

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

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: 10:35 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**

January 21, 2026





1 \*\*\*

2 State Board of Funeral Directors

3 January 21, 2026

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 Tuesday,  
15 January 21, 2026. Kenneth C. DuPree, Chairperson,  
16 called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

17 \*\*\*

18 Roll Call/Introduction of Attendees

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

22 \*\*\*

23 [Shawn J. Jayman, Esquire, Board Counsel, noted the  
24 meeting was being recorded and continued  
25 participation constituted consent to be recorded.

1           Mr. Jayman also noted that the Board entered into  
2 Executive Session for the purpose of conducting  
3 quasi-judicial deliberations on a number of matters  
4 currently pending before the Board and to receive the  
5 advice of counsel.]

6

\*\*\*

7 Approval of Minutes of the December 9, 2025 meeting

8 CHAIR DUPREE:

9

                  We received the minutes from December  
10                   9, 2025 electronically. Can I have a  
11                   motion to adopt these minutes?

12 MR. FURLONG:

13

I'll make a motion.

14 MR. RUGGERI:

15

Second.

16 CHAIR DUPREE:

17

It's been moved and properly seconded.

18

We're ready for roll call.

19

20

Nichole Maloney, abstain; Kenneth

21

Dupree, aye; Gregory Furlong, aye; Eric

22

Ruggeri, aye; Christopher Feryo,

23

abstain; Chad Lutz, aye; Jennifer Kirk,

24

abstain.

25

[The motion carried. Ms. Maloney, Mr. Feryo, and Ms.

1 Kirk abstained from voting on the matter.]

2 \*\*\*

3 Report of Prosecutorial Division

4 [Timothy Fritsch, Esquire, Board Prosecution Liaison,  
5 presented the Consent Agreement for Item No. 2, Case  
6 Nos. 24-48-016326 and 25-48-010364. Jason Benion,  
7 Esquire, Saxton & Stump, noted his client had sent in  
8 mitigation letter for the Board's review.]

9 MR. JAYMAN:

10 Based on Executive Session  
11 deliberations, I believe the Chair  
12 would entertain a motion to approve the  
13 Consent Agreement for Case No. 24-48-  
14 016326 and Case No. 25-48-010364 at  
15 Agenda Item 2.

16 MR. FERYO:

17 I'll make a motion to accept the  
18 Consent Agreement on those two cases.

19 MR. RUGGERI:

20 Second.

21 CHAIR DUPREE:

22 We're ready for roll call.

23

24 Nichole Maloney, aye; Kenneth Dupree,  
25 aye; Gregory Furlong, aye; Eric



1 Roll call.

2

3 Nichole Maloney, aye; Kenneth Dupree,  
4 aye; Gregory Furlong, aye; Eric  
5 Ruggeri, aye; Christopher Feryo, aye;  
6 Chad Lutz, aye; Jennifer Kirk, aye.

7 [The motion carried unanimously.]

8

\*\*\*

9 Report of Board Counsel - Final Adjudication and  
10 Order

11 MR. JAYMAN:

12 This takes us to No. 4 on the Agenda.

13 Based on Executive Session  
14 deliberations, I believe the Chair  
15 would entertain a motion to accept the  
16 Final Adjudication and Order as written  
17 in the matters of Todd T. Thompson and  
18 Todd T. Thompson Funeral Home, Inc. at  
19 Case Nos. 23-48-016833, 24-48-011743,  
20 and 25-48-003690.

21 CHAIR DUPREE:

22 Can I have the motion?

23 MR. FERYO:

24 I'll make the motion to accept the  
25 Final Adjudication.

1 MR. RUGGERI:

2 Second.

3 CHAIR DUPREE:

4 Roll call.

5

6 Nichole Maloney, aye; Kenneth Dupree,  
7 aye; Gregory Furlong, aye; Eric  
8 Ruggeri, aye; Christopher Feryo, aye;  
9 Chad Lutz, aye; Jennifer Kirk, aye.

10 [The motion carried unanimously.]

11

\*\*\*

12 Report of Board Counsel - Discussion

13 MR. JAYMAN:

14 Takes us to Agenda Item No. 5. This is  
15 for courses to be approved from the  
16 Maryland State Funeral Directors  
17 Association.

18 Based on Executive Session  
19 deliberations, I believe the Chair  
20 would entertain a motion to reject the  
21 courses that have been provided by the  
22 Maryland State Funeral Directors  
23 Association - 106th Annual Convention  
24 for lack of information in Case No. 25-  
25 48-011205.

1 CHAIR DUPREE:

2 I will entertain a motion.

3 MR. FERYO:

4 I will make a motion to deny these  
5 continuing ed requirements.

6 MR. RUGGERI:

7 Second.

8 CHAIR DUPREE:

9 Roll call.

10

11 Nichole Maloney, aye; Kenneth Dupree,  
12 aye; Gregory Furlong, aye; Eric  
13 Ruggeri, aye; Christopher Feryo, aye;  
14 Chad Lutz, aye; Jennifer Kirk, aye.

