

*Arkansas State Board of Embalmers, Funeral Directors, Cemeteries, and Burial Services
Board Meeting Minutes*

Tuesday, March 15, 2022

1 Commerce Way
Diamond Mine Room– 2nd Floor
Little Rock, AR
9:00 – 9:40 AM

1. **Call to Order** – Introduction of Board members and staff.

Chair Bill Booker, Professional Member called the meeting to order. Member(s) present: Billy Curl, Professional Member, Commissioner Appointed Designee Dan Honey, Professional Member, Rausch Hodges, Professional Member, Keith Medders, Professional Member, Stephanie Nepling, Consumer Member, and Josephine Perry, Senior Citizens Member

Members absent: Bruce Smithson, Professional Member and Steve Whitwell, Professional Member and Vice-chair.

Staff present: Robert Akers, Director, Funeral Services Division, Amanda Gibson, Arkansas Insurance Department, Associate Counsel, Amy Goode, Executive Secretary, Josh Taylor, Board Inspector/Investigator, and Amelia Vestal, Senior Securities Examiner.

2. **New Business**

a) **Embalmers & Funeral Directors – Establishments Seeking Approval**

[[A.C.A. §17-29-304 Funeral Establishment – Requirements, §17-29-305 Examinations – Licenses](#)]

i. **Southern Transport and Removal Service (STAR) – Board ID No. 25491.**

Requests a **Type D** establishment license and is located at 506 Clement, Gosnell, Arkansas. Inspector Taylor inspected the Type D Transport establishment owned by Tommy Ray Rodgers, III on **Thursday, March 3, 2022**. Mr. Rodgers received his blood borne pathogen training 01/20/2022. All required documentation submitted is pending Board approval.

Tommy Rodgers was present representing Southern Transport and Removal Service (STAR). The inspection was in order and ready for licensure. Executive Secretary noted the photos appeared the windows needed curtains or darker tinting. Inspector Taylor said that some curtains wouldn't hurt, but the windows were tinted.

Motion made by Perry to approve the Type D Establishment License to Southern Transport and Removal Service (STAR), seconded by Nepling, all in favor. Motion carried.

- ii. **Conway Transport – Board ID No. 25492.** Requests a **Type D** establishment license and is located at 5186 Prince Street, Conway, Arkansas. Inspector Taylor inspected the Type D Transport establishment owned by Ronnie Cooper on **Monday, February 14, 2022.** Mr. Cooper received his blood borne pathogen training 02/07/2022. Additional driver Jaquan Cartwright received his blood borne pathogen training 02/07/2022, as well. All required documentation submitted is pending Board approval.

Ronnie Cooper was present representing Conway Transport. The inspection was in order except for vehicle registration.

Motion made by Medders to approve the Type D Establishment license to Conway Transport pending proof of registration, seconded by Honey, all in favor. Motion carried.

b) Crematory Permit Application Approval [[§17-29-313 Crematorium Construction](#)]

- i. **Barker Crematory, Salem, Arkansas - Crematory Permit Application – Steve Barker,** requests a Crematory Construction Permit and will be located at 857 Hwy 62 West, Salem, AR. All required documentation submitted is pending Board approval.

Steve Barker was present representing Barker Crematory. Everything has been submitted as required by the statute.

Motion made by Honey to approve the crematory construction permit to Barker Crematory, seconded by Medders, all in favor. Motion carried.

- ii. **Wolfe Brothers Funeral Home, West Memphis, Arkansas - Crematory Permit Application – Larry and William Wolfe,** requests a Crematory Construction Permit and will be located at 107 Barton Street, Turrell, AR. All required documentation submitted is pending Board approval

William Wolfe was present representing the crematory. Everything has been submitted as required by the statute.

Motion made by Curl to approve the crematory construction permit to Barker Crematory, seconded by Honey, all in favor. Motion carried.

3. Complaints

- a) **To consider the complaint(s) on-file with the State Board**
[\[A.C.A. §23-61-1111 Duties of the State Insurance Department\]](#)

Amanda Gibson stated she had 9 complaints to present to the board for consideration.

Case No. 21-29 In the matter of Eden Riffe – Respondent is dually licensed in Tennessee. She was issued a temporary working number with an expiration date of December 10, 2021. Prior to

the expiration date, Board staff advised she needed to take the exam to become licensed. Respondent advised she is no longer working for the establishment and has agreed to a revocation of the temporary working number. Counsel advised that the Board should accept the Consent Agreement signed by Respondent.

Motion made by Medders to approve the consent agreement with Eden Riffe, seconded by Honey, all in favor. Motion carried.

Case No. 21-22 - Respondent is a dually out of state temporary licensee, which expired March 12, 2021. Despite several emails from Board staff, the Respondent failed to apply for full licensure. The investigation revealed that the Respondent embalmed 69 bodies between March 12, 2021, and December 14, 2021, after the expiration of the temporary working number. Counsel advises the Board should set this matter for a hearing to address disciplinary action as a result of the unlicensed embalming.

Motion made by Neipling to accept staff's recommendation to set Case No. 21-22 for a hearing, seconded by Medders, all in favor. Motion carried.

Case No. 20-21 – Board staff and counsel recommends closure.
Case No. 21-04 – Board staff and counsel recommends closure.
Case No. 21-10 – Board staff and counsel recommends closure.
Case No. 21-20 – Board staff and counsel recommends closure.
Case No. 21-27 – Board staff and counsel recommends closure.
Case No. 21-28 – Board staff and counsel recommends closure.
Case No. 22-01 – Board staff and counsel recommends closure.

Motion made by Curl to accept staff's recommendation to close the above referenced cases, seconded by Honey, all in favor. Motion carried.

Amelia Vestal has 4 complaints to present to the board to consider for closure.

PCC22-002– Complaint was regarding a monument ordered in May 2021 that has yet to be placed. Cemetery has not been forthcoming with details; the matter has been resolved and the family is satisfied.

PCC22-012 – Complaint was regarding the removal of a ledger marker, placed in 2018, from her loved one's grave. There had been a new manager named and the problem has now been resolved and the family is satisfied.

PCC22-015 – Complainant was complaining about dirt piles and maintenance running over graves. There was a new groundskeeper who was made aware of the problem and the issue has been resolved and family has not responded to the response, therefore we assume the matter is resolved.

PCC22-016 – Complaint was regarding destruction of his mother's headstone. Cemetery reset the headstone and the family is satisfied.

Motion made by Curl to accept the staff's recommendation to close the above referenced cases, seconded by Honey, all in favor. Motion carried.

4. **Administrative**

a) **Approval of the October 19, 2021, meeting minutes**

Motion made by Curl to approve the October 19th minutes as submitted, seconded by Perry, all in favor. Motion Carried.

b) **Approval of the November 16, 2021, meeting minutes**

Motion made by Curl to approve the November 16th minutes as submitted, seconded by Medders, all in favor. Motion carried.

5. **Next Meeting Date(s)**

a) **Tuesday, April 19, 2022 (9:00 a.m.) Board Meeting and Hearings**

6. **Future Meeting Date(s) 2022:**

a) **Monday, May 16, 2022 (1:00 p.m.) Rules Sub-Committee.**

b) **Tuesday, May 17, 2022 (9:00 a.m.) Board Meeting and Hearings**

7. **Comments and Announcements**

Rules sub-committee to meet immediately following this meeting.

8. **Adjournment**

Motion made by Honey to adjourn to Rules sub-committee at 10:32 AM, seconded by Medders, all in favor. Motion carried.