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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
BUREAU OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL AFFAIRS

**F I N A L M I N U T E S**

MEETING OF:

**STATE BOARD OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS**

TIME: 10:32 A.M.

Held at

**PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

2525 North 7th Street

CoPA HUB, Eaton Conference Room

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110

as well as

**VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

December 11, 2024

1                                    State Board of Funeral Directors  
2                                    December 11, 2024

3  
4  
5 BOARD MEMBERS:  
6

7 Arion R. Claggett, Acting Commissioner, Bureau of  
8 Professional and Occupational Affairs  
9 Kenneth C. DuPree, Chairperson, Professional Member  
10 Gregory K. Furlong, Vice Chairperson, Professional  
11 Member  
12 Eric D. Ruggeri, Secretary, Public Member  
13 Charles F. Snyder III, Professional Member  
14 Christopher Feryo, Professional Member  
15 Chad M. Lutz, Professional Member  
16 Jennifer Jane Kirk, Esquire, Senior Deputy Attorney  
17 General, Antitrust Section, Bureau of Consumer  
18 Protection Representative  
19  
20

21 BUREAU PERSONNEL:  
22

23 Shawn J. Jayman, Esquire, Board Counsel  
24 Timothy A. Fritsch, Esquire, Board Prosecution  
25 Liaison  
26 J. Leslie Warner, Board Administrator  
27 Marc Farrell, Esquire, Regulatory Counsel,  
28 Office of Chief Counsel, Department of State  
29 Andrew LaFratte, MPA, Deputy Policy Director,  
30 Department of State  
31 Jennifer Jumper, Fiscal Management Specialist 2,  
32 Bureau of Finance and Procurement, Department of  
33 State  
34 Amanda Richards, Fiscal Supervisor, Bureau of Finance  
35 and Procurement, Department of State  
36 Tamie Laudenslager, Fiscal Management Specialist,  
37 Bureau of Finance and Procurement, Department of  
38 State  
39 Taylor Koch, Fiscal Management Specialist 3,  
40 Bureau of Finance and Procurement, Department of  
41 State  
42 Mercedes Newby, Fiscal Management Specialist 1,  
43 Bureau of Finance and Procurement, Department of  
44 State  
45  
46

47 ALSO PRESENT:  
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49 David Morrison, National Home Funeral Alliance  
50

State Board of Funeral Directors  
December 11, 2024

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ALSO PRESENT: (cont.)

Jason Benion, Esquire, Shareholder and Chair of the  
Death Care Group, Saxton & Stump, LLC  
Kathleen K. Ryan, Esquire, Pennsylvania Funeral  
Directors Association  
Adam Shaffer, Pennsylvania Funeral Directors  
Association  
Ernie Heffner, President, Heffner Funeral Chapel  
& Crematory, Inc.  
Harry Neel, Jefferson Memorial Cemetery, Funeral  
Home, Crematory, and Arboretum  
Call-In 2699  
Zachary Petrosky, Sargent's Court Reporting Service,  
Inc.

1 \*\*\*

2 State Board of Funeral Directors

3 December 11, 2024

4 \*\*\*

5 [Pursuant to Section 708(a)(5) of the Sunshine Act,  
6 at 9:00 a.m. the Board entered into Executive Session  
7 with Shawn J. Jayman, Esquire, Board Counsel, for the  
8 purpose of conducting quasi-judicial deliberations on  
9 a number of matters currently pending before the  
10 Board and to receive the advice of counsel. The  
11 Board entered into public session at 10:30 a.m.]

12 \*\*\*

13 The regularly scheduled meeting of the State  
14 Board of Funeral Directors was held on Wednesday,  
15 December 11, 2024. Kenneth C. DuPree, Chairperson,  
16 Professional Member, called the meeting to order at  
17 10:32 a.m.

18 \*\*\*

19 Roll Call/Introduction of Attendees

20 [Kenneth C. DuPree, Chairperson, Professional Member,  
21 requested a roll call of Board members and  
22 introduction of attendees. A quorum of Board members  
23 was present.]

24 \*\*\*

25 [Shawn J. Jayman, Esquire, Board Counsel, noted the



1                   aye; Ruggeri, aye; Snyder, aye; Feryo,  
2                   aye; Lutz, aye; Kirk, aye.

3 [The motion carried unanimously.]

4                                           \*\*\*

5 Report of Prosecutorial Division

6 [Timothy Fritsch, Esquire, Board Prosecution Liaison,  
7 presented the Consent Agreement for Case No. 24-48-  
8 013903.]