15 [The motion carried unanimously.]

16

\*\*\*

17 Applications Committee

18 MR. JAYMAN:

19 Number 7 on the Agenda is an  
20 Application.

21 Based on Executive Session  
22 deliberations, I believe the Chair  
23 would entertain a motion to  
24 provisionally deny the Application for  
25 Additional Employment for a Supervisor

1 Application in the matter of Jill Denis  
2 Askin.

3 CHAIR DUPREE:

4 I'll entertain a motion.

5 MR. FERYO:

6 I make a motion to deny the  
7 application.

8 MR. RUGGERI:

9 Second.

10 CHAIR DUPREE:

11 Roll call.

12  
13 Nichole Maloney, aye; Kenneth Dupree,  
14 aye; Gregory Furlong, aye; Eric  
15 Ruggeri, aye; Christopher Feryo, aye;  
16 Chad Lutz, aye; Jennifer Kirk, aye.

17 [The motion carried unanimously.]

18 \*\*\*

19 Request for Review - Ratifications

20 MR. JAYMAN:

21 I'll also handle the Ratifications from  
22 8 to 14 on the Agenda.

23 Based on Executive Session  
24 deliberations, I believe the Chair  
25 would entertain a motion to ratify the

1 Applications for course approval for  
2 the following matters, 8 through 14.

3 CHAIR DUPREE:

4 I will entertain a motion.

5 MR. FERYO:

6 I make a motion to ratify 8 through 14  
7 on the Agenda.

8 MR. RUGGERI:

9 Second.

10 CHAIR DUPREE:

11 Roll call.

12

13 Nichole Maloney, aye; Kenneth Dupree,  
14 aye; Gregory Furlong, aye; Eric  
15 Ruggeri, aye; Christopher Feryo, aye;  
16 Chad Lutz, aye; Jennifer Kirk, aye.

17 [The motion carried unanimously. Approved

18 Ratifications are as follows: No. 8. FED000006 -  
19 Managing Risk in the Funeral Home; No. 9. FED000006 -  
20 The Power of META Platforms Elevating Funeral Home  
21 Visibility; No. 10. FED000062 - Review of the FTC  
22 Funeral Rule; No. 11. FED000006 - Grief: The Funeral  
23 Directors Role - Proving After Care Services; No. 12.  
24 FED000012 - Mastering the Media: Turning Interviews  
25 into Opportunities; No. 13. FED000051 - The Cremation

1 of Sam McGee: A Profile of the Modern Cremation  
2 Consumer; No. 14. FED000080 - Assessing Level of Risk  
3 with Bereaved Individuals: The Role of "Selfhood".]

4 \*\*\*

5 Requests for Review - Denied Course

6 MR. JAYMAN:

7 Finally, for Number 15 on the Agenda,  
8 based on Executive Session  
9 deliberations, I believe the Chair  
10 would entertain a motion to  
11 provisionally deny the Application for  
12 the course Every Life is Worth  
13 Remembering - What Celebrants Can Do  
14 for You at Application FED000006  
15 because it's promoting an individual  
16 company.

17 CHAIR DUPREE:

18 I'll entertain a motion.

19 MR. FERYO:

20 Motion to deny the course.

21 MR. RUGGERI:

22 Second.

23 CHAIR DUPREE:

24 Roll call.

25

1 Nichole Maloney, aye; Kenneth Dupree,  
2 aye; Gregory Furlong, aye; Eric  
3 Ruggeri, aye; Christopher Feryo, aye;  
4 Chad Lutz, aye; Jennifer Kirk, aye.

5 [The motion carried unanimously.]

6 \*\*\*

7 Report of Regulatory Counsel

8 [Marc Farrell, Esquire, Regulatory Counsel, reported  
9 the Board continues to have four open regulatory  
10 matters. Licensure by Endorsement, 16A-4832, has  
11 been published in proposed format and public comments  
12 have closed. The regulation will go into final  
13 rulemaking stage. Mr. Farrell hoped to have the  
14 regulation completed in the next few months.

15 Mr. Farrell stated General Revision, 16A-4833, is  
16 a priority for 2026. He stated his office has  
17 everything needed from the Board, and they are  
18 working on drafting the additional pieces needed for  
19 the package.

20 Mr. Farrell noted the Civil Penalties, 16A-4829,  
21 is waiting until General Revisions works through the  
22 system. He explained the civil penalty schedule may  
23 be affected by some of the general revisions.

24 Mr. Farrell explained the Food and Beverages,  
25 16A-4834, is a statement of policy. He stated it was

1 not currently active as a solution was put into the  
2 General Revisions package. 16A-4834 is serving as a  
3 placeholder.]

