motion carried by the Board to accept the Continuing Education Committee’s recommendations to approve the following continuing education course as presented:

Provider	Course	Points
Matthews International Corporation	Cremator Operator Certification Program	7

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**Docketed Orders** – Joe Westbury moved, Bryant Hightower seconded, and the Board voted to accept the docketed orders as presented:

Type	Licensee	License/Application #	Docket #	City
OAFM	C A Reid Sr Memorial Funeral Home	FEST001319	2024-0385	Augusta
Consent Order	Jamika Booth	4024595 / 4025154	2024-0456	Hampton

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**Requests to Lift Probation:**

The Board reviewed a request to lift probation for Murray Brothers Funeral Home (FEST001324). Bryant Hightower moved, Joe Westbury seconded, and the Board voted unanimously to deny the request as the licensee has not complied with all requirements of probation.

**Grace Period Requests:**

Joe Westbury moved, Bryant Highway seconded, and the Board voted unanimously on the following 90-day grace period request:

Type	Decision	License / App #	City	Expiration
James R. Barnes Mortuary	Approved	FEST000986	Statesboro	2/29/2024
McDougald Funeral Home	Approved	FEST001020	Butler	7/5/2024
Robert Jester Mortuary Inc.	Approved	FEST000206	Camilla	12/17/2023

**California Consumer Protection Suit:**

The Board reviewed a report from the California Attorney General regarding violations of consumer protection laws by funeral service providers by engaging in false advertising and deceptive acts in its marketing and sale of pre-need packages.

**Application Requirements:**

The Board reviewed and discussed the current requirement that applicants for initial Embalmer and Funeral Director licensure and licensure by endorsement/reciprocity provide a certificate of embalming education to prove that they have graduated from mortuary school. Joe Westbury moved, Nancy Kennedy seconded, and the Board voted unanimously to require an official transcript instead of the certificate embalming education for applications for initial licensure and endorsement/reciprocity as an official transcript sufficiently proves the applicant has graduated from mortuary school as is more easily attainable for the applicant than the certificate of embalming education.

**Fee Schedule Discussion:**

The Board reviewed and discussed the Board's fee schedule and potential changes to the fee schedule. Joe Westbury moved, Bryant Hightower seconded, and the Board voted unanimously to continue discussion at the next Board meeting on July 9, 2024.

There being no further business, Tommy Davis, President, declared the meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m. The next meeting of the Georgia Board of Funeral Service will be held Tuesday, July 9, 2024, 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: June 18, 2024.

  
Thomas Davis, President

  
Brad Coman, Executive Director

STATE OF GEORGIA

COUNTY OF BIBB

AFFIDAVIT SUPPORTING CLOSING OF PUBLIC MEETING

The Georgia Open Meetings Act, O.C.G.A 50-14-1 et seq., requires that all meetings of an entity covered by the statute must be open to the public unless there is some specific statutory exception which permits the closing of the meeting. If such a meeting is to be closed, the law requires that the presiding person execute a sworn affidavit stating that the subject matter of the meeting or the closed portion thereof was devoted to matters within the statutory exceptions and identifying those specified exemptions relied upon. O.C.G. A. 50-14-4(b). A copy of this affidavit must be filed with the minutes of the meetings in question.

Comes Thomas Davis, the Chairman identified below and, before an official duly authorized to administer oaths, makes this affidavit in satisfaction of the statutory requirements outlined above.

1. I am the presiding officer of the Georgia State Board of Funeral Service
2. I am over the age of 18 and in other aspects competent to make this sworn statement. I acknowledge that I am giving this statement under oath and subject to penalty of perjury and that I have read the contents of this affidavit prior to signing it.
3. On June 18, 2024, this entity, which is subject to the Open Meetings Act, met. A majority of the quorum of members present voted to close the meeting or a portion hereof of the following indicated reason(s). I hereby certify that during the closed portion of the meeting, only those subjects indicated below were discussed. I also certify that I have reviewed the exceptions provided under the Open Meetings Act that may permit the closing of a meeting and that, to the best of my knowledge, the reasons I have described in detail below meet the requirements for closing this public meeting.
4. The legal authority for closure of this meeting was: O.C.G.A. 43-1-2(k).
5. The subjects discussed and the underlying facts supporting the closing of this meeting are as follows:

Applications and other personal information submitted by the applicants, information, Favorable or unfavorable, submitted by a reference source concerning an applicant; and Deliberations of the Board with respect to an application, an examination, a complaint, an Investigation, or a disciplinary proceeding.

FURTHER THE AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

*Thomas E. Davis*

PRESIDING OFFICER

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 18  
Day of June, 2024.

*Renae L. Gray*  
Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