9 MR. JAYMAN:

10                   Based on Executive Session  
11                   deliberations, I believe the Chair  
12                   would entertain a motion to reject the  
13                   Consent Agreement for Case No. 24-48-  
14                   013903 as too harsh.

15 CHAIR DUPREE:

16                   May I have a motion.

17 ACTING COMMISSIONER CLAGGETT:

18                   So moved.

19 MR. RUGGERI:

20                   Second.

21 CHAIR DUPREE:

22                   Roll Call.

23                   Claggett, aye; DuPree, aye; Furlong,  
24                   aye; Ruggeri, aye; Snyder, aye; Feryo,  
25                   aye; Lutz, aye; Kirk, aye.

1 [The motion carried unanimously.]

2 \*\*\*

3 Report of Board Counsel - Final Adjudication and  
4 Order

5 MR. JAYMAN:

6 With regard to number 3 on the agenda,  
7 based on Executive Session  
8 deliberations, I believe the Chair  
9 would entertain a motion to approve the  
10 Final Adjudication and Order as written  
11 in the Matter of Colt Morningstar  
12 Black, Case Nos. 22-48-004494 and 22-  
13 48-001391.

14 CHAIR DUPREE:

15 May I have a motion.

16 COMMISSIONER CLAGGETT:

17 So moved.

18 MR. RUGGERI:

19 Second.

20 CHAIR DUPREE:

21 Roll call.

22 Claggett, aye; DuPree, aye; Furlong,  
23 aye; Ruggeri, aye; Snyder, aye; Feryo,  
24 aye; Lutz, aye; Kirk, aye.

25 [The motion carried unanimously.]

1 \*\*\*

2 MR. JAYMAN:

3 Number 4 on the Agenda. Based on  
4 Executive Session deliberations, I  
5 believe the Chair would entertain a  
6 motion to approve the Final  
7 Adjudication and Order as written in  
8 the case of Richard T. Wolfe, Jr., Case  
9 Nos. 23-48-004206 and 23-48-013666.

10 CHAIR DUPREE:

11 May I have a motion.

12 ACTING COMMISSIONER CLAGGETT:

13 So moved.

14 MR. RUGGERI:

15 Second.

16 CHAIR DUPREE:

17 Roll call, please.

18  
19 Claggett, aye; DuPree, aye; Furlong,  
20 aye; Ruggeri, aye; Snyder, aye; Feryo,  
21 aye; Lutz, aye; Kirk, aye.

22 [The motion carried unanimously.]

23 \*\*\*

24 MR. JAYMAN:

25 Number 5 on the agenda. Based on



1 Executive Session deliberations, I  
2 believe the Chair would entertain a  
3 motion to approve the Final  
4 Adjudication and Order as written in  
5 the matter of Brittany Thomas,  
6 Individually, and Brittany Thomas as  
7 Executor of the Estate of Allen Bruce  
8 Reidt t/d/b/a Moskal-Reid Funeral Home,  
9 Case Nos. 23-48-004205, 23-48-013665,  
10 and Case No. 23-48-0133667.

11 CHAIR DUPREE:

12 May I have a motion.

13 ACTING COMMISSIONER CLAGGETT:

14 So moved.

15 MR. RUGGERI:

16 Second.

17 CHAIR DUPREE:

18 Roll call.

19  
20 Claggett, aye; DuPree, aye; Furlong,  
21 aye; Ruggeri, aye; Snyder, aye; Feryo,  
22 aye; Lutz, aye; Kirk, aye.

23 [The motion carried unanimously.]

24 \*\*\*

25 Report of Board Counsel - Other

1 [Shawn Jayman, Esquire, Board Counsel, reported that  
2 the current caseload is approximately 15 cases before  
3 the Board.]

4

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5 Report of Regulatory Counsel - Regulatory Status  
6 Report

7 [Marc Farrell, Esquire, Regulatory Counsel, Office of  
8 Chief Counsel, Department of State, informed Board  
9 members that he was seeking a decision as to when the  
10 Board would like to resume its review of the general  
11 revisions of the regulation package. It was  
12 suggested that the Board should continue its  
13 discussion on January 24, 2025.

14 Mr. Farrell agreed but stated there are still  
15 discussions about potential changes to be made to the  
16 regulation. Once those changes were decided, he  
17 would incorporate them into a cohesive annex and put  
18 it before the Board again for a formal vote.  
19 Eventually, after internal reviews by the Governor's  
20 Office, and assuming the vote is approved, the  
21 general provisions regulation package would then  
22 enter into the regulatory process.