4

\*\*\*

5 Appointment - Financial Presentation - Taylor Koch,  
6 Chief, Bureau of Fiscal Management

7 [Tamie Laudenslager, Fiscal Management Specialist,  
8 Bureau of Finance and Procurement, presented the  
9 Board with the financial statement. The first page  
10 of her presentation showed the six-year history of  
11 the Board's license counts. She noted the Board was  
12 currently in the middle of a renewal period as their  
13 renewals happen in January of even years. She  
14 explained the screen reflected a breakdown of the  
15 Board's 11 license classes over the past four years  
16 or two biennial periods. She noted there was a 1.9  
17 percent increase in renewals for the current biennial  
18 period over the last period.

19 Her second slide disclosed the licensure renewal  
20 fees. There are three renewal fees, \$35, \$50, and  
21 \$400. She noted the last fee increase was in 2014.

22 Ms. Laudenslager provided a list of definitions  
23 for the revenue screen which the Board reviewed.

24 Ms. Laudenslager next reviewed the Board's  
25 biennial revenue by source which listed renewal

1 applications and other revenues which come from their  
2 license classes. She noted the last biennium had a  
3 revenue of \$2.435 million while the current biennium  
4 was projected to be \$2.478. She stated renewals  
5 bring in 95.3 percent of revenue with applications  
6 bringing in 3.6 percent.

7 Ms. Laudenslager presented another definition  
8 screen, showing definitions of expenses.

9 She followed up by showing the Board their  
10 expenses by cost category. She explained there were  
11 three ways in which expenses hit the Board. The  
12 first is timesheet based which is anybody who works  
13 for the Department of State who does any type of work  
14 for the Board. The second way is through direct  
15 costs such as the stenographers and expert witnesses.  
16 The third way is the license population which is a  
17 percentage of total system modernization costs  
18 divided among the 29 BPOA boards based on the  
19 percentage of licensees. She noted the prior  
20 biannual period reflected estimated costs of \$2.1  
21 million while the current biannual period is  
22 estimated at costs of \$2.8 million.

23 Ms. Kirk requested clarification on where on the  
24 spreadsheet the specific costs broken across all BPOA  
25 boards was located.

1 Taylor Koch, Fiscal Chief, Bureau of Finance and  
2 Procurement stated the modernization costs are  
3 primarily found in the board administration bucket.  
4 He added there are also costs found in the legal  
5 office bucket as well. He reiterated the costs are  
6 based of the license counts. He also noted the  
7 timesheet distributions are allocated on a monthly  
8 basis. He added, overall, there is not a single  
9 bucket where all of the modernization costs can be  
10 found.

11 Ms. Kirk expressed confusion on what Mr. Koch  
12 meant by timesheet-based expenses and if he was  
13 speaking about people who were working on projects  
14 strictly related to the Funeral Board.

15 Mr. Koch stated the phrase timesheet-based was  
16 very general and was a catch-all bucket where it  
17 could be anyone specifically charging their time to  
18 the Board for Board related costs. The licensee  
19 modernization project costs are lumped into the  
20 timesheet bucket due to the wide scope of people  
21 working across the Commonwealth on the project for  
22 all of the boards. He reiterated the costs are  
23 allocated per Board based on the license count of  
24 each Board. He added the cost category of board  
25 administration was being used for all boards because

1 the modernization costs are not specific to costs  
2 incurred by Board members or costs for departmental  
3 services. When asked, he provided additional  
4 clarification on how the percentages are split  
5 between boards, noting boards with larger numbers of  
6 licensees are picking up more of the costs for the  
7 project. He also noted there was a large jump  
8 between 2024 and 2025 in the associated fees due to  
9 costs being allocated in 2024 but not spent due to  
10 timing of purchase orders. He added some of the  
11 costs were shifted into 2025.

12 Ms. Kirk asked how the legal costs were broken  
13 down and if the costs were directly related to  
14 Funeral Board costs.

15 Mr. Koch explained while there are fees tied to  
16 the licensing system for the legal team, the bulk of  
17 the costs are tied directly to the Board. He noted  
18 the enforcement and investigation costs are  
19 specifically related to Funeral Board related case  
20 counts.

21 Ms. Kirk questioned how future budgeting was  
22 determined for costs like the hearing expenses.

23 Mr. Kock stated projections are based on what is  
24 known at the particular point in time. He explained  
25 reports are pulled on what year-to-date costs are at

1 the time of completing the budget. Those numbers are  
2 used to project out by pay periods along with looking  
3 at commitments allocated by BPOA for the rest of the  
4 year, which may not have yet hit. Consideration is  
5 also taken into account for renewal years when costs  
6 are typically higher. He added a buffer is built  
7 into the projected costs to safeguard the Board. He  
8 stated the fiscal year runs from July 1st to June  
9 30th.

