

MARYLAND BOARD OF MORTICIANS AND FUNERAL DIRECTORS

OPEN SESSION MINUTES

December 11, 2024

1. **CALL TO ORDER/GREETINGS:** Board President Michele Kutta called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. and began the open session:

a. Board Members Present: Michele Kutta President, Brandon Wylie, 1st Vice President, Patrick Thompson 2nd Vice President; Kirk Helfenbein, Secretary; Kenyatta Clinton; Brittney Greene; Dr. James Kalshoven; Charlotte Hoffman & Gidon Van Emden; Absent Dr. Patricia Fletcher & Rev. Richard Mosley

b. Board Staff Present: Erika Malone, Executive Director; Ashley Combs, Licensing Coordinator; Andrew Liberto, Inspector; Joshua Frazer, Board Counsel

President Kutta read the opening statement:

COMAR 10.01.14.02.B: Except in instances when a public body expressly invites public testimony, questions, comments, or other forms of public participation, or when public participation is otherwise authorized by law a member of the public attending an open session may not participate in the session.

President Kutta stated: First order of business last month when we approved the minutes, they were read in as November. I need a motion to correct the approved minutes, to be read in as the October minutes.

Motion by Charlotte Hoffman. Second by Patrick Thompson. Motion Carried.

PRESIDENTS REMARKS:

President Kutta provided an update regarding Leaf and Water, a Vermont-based company that mailed materials to Maryland funeral homes about alkaline hydrolysis. A meeting with the owner, Candis Best, clarified that the mail aimed to form future partnerships for the service. While the company plans to expand to Maryland eventually, they respect that alkaline hydrolysis is not yet sanctioned in Maryland.

The President also addressed media attention on alkaline hydrolysis. Although the governor signed the bill into law on October 1, 2024, the process cannot be performed in Maryland until regulations are finalized by the Board, Office of Cemetery Oversight, and the Department of the Environment.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:

Executive Director Erika Malone stated: Our offices will be closed to the public December 25th and January 1st. Be sure to make contact with staff directly regarding specific times of availability during the holiday season and make accommodations accordingly.

This message is for licensees regarding renewals: As of today's date all Renewal applications, License verifications requests, Duplicate licenses requests, Establishment Name changes requests, Roster Requests and State Exams Sign-ups are now online. Online payments offer a streamlined, secure, and

cost-effective method that benefits both the payee and Board administration, enhancing efficiency for everyone involved. The goal is to have ALL applications and forms available for electronic submission and payment by the end of FY 25.

All Licensed Funeral Establishments, Corporations, Funeral Directors, Courtesy Cards, and Surviving Spouses renewal cycle ended November 30th 2024. Any renewal applications received after December 15th will require a late fee of \$400 in addition to the renewal payment. Notifications have already been made via landline, postal mail and electronically. Additional notifications will be made to non-renewees after December 15th.

This message is for all licensees: Do not forget to keep your information up to date. The Board requires that any changes be reported within 30 days in order to ensure that our records are accurate. A regulated \$50 fee has begun to be enforced. Please do not hesitate to contact a member of our staff for any questions or concerns, all staff contact information has been updated and available on the Board's homepage. I want to thank you all for your patience and support during this new administrative progression.

This is a message for all applicants: The upcoming application deadline is December 18, 2024 for review of your application prior to the next Board meeting being held January 8, 2025. The next jurisprudence exam is January 7th 2025 and the practical exam is April 3rd 2025. If you qualify please make sure you sign up as soon as possible. This form and method of payment is available electronically on the Board's website.

Have a happy holiday season and that completes my report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

a. Executive Committee:

President Michele Kutta / There is no report at this time.

b. Family Security Trust Fund:

Chair Dr. James Kalshoven reported: The biannual Family Security Trust Fund open meeting will be held on January 8th at 12:30 PM, prior to the regular open meeting. A zoom link is available on the Board's website.

c. Pre-Need Committee:

Chair Patrick Thompson stated: No report this month.

d. Establishment Committee:

Chair Kenyatta Clinton reported, the committee met and is recommending the following for Board approval.

