



Douglas A. Ducey – Governor

Arizona State Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers
1740 West Adams Street, Suite 3006, Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Samuel Bueler, Chairman/Professional Member * Amie Gazda, Secretary
Harold Adair, Professional Member * Joe Hornat, Public Member * Robert Hockensmith, Public Member
* Helene Bergeon, Public Member * Lemuel D. Cannon, Public Member

MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION

Board Meeting Held On:
Tuesday, March 16, 2021 • 9:00 a.m. • 1st Floor Conference Room “C”
1740 West Adams Street • Phoenix, AZ 85007

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Samuel Bueler called the Board Meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Members Present:	Samuel Bueler Amie Gazda Lemuel Cannon Harold Adair	Chairman/Industry Member Secretary/Industry Member Public Member Industry Member
Telephonically:	Robert Hockensmith Helene Bergeon	Public Member (joined at 9:09 am) Public Member
Members Absent:	Joe Hornat	Public Member
Board Staff Present:	Judith Stapley Brandon Eaden Evelyn Estrella	Executive Director Investigator Licensing Administrator
Attorney General’s Office:	Scott Donald (9:00-11:45 am) Carrie Smith (11:45 - 12:39 pm)	Assistant Attorney General Assistant Attorney General

2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Board Chairman Sam Bueler read the Board's Statement of Purpose.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Amie Gazda recused from agenda item #5 (E) (1) Salesperson licensure of Michael Gorman.

4. MINUTES

Board member Amie Gazda moved to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2021 Board meeting. Board member Harold Adair seconded this motion. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

5. LICENSING

By motion and second, and motion carrying, the following actions occurred relative to applications for licensure subject to the conditions noted:

NAME	TYPE OF LICENSE	ACTION	MOTION BY	SECOND BY
Keith Perkins	Funeral Director	Approved 5-0	Adair	Gazda
Wendy Greer	Funeral Director Universal Recognition	Approved 5-0	Adair	Gazda
Darryl Foster	Funeral Director Universal Recognition	Approved 5-0	Adair	Cannon
Karen De Bruin	Funeral Director Universal Recognition	Approved 5-0	Adair	Cannon
Darren Malone	Funeral Director	Approved 5-0	Adair	Cannon
Sufiyya Sparkman	Funeral Director	Approved 5-0	Adair	Cannon
Darren Malone	Embalmer	Approved 5-0	Adair	Cannon
Adam Lindsay	Embalmer	Approved 5-0	Adair	Cannon

Karen De Bruin	Embalmer Universal Recognition	Approved 5-0	Adair	Cannon
Sufiya Sparkman	Embalmer	Approved 5-0	Adair	Cannon
Houston Denny	Cremationist	Approved 6-0	Adair	Cannon
Jayne Hansen	Cremationist	Approved 6-0	Adair	Cannon
Brittany Hinegardner	Cremationist	Approved 6-0	Adair	Cannon
Alex Nunez-Tapia	Cremationist	Approved 6-0	Adair	Cannon
Spencer Perlman	Cremationist	Approved 6-0	Adair	Cannon
Brittany Hinegardner	Intern	Approved 6-0	Adair	Cannon
Michael Gorman	Salesperson	Approved 5-0 Amie Gazda recused	Cannon	Adair
Jacqueline Von Bank	Salesperson	Approved 6-0	Adair	Cannon

6. REVIEW, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING:

The Board may vote to go into Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S. § 32-431.03(A) (2) (to discuss confidential information) or A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A) (3) (to receive legal advice).

A. Docket 2020-FDE-0017 Oasis Cremation & Funeral Care

Responsible Funeral Director (RFD) of Oasis Cremation & Funeral Care (Oasis) at the time of the incident was Chris McDermott. Mr. McDermott was present telephonically along with the current RFD and legal counsel Wendy Weiner. The complainant Cynthia Martinez was not present. Ms. Martinez alleged in the complaint that the lawful authorizing agent of the decedent was the son, Travisario Nereim. Mr. McDermott produced a court ordered document that directed the legally adopted daughter to make final disposition arrangements for the decedent and take custody of the cremated remains. Following review and discussion of the matter, Board member Samuel Bueler moved to dismiss the matter. This motion was seconded by Helene Bergeon and carried unanimously 6-0.

7. REVIEW, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING:

The Board may vote to go into Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S. § 32-431.03(A) (2) (to discuss confidential information) or A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A) (3) (to receive legal advice).