10 Ms. Kirk asked if it was normal for more than  
11 half of the expenses to come in from January to June,  
12 noting the report showed legal administration costs  
13 of less than \$10,000 as of January with an estimated  
14 budget of \$41,000 and prosecution costs for the same  
15 time period of \$40,000 versus a budget of \$99,000.

16 Mr. Koch stated some of the disparity she noted  
17 was part of the licensing modernization costs which  
18 have not yet hit, such as purchase order which are on  
19 the table for 2025 but have not been applied yet to  
20 each of the boards. He noted, once one-time  
21 deliverables are picked up, there will be on-going  
22 maintenance costs, which have been included in the  
23 budgets.

24 Ms. Kirk asked Mr. Koch to clarify his  
25 explanation on how the modernization project costs

1 are allocated versus what costs are specifically  
2 related to Funeral Board costs.

3 Mr. Koch provided additional clarification,  
4 echoing his previous explanation. He noted basic  
5 formulas are used to project costs. He additionally  
6 broke down the costs and projected numbers for  
7 prosecution counsel; hearing expenses; and  
8 enforcement and investigations. He noted the amounts  
9 include not just payroll charges but expenses like  
10 rent and other direct costs. He noted investigations  
11 and inspections are hourly cost based which can vary  
12 based not just on number of investigations but also  
13 in who is doing the inspections. To project costs, a  
14 basic math formula is used.

15 Ms. Laudenslager explained the last slide of the  
16 presentation showed both the biannual revenue and  
17 expenses as well as the restricted balance for fiscal  
18 years 2022 through 2033. She noted, while projected  
19 expenses are expected to exceed projected revenue,  
20 the Division of Fiscal Management was not  
21 recommending a fee increase at the current time. She  
22 stated they intended to monitor the rest of the  
23 current fiscal year and into the next fiscal year.

24 Ms. Kirk asked what would trigger a  
25 recommendation for a fee increase.

1 Ms. Laudenslager stated a recommendation would be  
2 triggered if the restricted balance drops too low and  
3 biannual balances are too negative. She noted the  
4 division would return to the Board with a fee  
5 package, and it would be the Board's responsibility  
6 at that point to approve or deny an increase based on  
7 possible options.

8 Ms. Kirk asked what Ms. Laudenslager meant by the  
9 restricted balance going low.

10 Mr. Koch explained ideally the restricted balance  
11 is maintained with enough funds to cover one biennium  
12 of expenses should everything shut down and no  
13 revenue be generated. Because the Boards restricted  
14 balance is very close to their biennium expense, the  
15 plan is to monitor the numbers. He intends to meet  
16 with the Board more than one time a year at the  
17 annual report. He suggested it was better to keep  
18 the Board updated on a more frequent balance instead  
19 of the Board needing to make a reactive snap  
20 decision. He added the division would return to the  
21 Board months in advance before a dire straits  
22 situation to stay ahead of a full depletion of the  
23 restricted funds.

24 Mr. Farrell commented the process to raise fees  
25 is done through the regulatory process. He noted

1 final regs have to be published prior to when the  
2 fees can go up, giving licensees adequate notice of  
3 increases. He added the process can take roughly two  
4 years, which makes it tricky to predict where things  
5 are going.

6 Mr. Koch echoed Mr. Farrells remarks and stressed  
7 the length of the regulatory process is why he wanted  
8 to meet with the Board on a more frequent basis.

9 Chair Dupree stated funeral homes have a minimum  
10 of three licenses they would have to renew, so a fee  
11 increase could be a huge expense for a funeral home  
12 that would need ample time to fiscally prepare. He  
13 asked when Mr. Koch would be reporting back to the  
14 Board and how any recommendation could be worked  
15 through to minimize the impact on funeral homes.

16 Mr. Koch stated he would likely return at the May  
17 or July meeting, by which time he would be able to  
18 present a more accurate picture of the fiscal year.  
19 He explained he may not be presenting a fee package  
20 at that time since the restricted balance is still  
21 healthy. He noted a fee package presentation would  
22 be more likely later in the 2026/2027 biennium. He  
23 added, if there was a spike in license counts,  
24 driving up revenue, the Board may be able to push off  
25 fee increases to a later point. He stated there are

1 steps in place for increases to prevent a huge shock  
2 to anyone if fee increases are warranted.

3 Ms. Kirk confirmed the last increase was in 2014.  
4 She asked how frequently other boards changed their  
5 fees.

6 Mr. Koch stated fee changes vary by board  
7 depending on license counts. He noted some Boards  
8 have not had a fee increase since 1988 while other  
9 boards increase fees last year. He added there are  
10 many unknown factors that can affect revenue.

11 Ms. Kirk asked if the modernization costs would  
12 eventually be paid off or if there would be  
13 indefinite continuing costs.

14 Mr. Koch explained the bulk of the modernization  
15 costs were slated for the current fiscal year. Once  
16 the one-time deliverables are paid, he projected  
17 relative maintenance costs moving forward.