Newman Cremation Services LLC/ Board unanimously approved.

Randolph B. Horton Funeral Services/ Board unanimously approved.

Farewell Cremations of Fairfax/ Board unanimously approved.

e. Licensing Committee:

Chair Patrick Thompson reported the Licensing Committee met and is recommending the following for Board approval:

Apprentice:

Loriel Taylor Ft. Lincoln Funeral Home/Delores Jones (Sponsor) /Board unanimously approved.

Lauren Stoner/Sol Levinson Brothers/Joshua Willet (Sponsor)/ Board unanimously approved.

Rachael Skoczylas/ Lemmon Funeral Home/ Jessica Warnick/ Corey Cooper (Sponsors) Board unanimously approved.

Crematory Operator:

James Ford/ Newman Funeral Home/ Board unanimously approved.

Donald Newman/ Newman Funeral Home/Board unanimously approved.

Fred Meyer/ Newman Funeral Home/Board unanimously approved.

Allison Schwartz/ Metro Crematory/Board unanimously approved.

Shoshana Deming/ Metro Crematory/Board unanimously approved.

Adrienne Finley/ Metro Crematory /Board unanimously approved.

Ryan Heiland/ Atlantic Crematory/ Board unanimously approved.

Travis Bruce/ Maryland Cremation Services/ Board unanimously approved.

Mortician:

Quentae Barnes/Simplicity Cremation & Funeral Services/ Board unanimously approved.

Christina Clifford/Witzke Funeral Home/ Board unanimously approved.

Travis Bruce/ Maryland Cremation Services/ Board unanimously approved.

APPRENTICE REINSTATEMENT:

None

APPRENTICE CHANGE OF SPONSOR:

Shoshana Deming/Myers-Durboraw Funeral Home/James Schwartz (Sponsor) Board unanimously approved.

COURTESY CARD:

Rachel Mackey/ Everly Funeral Home & Cremation Services/ Board unanimously approved.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR:

None

Mortician Via Waiver:

None

MORTICIAN REINSTATEMENT/REACTIVATION:

None

EXECUTOR LICENSE:

None

REGISTERED TRANSPORTERS:

John Young/ Metropolitan Funeral Service/ Board unanimously approved.

Amelia Capilongo/ Carewell Cremations/ Board unanimously approved.

Katherine Capilongo/ Carewell Cremations/ Board unanimously approved.

Ciarra Jones/ Alvins Anointed Hands/ Board unanimously approved.

Michelle Nicholson/ Alvin Anointed Hands/ Board unanimously approved.

SURVIVING SPOUSE:

None

f. Continuing Education:

Chair Kirk Helfenbein stated: Courses requesting Board approval were either approved or pre-approved and are listed on the Board's website.

Reminder: Attendees of today's virtual meeting can email the Board offices to receive one CEU.

g. Legislative Committee:

Chair Brandon Wylie stated: We just want to let everyone know that the proposed fee changes were published on the Board's website for public comment with the deadline of December 4th.

h. Rehabilitation Committee:

President Michele Kutta stated: there is no report at this time

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

None

ADJOURNMENT STATEMENT: The Board will be discussing disciplinary matters and complaints against licensees which are discussed in closed session. Pursuant to General Provisions 3-305 at B (2) which protects the privacy of individuals and COMAR 10.31.01.05 which provides that board investigations are

confidential. The Board will be obtaining legal advice from Board Counsel which is discussed in the Closed Session. Pursuant to General, Provisions 3-305 B (7) and Administrative functions of the Board to which the Open Meetings Act does not apply pursuant to general provisions 3 - 103 A (1). Motion and second for Adjournment.

The Board unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT: I would like to wish everybody a happy holiday and enjoy your families, however you celebrate. And if I could ask the Board to transition over to the closed session.