

GEORGIA BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICE
Board Meeting Minutes – February 10, 2026
Professional Licensing Boards Division of the Secretary of State
3920 Arkwright Rd., Suite 195, Macon, Georgia 31210

Members Present:

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

Others Present:

- Brad Coman, Executive Director
- Melanie Foster, Licensing Supervisor*
- Kristin Mitchell, Board Support Specialist
- Robyn Henley, Licensing Analyst
- Craig Pake, Assistant Attorney General

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

Joe Westbury, President, noted that a quorum was present, called the meeting to order at 10:01 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

Bryant Hightower moved, Shanna Jackson Sheats seconded, and the Board voted to approve the February 10, 2026, meeting agenda.

Minutes

Bryant Hightower moved, Bradley Anderson seconded, and the Board voted to approve the February 2, 2026, Open Session minutes.

Ratification List

Licenses Issued 1/8/2026 – 2/4/2026 (Total – 31): Bryant Hightower moved, Shanna Jackson Sheats 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
EMB026725	Crystal M Gonzales	FSA007405	Kelly Peel
FD009903	Crystal M Gonzales	FUNCE000056	Betty R. Hill
EMB026726	Hailee Renae Thatcher	FD009907	Terence Maurice Jackson
FD009904	Hailee Renae Thatcher	FSA007406	Mariah Le'Rae Champagne
FSA007401	Ryan Margaret Hart	FSA007407	Jackson Scott Lawrence
FSA007402	Xavius Robert Robinson	FSA007408	Dortch-Williamson Funeral & Cremation
FSA007403	Nathan Chandler Stanley	FSA007409	Trakeveon Robinson
FD009905	Brelan Chenard Holston	FSA007410	Rayla Gay
EMB026727	Brelan Chenard Holston	FSA007411	Sacilia Tamar Smith
FSA007404	Kelly Jayla Brown	FSA007412	Darrell Edward Watkins
EMB026728	Terence Maurice Jackson	FSA007413	Bradley Scott Baldwin Sr
FEST002186	South Forsyth Memorial Chapel Funeral and Cremation Services	FSA007414	Jessica Gail Hardin
FEST002187	Harrington Memorial Tribute Center, LLC	FSA007415	Kayla Jean Howard
CREM000208	Wilkes Funeral Home Crematory	FSA007416	Madison Jaide Dees
FD009906	Tracey Zbierski	FSA007417	Teonna Palmer Smalls
		FSA007418	Olivia-Grace Helcher

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

Bryant Hightower moved, Felicia Wimberly seconded, and the Board voted to enter Executive Session at 10:02 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, Joe Westbury, 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 2:48 p.m. No votes were taken during Executive Session.

OPEN SESSION

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

Appointments

Appearance # 4376863 – P.C.C. – Change of FDFCC – No show. Withdraw application.

Appearance # 4574602 – T.M.W.F.S.L. – Change of FDFCC from Tom Wages to Lara Wayne – Approve.

Appearance # 4514726 – D.F.O. – Change of FDFCC – No show. Reschedule for next meeting.

Appearance # 4222394 / 4222490 – M.F. – Denial Appeal – No show. Reschedule to next meeting.

Appearance # FUN260116 – No show. Reschedule to next meeting.

Appearance # FUN260062 – Close with a Letter of Reservation requiring that respondent provide court documents showing the final disposition of the case within 10 days of adjudication.

Appearance # FUN260117 – Refer to Attorney General's Office for a public Consent Order against facility to include a fine of \$250 and two years' probation and a public Consent Order against FDFCC to include a fine of \$250 and two years' probation for being unavailable for inspection.

Applications

Application # 4578413 / 4581534 – Brandon Martin – Funeral Director/Embalmer by Reciprocity – Approve.

Application # 4580110 – T.F.H. – Change of FDFCC – Approve with second 90-day grace period and public Consent Agreement to include a fine of \$3,000 and two years' probation for falsifying two death certificates and operating without an FDFCC.

Application # 4412268 / 4417655 – M.P. – Funeral Director / Embalmer by Endorsement or Reciprocity – Table for Applicant Interview.

Complaints

FUN260023 – Refer to Attorney General's Office for a public Consent Order for the facility to include a fine of \$16,250 and two years' probation for failure to maintain signed contracts, a public Consent Order for the FDFCC to include a fine of \$16,250 and two years' probation for failure to maintain signed contracts, and a hearing for Cease and Desist Order for unlicensed respondent. Also refer to Department of Revenue.

FUN250112 – Refer to Attorney General's Office for violation of the consent order for the facility for failure to pay fine and continued unlicensed practice, for a public Consent Order to include a fine of \$2,000 and two years' probation and requirement that original \$250 fine be paid.

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FUN260051– Close - To be addressed with Change of FDFCC application. Place hold on facility license.

FUN260098 – Close – No jurisdiction as facility has closed/owner deceased. Direct complainant to reach out to Coroner for assistance in filing death certificate.

FUN260107 – Close – No jurisdiction/civil matter.

FUN260093 – Close with a Letter of Concern for unprofessional conduct and lack of communication regarding shipping of the body/ failure to deliver in a timely manner.

FUN260110 – Close - No jurisdiction. Direct complainant to reach out to law enforcement.

FUN260100 – Close - Refer to Cemetery Board.

Executive Session Other Business

S.W.G.C.S. – Table for additional information from the manufacturer.