18 Ms. Kirk explained she was trying to estimate how  
19 much the cost estimate would go down once the front-  
20 loaded costs are gone.

21 Mr. Koch explained how the decreases were  
22 projected, noting the projected expenses also take  
23 into account for things like payroll increases and  
24 future higher overall costs of doing business.

25 Mr. Farrell mentioned the last fee increase for

1 the Board in 2014 only changed the biennial renewal  
2 fee, so application fees have remained the same for  
3 much longer.

4 Ms. Laudenslager thanked the Board for allowing  
5 them to come give the financial presentation. She  
6 noted they looked forward to seeing the Board later  
7 on in the year.]

8

\*\*\*

9 Appointment - Annual Prosecution Report - Shana

10 Walter, Deputy Chief Counsel

11 [Shana M. Walter, Esquire, Deputy Chief Counsel,

12 Prosecution Division explained the Bureau of

13 Professional and Occupational Affairs (BPOA) provides

14 administrative and legal support to the 29

15 professional and occupational licensing boards and

16 commissions within the department. The Office of

17 Chief Counsel Prosecution Division works with its

18 investigative (BEI) and compliance arms (PCO) who

19 receive complaints, investigate allegations, and

20 enforce compliance with the acts and regulations that

21 govern the boards and commissions. She stated the

22 Prosecution Division is comprised of five senior

23 prosecuting attorneys as well as 34 prosecuting

24 attorneys including each board liaison.

25 Ms. Walter stated the prosecution process always

1 begins with a complaint. She reported in both 2024  
2 and 2025 the department received approximately 22,800  
3 total complaints for all boards. Ms. Walter provided  
4 an overview of the investigative process in which the  
5 complaint moves through several levels of review.  
6 She noted the primary role of prosecution at Board  
7 meetings is to present Consent Agreements to the  
8 Board.

9 Ms. Walter explained, after the investigative  
10 process, the evidence is reviewed by the prosecuting  
11 attorney to determine if they believe there have been  
12 any violations of the act or regulations, how  
13 sufficient the evidence is and determine if  
14 additional files need to be opened. She stated, if a  
15 violation is suspected, the available options  
16 include: Immediate temporary suspension; filing an  
17 order to show cause; automatic suspension; an order  
18 for a mental or physical examination; and a petition  
19 for appropriate relief if the case violates a  
20 previous Board order. Avenues for discipline types  
21 are revocation, suspension, probation, public  
22 reprimand, civil penalty, remedial education, and  
23 cost of investigation. She added all investigations  
24 are confidential and are not subject to right-to-know  
25 requests. Information can be shared with other

1 licensing boards and law enforcement. The only  
2 information shared publicly via the PALS website are  
3 the final actions.

4 Ms. Walters shared, in 2025, there were 17,354  
5 cases opened, slightly more than calendar year 2024.  
6 However, the division closed significantly more in  
7 2025, having closed 19,131. Specifically for the  
8 Funeral Directors Board, she reported 223 were opened  
9 with 173 cases being closed. The penalties included  
10 11 monetary and/or types of discipline affecting the  
11 ability to practice, and 61 warning letters. She  
12 added three licenses were reinstated. Ms. Walter  
13 shared the Funeral Directors Board has 7,614 active  
14 licenses and 142 open cases.

15 Ms. Kirk asked how long the average investigation  
16 takes to conclude.

17 Ms. Walter stated for the Funeral Directors  
18 Board, the average is 186 days. She noted the goal  
19 for all boards is under 365 days. She added the  
20 average for the Board was a testament to the great  
21 prosecution working for the Board.

22 Ms. Kirk requested clarification on the penalty  
23 categories.

24 Ms. Walter explained, when discipline is imposed,  
25 it can be a combination of different kind of monetary

1 penalties. With civil penalties or cost of  
2 investigation, the penalty may be accompanied by  
3 another kind of disciplinary action which would  
4 affect the licensee's ability to practice. She  
5 thanked the Board for their time.]

6

\*\*\*

7 Miscellaneous - Sunshine Act and Recusal Presentation  
8 [Shawn J. Jayman, Esquire, Board Counsel, presented  
9 the biannual Sunshine Act and Recusal Guidelines  
10 Presentation. He summarized that the Sunshine Act  
11 ensures transparency in government by requiring open  
12 meetings for all official actions and deliberations  
13 involving agency matters. Any time a quorum of Board  
14 members meets to discuss Board business, the meeting  
15 must be publicly advertised. Deliberations are  
16 defined as discussions intended to lead to decisions,  
17 and official actions include votes or policy  
18 decisions.

19 Public notice of meetings must be issued at the  
20 beginning of the calendar year and at least three  
21 days in advance, with any changes requiring 24-hour  
22 notice. Emergency meetings are exempt but must be  
23 justified. All meetings and agendas are posted  
24 publicly, including in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* and  
25 on the Board's website.