A. Docket 2020-FDE-0019 Mohave Memorial Funeral & Cremation Services

Responsible Funeral Director (RFD) and owner of Mohave Memorial Funeral & Cremation Services (Mohave) Jerome Miratsky was present telephonically. The complainant Nancy Besier was not present. The complainant alleged that the arranger Kelly Medlin at Mohave questioned her about insurance matters that were inappropriate and shared information with other individuals who she had no authorization to. During review it was noted that the contract was not signed by a licensed funeral director as required by A.R.S. 32-1373 (E).

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Samuel Bueler moved to enter in to an executive session at 9:50 am. This motion was seconded by Harold Adair and carried 6-0.

OPEN MEETING:

The Board returned to open session at 10:12 am.

After further review and discussion Board member Harold Adair moved to continue this matter and directed Board staff to further investigate. This motion was seconded by Board member Amie Gazda and carried unanimously 6-0.

8. REVIEW, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING:

The Board may vote to go into Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S. § 32-431.03(A) (2) (to discuss confidential information) or A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A) (3) (to receive legal advice).

A. Docket 2020-FDE-0037 Abel Funeral Services Inc.

*Board member Helene Bergeon left the meeting at 10:44am during the review of this docket.

Responsible Funeral Director Marty Thompson, Embalmer Darrin Harper and Funeral Director/Embalmer Michael Vasquez were present on behalf of Abel Funeral Services Inc. The complainant Judy Hamik, spouse of the decedent was present telephonically. The complainant alleged the decedent, Thomas J. Hamik was not embalmed correctly and subsequently was not viewable once the decedent arrived at the funeral home in Seattle, Washington. These allegations were based on guidance received from a licensed Intern and Embalmer at Bonney Watson Funeral Services in Seattle, Washington. After review of all photos and documentation, Board members found all embalming procedures to be in line with industry standards and the decedent was in a condition that he could have been viewed upon arrival in Washington had the receiving funeral home acted in a

professional and competent manner. Following discussion and review, Robert Hockensmith moved to dismiss the matter and direct Board staff to forward the complaint and investigation to the Washington State Funeral and Cemetery Board for review and consideration. This motion seconded by Harold Adair and carried 5-0.

9. REVIEW, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING:

The Board may vote to go into Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S. § 32-431.03(A) (2) (to discuss confidential information) or A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A) (3) (to receive legal advice).

- A. A. Discussion of Fatality Surge Situational Brief
Arizona Department of Health Service Health Emergency Operations Center (HEOC)-Antonio Hernandez

Antonio Hernandez was present to present an update of the current fatality situation in the state. There has been a gradual downturn in daily death totals. As of yesterday, there were an average of slightly more than 250 deaths occurring daily. The average number of days for funeral establishments to register a death in the Database Application of Vital Events (DAVE) system was 1 day. The average number of days for a death to be certified by a medical provider is 1 ½ days. The state is seeing about a 20% increase in deaths. Approximately ⅓ of the population 18 and older has been vaccinated at this time. The approximate total number of deaths in 2020 was 71,000.

10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No one came forward to speak.

11. EXECUTIVE REPORT:

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- A. International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Board (ICFSEB)
 - a. 118th Annual Meeting, February 23-24, 2021, was attended by Board member Lemuel Cannon, Amie Gazda and Executive Director Judith Stapley. Many items were covered at the conference including industry challenges brought on by COVID-19, alkaline hydrolysis, mortuary transporters, changes and struggles occurring throughout the nation with regard to industry standards. Ms. Stapley expressed the benefit of hearing from counterparts in other states to help gain perspective on how Arizona is doing in comparison.
- B. Quarterly Report
 - a. Virtual Inspections - Executive Director will explore the possibility of conducting virtual inspections throughout the state.
 - b. Brandon conducted 3 inspections this quarter, all for funeral establishments. There are currently 240 licensed funeral establishments

and 58 licensed crematories.

- C. Board Appointment - Harold Adair has been reappointed by the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions until 2024.

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- A. Update on sunset audit
- B. Salary

13. REVIEW OF SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS:

Subject to appropriate notice, the Board reserves the right to change meeting dates.

2021 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

APRIL 20, 2021	MAY 18, 2021	JUNE 15, 2021	JULY 20, 2021
AUGUST 17, 2021	SEPTEMBER 21, 2021	OCTOBER 19, 2021	NOVEMBER 16, 2021
DECEMBER 21, 2021			

14. ADJOURNMENT

Board member Lemuel Cannon moved to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Board member Amie Gazda and carried 5-0. The Board adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

Judith R. Stapley

Judith Stapley
Executive Director