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.

FUN260050 – Staff to reach out to State Vital Records to obtain death certificates.

FUN260029 – Close – Matter resolved. Facility has changed ownership.

FUN250131 – C.A. – Table to May meeting.

Continuing Education – Felicia Wimberly moved, Bryant Hightower 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:

Provider	Course	Points
Wilbert Funeral Services	The Critical Importance of Preneed on the Future of Deathcare	1
Wilbert Funeral Services	AI for the Modern Funeral Professional myths mechanics and Practical magic	1
NFDA	Tradition and Innovation in Funeral Service	1
NFDMA	Membership Has Its Perks the Value of Death Care Organizations	1
NFDMA	An Overview of South African Funerals	1
NFDMA	Embalming Panel Discussion	1
NFDMA	Innovations in Funeral Service Technology	1
NFDMA	Rooted in Care The Brand Blueprint for the Modern Funeral Home	1
NFDMA	Legal Compliance and Ethics in Funeral Service	1
NFDMA	Succession Planning and Intergenerational Business Transition	1
The Independent Funeral Group	Our Embalming Journey	1
The Independent Funeral Group	Crematory Safety Series #2, Crematory Apparel, Stack Monitoring and Using Fire Safety Equipment	1
NFDMA	Using Parliamentary Procedures for Meeting Effectiveness	1
NFDMA	Bloodborne Pathogens	1
NFDMA	Risk Management for Funeral Service Professionals for the Public	1
NFDMA	Risk Management for Funeral Service Professionals for Employees	1
NFDMA	Ethics In Funeral Service	2

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NFDA	Arrangement Solutions Academy	6
NFDA	Marketing Funeral Homes Balancing Sensitivity with Strategy	1
Selected Independent Funeral Homes	2026 NextGen Seminar	8
GFDA	How to Keep Your Organization on the Cutting Edge	1
GFDA	Non-Toxic Formaldehyde-Free Embalming Is Here and It WORKS	2
GFDA	Natural Organic Reduction 101	1
GFDA	Through Death, Comes Life, The Simple Art of Green Burial	1
GFDA	Exhibit Hall	2
GFDA	AGEG Business Meeting and 2026 Memorial Service	1
GFDA	Challenging Cases - Overcoming the Obstacles	2
GFDA	Compassionate Financial Conversations in Funeral Service	1
GFDA	Funeral Service Ethics Yours or Mine	1
GFDA	Creative Applications A New Approach for Mastering the Prep Room and Beyond	2
GFDA	Using AI to Enhance Funeral Care	2
Wilbert Funeral Services	More Presence, More Care	1
Wilbert Funeral Services	Alternative Treatments when Standard Embalming is Not chosen	1
Wilbert Funeral Services	Engaging with Hospice	1
NFDA	Meet the Mentors	5

OTHER BUSINESS

Docketed Orders – Bryant Hightower moved, Bradley Anderson seconded, and the Board voted to accept the docketed orders as presented:

Type	Licensee	License/Application #	Docket #	City
OAFM	McLeighton Funeral Service	FEST001833	2026-0102	Roberta
OAFM	SWGA Cremation and Funeral Services LLC	CREM000170	2026-0134	Albany
OAFM	White Funeral Home	FEST002072	2026-0133	Commerce
OAFM	Atlanta Mortuary Service Inc	FEST002090	2026-0132	Stone Mountain
OAFM	Families First Funeral Care.	FEST001862	2026-0106	Savannah
OAFM	Barnum Funeral Home	FEST000042	2026-0103	Americus
Consent Order	Hanley Shelton Funeral Home	FEST001170	2026-0131	Marietta
Consent Order	Edwin Shelton	FD003954	2026-130	Marietta
Consent Order	W L Wilson & Sons Funeral Home	FEST000993	2026-0056	Fort Oglethorpe
Consent Order	R W Andrews Mortuary	FEST001653	2026-0055	Atlanta
Consent Order	John Goddard	FD005171	2026-0128	Forest Park
Consent Order	Willie A. Watkins Funeral Home Riverdale Chapel	FEST001876	2026-0129	Riverdale

Legislative Discussion:

The Board discussed any updates regarding legislative session and bills that would impact the Board or the profession, as well as legislative changes that the Board feels are needed.

Correspondence:

The Board reviewed and discussed correspondence regarding maintaining files for a facility that has been closed since 2013. Bryant Hightower moved, Bradley Anderson seconded, and the Board unanimously voted that the Board cannot provide business or legal advice or interpret the laws or rules for the questioner, but that the facility should ensure that any preneed contracts have been refunded or transferred to another establishment of the contract holders choice.

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Correspondence:

The Board reviewed and discussed correspondence regarding preparation rooms and aldehyde exposure.


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, Joe Westbury, President, declared the meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m. The next meeting of the Georgia Board of Funeral Service will be held Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at the new Board office at 3920 Arkwright Rd. Suite 195, Macon, Georgia.

Minutes recorded by: Kristin Mitchell, Board Support Specialist
Minutes reviewed and edited by: Brad Coman, Executive Director
Minutes approved on: March 17, 2026.


Joe Westbury, 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 February 10, 2026, 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.



PRESIDING OFFICER

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 10th

Day of February 2026

Notary Public

My Commission Expires



RENEA L. GRAY
Notary Public, Georgia
Houston County
My Commission Expires
June 01, 2027