1           Mr. Jayman noted that amendments to the Sunshine  
2 Act in 2021 require, if the agenda changes within 24  
3 hours of the meeting, an amended agenda must be  
4 published afterward. Meeting locations and agendas  
5 must be made available in advance, and discussions  
6 outside the posted agenda are only allowed if there  
7 is a natural connection. All votes must be publicly  
8 cast, so virtual participant members must have  
9 cameras on. Meeting minutes must include the time,  
10 place, attendance, and substance of discussions,  
11 though not verbatim. Executive sessions may be held  
12 for limited purposes, such as discussing litigation  
13 strategy, deliberation matters, or personnel issues,  
14 though personnel issues typically fall outside Board  
15 purview. Executive sessions must be announced with  
16 reasons and remain confidential even after the  
17 meeting.

18           He warned that violations of the Sunshine Act can  
19 invalidate meeting actions and lead to litigation or  
20 attorney fees. Criminal penalties are rare and  
21 require District Attorney action. He clarified that  
22 actions of Board committees like the Application  
23 Committee or Probable Cause Committee are not  
24 considered to be a meeting if there is no quorum and  
25 if actions are preliminary or administrative.

1           Regarding recusals, Mr. Jayman outlined the types  
2 of recusals and the impact of those recusals.  
3 Mandatory recusals include involvement in  
4 prosecution, being a complainant, or having a direct  
5 financial interest. Strongly recommended recusals  
6 include personal connections or outside knowledge of  
7 a case. Discretionary recusals apply when  
8 impartiality is uncertain. He advised Board members  
9 to consult Counsel in advance when unsure.  
10 Abstentions from voting are allowed for lack of  
11 preparation or uncertainty but prevent a member from  
12 requesting reconsideration later. Members may still  
13 attend for quorum purposes, but recusals count  
14 against quorum.

15           He also detailed conflict-of-interest rules.  
16 Professional members may not serve as officers or  
17 agents of statewide professional associations, and  
18 public members may not be part of the regulated  
19 profession or have immediate family members who are.  
20 Public members must not hold any other appointed  
21 office in the Commonwealth.]

22

\*\*\*

23 Old Business - New Business - New Board Officers

24 MR. JAYMAN:

25                           Is there a nomination for the Chair of

1 the State Board of Funeral Directors?

2 MR. RUGGERI:

3 I nominate Kenneth Dupree.

4 MR. JAYMAN:

5 And is there a second?

6 MR. FURLONG:

7 I second that.

8 MR. JAYMAN:

9 Are there any other nominations for  
10 Chair of the State Board of Funeral  
11 Directors?

12 Seeing none, is there a motion to  
13 elect Kenneth Dupree as Chair of the  
14 State Board of Funeral Directors?

15 MR. FERYO:

16 I'll make the motion to elect Ken  
17 Dupree as Chairperson.

18 MR. RUGGERI:

19 Second.

20 MR. JAYMAN:

21 Roll call.

22  
23 Nichole Maloney, aye; Kenneth Dupree,  
24 aye; Gregory Furlong, aye; Eric  
25 Ruggeri, aye; Christopher Feryo, aye;

1 Chad Lutz, aye; Jennifer Kirk, aye.

2 [The motion carried unanimously.]

3 \*\*\*

4 MR. JAYMAN:

5 Is there a nomination for the Vice  
6 Chairperson of the State Board of  
7 Funeral Directors?

8 CHAIR DUPREE:

9 I can nominate Gregory Furlong.

10 MR. JAYMAN:

11 And is there a second?

12 MR. RUGGERI:

13 Second.

14 MR. JAYMAN:

15 Are there any other nominations for  
16 Vice Chair of the State Board of  
17 Funeral Directors?

18 Seeing none, is there a motion to  
19 elect Gregory Furlong as Vice Chair of  
20 the State Board of Funeral Directors?

21 MR. FERYO:

22 I nominate Greg Furlong as Vice Chair.

23 MR. JAYMAN:

24 Is there a second?

25 MR. RUGGERI:

1                               Second.

2 MR. JAYMAN:

3                               Roll call.

4

5                               Nichole Maloney, aye; Kenneth Dupree,

6                               aye; Gregory Furlong, aye; Eric

7                               Ruggeri, aye; Christopher Feryo, aye;

8                               Chad Lutz, aye; Jennifer Kirk, aye.

9 [The motion carried unanimously.]

10

\*\*\*

11 MR. JAYMAN:

12                               Is there a nomination for the Secretary

13                               of the State Board of Funeral

14                               Directors?

15 MR. FURLONG:

16                               I'll make the motion for Eric Ruggeri.

17 MR. JAYMAN:

18                               Is there a second?

19 MR. FERYO:

20                               Second.

21 MR. JAYMAN:

22                               Any other nominations for Secretary of

23                               the State Board of Funeral Directors?