23 Mr. Farrell continued by stating that once that  
24 process was complete it could take anywhere from 18  
25 to 24 months before all is said and done. The reason

1 for this is because the Independent Regulatory Review  
2 Commission will push the regulation through the  
3 internal department reviews twice, once in its  
4 proposed stage and again in its final stage.]

5

\*\*\*

6 Report of Commissioner

7 [Arion Claggett, Acting Commissioner of Professional  
8 and Occupational Affairs, informed Chair DuPree and  
9 the Board that Chris Feryo and he had a productive  
10 discussion with the Department of Health regarding  
11 the issues with eVitals. The Department of Health  
12 stated they are committed to fixing those issues.

13 Commissioner Claggett was asked by Chair Dupree  
14 if discussion took place about providing those CEUs  
15 for funeral directors who completed the training.  
16 Ms. Warner responded to Chair Dupree by stating that  
17 there is one course offered more towards training on  
18 how to use eVitals but is not a course that would  
19 count towards continuing education because it  
20 involved only training in the use of eVitals.

21 Acting Commissioner Claggett was asked if the  
22 Board could make recommendations on changes to the  
23 system that is currently in place. He responded by  
24 advising that the Board did not control the system,  
25 but he could pass along the recommendation. Another

1 recommendation by the Board was that they be allowed  
2 to print off a burial transit permit, no matter  
3 whether the Board starts a case or a doctor starts  
4 the case. The Board also discussed the issues  
5 surrounding the difficulty of funeral homes that do  
6 not use the eVitals system, one of the difficulties  
7 being the time delays with getting death certificates  
8 to the public and another difficulty being the  
9 expense and time funeral homes would need for  
10 completing the eVitals onboarding system.

11 Chair Dupree stated the Board was not going to  
12 spend much time on this issue as no one had applied  
13 for the course, and therefore, the subject was  
14 currently a moot point given that no one had yet  
15 applied for the eVitals class. He also added that  
16 the decision as to whether the eVitals course should  
17 be a continuing education class or not was up to the  
18 Board.]

19

\*\*\*

20 Report of Board Chairperson

21 [Kenneth Dupree, Chairperson, reported that he will  
22 be attending the International Conference and Funeral  
23 Service Examining Board that takes place in February  
24 2025 in Palm Springs, California.]

25

\*\*\*

1 Report of Board Administrator - No report

2 \*\*\*

3 Applications Committee

4 [Eric Ruggeri, Secretary, State Board of Funeral  
5 Directors, first stated this report would encompass  
6 the months of October, November and December. Mr.  
7 Ruggeri stated, for the months of October, November,  
8 and December, the Applications Committee approved one  
9 secondary funeral director employment application and  
10 processed 23 ten-day hold requests.

11 Chair DuPree then asked if there were any  
12 questions regarding the Continuing Education or the  
13 Applications Committee presentation. He also stated  
14 the next meeting would consist of discussion on  
15 committee assignments.]

16 \*\*\*

17 Applications Committee

18 MR. FRITSCH:

19 With regard to number nine on the  
20 agenda, based on Executive Session  
21 deliberations, I believe the Chair  
22 would entertain a motion to approve the  
23 funeral intern extension for Angela  
24 Marie Leazier, FL022039-AA0005630618.

25 CHAIR DUPREE:

1 And I have a motion to approve?

2 ACTING COMMISSIONER CLAGGETT:

3 So moved.

4 MR. RUGGERI:

5 Second.

6 CHAIR DUPREE:

7 Roll call.

8

9 Claggett, aye; DuPree, aye; Furlong,  
10 aye; Ruggeri, aye; Snyder, aye; Feryo,  
11 aye; Lutz, aye; Kirk, aye.

12 [The motion carried unanimously.]

13

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14 MR. FRITSCH:

15 Number 10 on the agenda, based on  
16 Executive Session deliberations, I  
17 believe the Chair would entertain a  
18 motion to approve the initial Funeral  
19 Trainee license for Mary Rago,  
20 Application No. AA0005774937.

21 CHAIR DUPREE:

22 Can I have a motion?

23 ACTING COMMISSIONER CLAGGETT:

24 So moved.

25 MR. RUGGERI:

1 Second.

2 CHAIR DUPREE:

3 Roll call.

4

5 Claggett, aye; DuPree, aye; Furlong,  
6 aye; Ruggeri, aye; Snyder, aye; Feryo,  
7 aye; Lutz, aye; Kirk, aye.

8 [The motion carried unanimously.]