24                               Seeing none, is there a motion to

25                               elect Eric Ruggeri as Secretary of the

1 State Board of Funeral Directors?

2 MR. FERYO:

3 I'll make a motion to elect Eric  
4 Ruggeri as Secretary.

5 MR. JAYMAN:

6 Is there a second?

7 MR. LUTZ:

8 I'll second.

9 MR. JAYMAN:

10 Roll call.

11

12 Nichole Maloney, aye; Kenneth Dupree,  
13 aye; Gregory Furlong, aye; Eric  
14 Ruggeri, aye; Christopher Feryo, aye;  
15 Chad Lutz, aye; Jennifer Kirk, aye.

16 [The motion carried unanimously.]

17

\*\*\*

18 Public Comments -

19 [Ernie Heffner, President, Heffner Funeral Chapel and  
20 Crematory, noted the financial report was  
21 interesting; however, he was concerned the Board was  
22 considering raising licensee fees when fines and  
23 penalties are de minimis. He specifically mentioned  
24 the penalties from the case at Agenda Item 2, noting  
25 the penalty was roughly 21 percent of the fraud

1 amount. He complimented Mr. Ruggeri in being opposed  
2 to the motion for Agenda Item 2.]

3

\*\*\*

4 [Laura Mudlock, Owner, Ruane & Mudlock Funeral Home  
5 Inc., Board Member, Luzerne County Funeral Directors  
6 Association, stated, as of last year, it was her  
7 responsibility to coordinate continuing education for  
8 her county. She explained the process was not easy,  
9 and she thought it could use some updating.

10 Ms. Mudlock explained the specific issue she had  
11 encountered noting her main issue was communication.  
12 She did not find out until December when she tried to  
13 renew the application that a class submitted in June  
14 had not been approved. When she called to ask what  
15 happened, she was told the class was not approved,  
16 because the syllabus did not have bullet points. She  
17 reviewed the requirements but did not see a  
18 formatting requirement of bullet points. She stated  
19 she brought the issue to the attention of Chair  
20 Dupree, who thought it could be fixed. However, she  
21 has now been told the problem cannot be fixed  
22 retroactively. She expressed confusion on why she  
23 did not receive communication. She was told a  
24 discrepancy letter had been sent, but stated no  
25 letter was received at the old email address or new

1 address on file with PALS.

2 Ms. Mudlock stated the application process needs  
3 to be clarified. She was told by a member of office  
4 staff to send in a new syllabus with bullet points.  
5 She then received another email asking where the rest  
6 of the application was, noting it appeared to be  
7 another lack of communication. She questioned if she  
8 sent in a new application with a new syllabus and new  
9 bio if she would also have to send in the money  
10 again. She noted she would love to be a part of the  
11 solution and not just bring up a problem.

12 Ms. Maloney thanked Ms. Mudlock for sharing. She  
13 stated she would take the information shared back to  
14 Acting Commissioner Claggett so BPOA could look into  
15 her specific case. She explained the new system,  
16 which will be replacing PALS, was expected to have  
17 improvements with the processing of applications.

18 Ms. Warner noted continuing education  
19 applications are processed by mail and not online in  
20 PALS.

21 Ms. Maloney cautioned against discussing any  
22 specific details of applications while in public  
23 session for security and confidentiality reasons.]

24

\*\*\*

25 [Harry C. Neel, Jefferson Memorial Funeral Home,

1 shared frustrations with the Board having discussions  
2 in Executive Session and then processing quickly by  
3 vote in the public meetings. He understood  
4 litigations could not be discussed publicly; however,  
5 he would like more descriptions of the continuing  
6 education ratifications approved by the Board. He  
7 noted the public only sees what they read on the  
8 Agenda. He appreciated the Sunshine Act presentation  
9 and hoped the Board would improve.]

10 \*\*\*

11 [Ernie Heffner, President, Heffner Funeral Chapel  
12 questioned the plethora of emails he was receiving  
13 regarding his license.

14 Ms. Warner stated the emails were automatic  
15 through PALS. She noted her office has been  
16 receiving a number of phone calls about the emails,  
17 noting people who have already renewed are getting  
18 renewal notices.

19 Mr. Heffner stated a similar problem happened two  
20 years ago and that he was not the only person in his  
21 company receiving the emails.

22 Ms. Maloney reviewed the general process for  
23 renewals, noting specific points where licensees  
24 should receive email notifications. She stated she  
25 was unable to speak to the number of individuals in a

1 similar situation to Mr. Heffner. She added there  
2 could be a number of reasons for a renewal to not  
3 process.

4 Mr. Heffner asked who he would contact to make  
5 sure there was not a failure on his part.

6 Ms. Warner stated there was an issue with a child  
7 abuse CE provider who did not upload information.  
8 She noted any licensee who used the particular  
9 provider was seeing that their license had not  
10 renewed and were receiving discrepancy letters. She  
11 added due to the license renewal process for funeral  
12 directors, all people at a funeral home have to be  
13 renewed before anyone will see their license renewed.  
14 She was preparing a list of everyone affected by the  
15 child abuse hold.]

16

\*\*\*

17 [Shawn J. Jayman, Esquire, Board Counsel, responded  
18 to Mr. Neel's comments. He stated he knew Mr. Neel  
19 had previous concerns regarding CE applications,  
20 which were denied. He explained provisional denial  
21 letters are filed with the prothonotary, and Mr. Neel  
22 could look up specific letters by docket number to  
23 find the reasons for denials.

24 Mr. Neel asked if the records were online.

25 Mr. Michalowski stated he did not think CE

1 denials were online, but he did not deal with  
2 application.

3 Mr. Neel expressed appreciation for the specific  
4 response; however, he noted he was speaking a bit  
5 more generally.]

6

\*\*\*

7 [Nichole Maloney, Division Chief, Health Licensing  
8 Division, designee for Arion R. Claggett, Acting  
9 Commissioner, Bureau of Professional and Occupational  
10 Affairs, added additional clarification for the  
11 renewal process. She noted any licensee can go to  
12 their profile to see detailed timelines for their  
13 application as well as what might still be  
14 outstanding or missing. She commented Ms. Warner's  
15 explanation would make sense regarding the child  
16 abuse CE provider. She added once the situation is  
17 resolved with a license renewal, any dependent  
18 licenses should also renew within 24 hours.

19 Chair Dupree asked if there was a way for  
20 licensees to verify child abuse clearance prior to  
21 renewal as many people take it months before the  
22 renewal.

23 Ms. Maloney explained there are education  
24 sections on the PALS dashboard. She stated if a  
25 licensee did not see their course listed, they should

1 double-check with the provider. She also cautioned  
2 all personal information including first and last  
3 name, date of birth and last four of the licensee's  
4 social security number have to match exactly with the  
5 provider and PALS system.

6 Ms. Mudlock shared she knew of a specific  
7 licensee in Luzerne County who has on-going issues  
8 with getting her license renewed due to a hyphenated  
9 last name. She added people who are juniors, seniors  
10 or have a second, third, or fourth at the end of  
11 their last name also seem to have issues getting  
12 everything to match.

13 Ms. Maloney reiterated it goes back to making  
14 sure everything matches exactly in the PALS profile  
15 and with the certification. She stated the only way  
16 to rectify the problem would be to make a change with  
17 the state or by making a change with the provider.  
18 She acknowledged there are nuances in any system  
19 which is why exact matching is important.

20 Mr. Ruggeri asked if there was a way to verify  
21 similar issues do not carry over to the new system.

22 Ms. Maloney stated extensive testing was being  
23 done in the different stages as they moved through  
24 the process of creating the new system. She noted  
25 hurdles seen in the PALS system are being looked at

1 to hopefully overcome with the new system. It was  
2 noted licensees should check within 30 days of  
3 completing child abuse CE to verify if it has cleared  
4 to their profile in PALS. Ms. Maloney confirmed  
5 child abuse CE is required by law to be directly  
6 submitted electronically by the provider.]

7 \*\*\*

8 Adjournment

9 CHAIR DUPREE:

10 So I'll move for the adjournment of  
11 this meeting.

12 MR. FERYO:

13 I'll make a motion to adjourn the  
14 meeting.

15 MR. RUGGERI:

16 Second.

17 CHAIR DUPREE:

18 This meeting is hereby adjourned.

19 Thank you.

20 [There being no further business, the State Board of  
21 Funeral Directors Meeting adjourned at 12:29 p.m.]

22 \*\*\*

23

24

25

26

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

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.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jacob Hill,  
Minute Clerk  
Sargent's Court Reporting  
Service, Inc.

STATE BOARD OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS  
REFERENCE INDEX  
January 21, 2026

	TIME	AGENDA
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8	9:00	Executive Session
9	10:30	Return to Open Session
10		
11	10:35	Official Call to Order
12		
13	10:36	Roll Call/Introduction of Attendees
14		
15	10:38	Approval of Minutes
16		
17	10:39	Report of Prosecutorial Division
18		
19	10:45	Report of Board Counsel
20		
21	10:51	Applications Committee
22		
23	10:52	Requests for Review
24		
25	10:53	Regulatory Issues
26		
27	10:58	Appointment - Financial Presentation
28		
29	11:38	Appointment - Annual Prosecution Report
30		
31	11:48	Miscellaneous
32		
33	12:00	New Board Officers
34		
35	12:04	Public Comment
36		
37	12:29	Adjournment
38		
39		
40		
41		
42		
43		
44		
45		
46		
47		
48		
49		
50		