9

\*\*\*

10 MR. FRITSCH:

11 Number eleven on the agenda, based on  
12 Executive Session deliberations, I  
13 believe the Chair would entertain a  
14 motion to approve the initial Funeral  
15 Trainee license for Heather G. Gardner,  
16 Application No. AA0005778570.

17 CHAIR DUPREE:

18 Can I have a motion?

19 ACTING COMMISSIONER CLAGGETT:

20 So moved.

21 MR. RUGGERI:

22 Second.

23 CHAIR DUPREE:

24 Roll call.

25





1 She addressed actual expenditures for the prior  
2 biennial and the current biennial periods. She also  
3 nuanced the Board's expenditures by cost category  
4 with three distinct ways in which expenses come in:  
5 By direct charges, timesheets and the licensed  
6 population. She stated every Board picks up a  
7 portion of these expenses based on their licensed  
8 population.

9 Ms. Laudenslager advised the Board of their  
10 expenses for the prior biennial period and the  
11 current biennial period.

12 She explained that the additional expenses were  
13 created by the new IT system for the legal  
14 department, the second expense funding the physical  
15 move for the legal department from Penn Center to  
16 Thea Drive and the last expenses being the PALS  
17 modernization.

18 She next reported on the Board's starting  
19 balance, their biennial revenue and their expenses,  
20 noting the balance. The Board's biennial balance is  
21 declining as the current expenses are reducing their  
22 available but restricted funds.

23 Ms. Laudenslager recommended that the Board do a  
24 fee renewal increase. Chad Snyder commented that the  
25 profession of funeral directors and staff is

1 experiencing a detrimental impact in our state due to  
2 the current laws. He opined that the Commonwealth  
3 must be more open to the split license, thereby  
4 attracting more license fees and more people staying  
5 in the Commonwealth to work.

6 In her concluding remarks, Ms. Laudenslager  
7 advised the Board that the expenses used for the  
8 legal team moving from the Penn Center to Thea Drive  
9 will be ongoing due to financially sustaining its  
10 ongoing maintenance. She advised again another fee  
11 increase for the Board and stated she will present  
12 before the Board in the spring with additional  
13 recommendations and options for same.]

14 \*\*\*

15 Public Comment

16 [Adam Shaffer, Pennsylvania Funeral Directors  
17 Association, requested additional feedback from the  
18 Board regarding his earlier comments on the current  
19 state of detriment that funeral homes in Pennsylvania  
20 are now experiencing. Marc Farrell suggested that  
21 the split license might require legislative changes  
22 that would be out of the Board's hands from a  
23 regulation perspective. Mr. Shaffer responded by  
24 stating that they, the State Board, could make  
25 recommendations to the legislature. He further

1 reiterated his commitment to preserving the  
2 profession of funeral directors in Pennsylvania  
3 despite the shaky situation.

4           Conversation continued with individuals Charles  
5 Snyder, Marc Farrell, Arion Claggett and Adam Shaffer  
6 discussing options on how best to approach resolving  
7 the issue of a failing funeral director profession  
8 and dual licensure in Pennsylvania to be revisited.]

9

\*\*\*

10 Adjournment

11 CHAIR DUPREE:

12           I would accept a motion to adjourn.

13 ACTING COMMISSIONER CLAGGETT:

14           So moved.

15 CHAIR DUPREE:

16           Our next meeting will be the regulatory  
17 meeting on Friday, January 24, 2025. I  
18 wish everyone a joyous holiday season  
19 and a Happy New Year.

20

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21 [There being no further business, the State Board of  
22 Funeral Directors Meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.]

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## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing summary minutes of the State Board of Funeral Directors meeting, was reduced to writing by me or under my supervision, and that the minutes accurately summarize the substance of the State Board of Funeral Directors meeting.



Zachary Petrosky,

Minute Clerk

Sargent's Court Reporting  
Service, Inc.

STATE BOARD OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS  
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TIME	AGENDA
9:00	Executive Session
10:30	Return to Open Session
10:32	Official Call to Order
10:32	Roll Call/Introduction of Attendees
10:36	Approval of Minutes
10:37	Report of Prosecutorial Division
10:39	Report of Board Counsel
10:42	Report of Regulatory Counsel
10:47	Report of Commissioner
10:57	Report of Chairman
10:59	Report of Board Administrator
10:59	Applications Committee
11:03	Old Business/New Business
11:17	Public Session
11:26	Adjournment