

**DRAFT**  
**Department of Health Professions**  
**Board of Health Professions**  
**REGULATORY RESEARCH COMMITTEE**  
**Public Hearing-Funeral Multi-Level Licensure**  
**May 28, 2015**

**TIME AND PLACE:** The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 28, 2015, Department of Health Professions, 9960 Mayland Drive, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Board Room, Henrico, VA, 23233.

**PRESIDING OFFICER:** Virginia Van de Water, Ph.D., Chair

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Virginia Van de Water, Ph.D., Board of Psychology  
James Watkins, Board of Dentistry  
James Wells, Citizen Member  
Frazier Frantz, Board of Medicine

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:** Ellen Shinaberry, Board of Pharmacy  
Yvonne Haynes, Board of Counseling

**STAFF PRESENT:** Elizabeth A. Carter, Ph.D., Executive Director for the Board  
Laura Jackson, Operations Manager  
Lisa Hahn, Executive Director Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers  
Lynne Helmick, Deputy Executive Director, Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers  
Missy Courier, Deputy Executive Director, Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Isabel Berney, Blacksburg, VA  
Sondra Holmes, Virginia Beach, VA  
Scott Johnson, First Choice Consulting for SCI  
Sammy Oakey, Roanoke, VA  
Veronica Wemath, Newport News, VA  
Paul Hazelgrove, SCI Virginia  
Bob Brown, Richmond, VA  
Larry Spiaggi, Richmond, VA  
Suzanne Stuart, Williamsburg, VA  
Michael Doherty, Fairfax, VA  
Robert Gallagher, Fairfax, VA  
Randy Minter, Warrenton, VA  
Bruce Keeney, Association of Independent Funeral Homes of Virginia  
Robert Finch, Jr., VFDA  
Tim Smith, Hampton, VA  
Elizabeth Haire, Keswick, VA  
Bill Faulkner, Jr., Virginia Beach, VA  
Rhonda Keyes Pleasants, Virginia Morticians Association and JTCC/TCC  
Fred Caston, Virginia Mortician Association

Blair Nelsen, SCI  
Barry D. Robinson, VMA  
Kirk Wilkerson, NVDMA

- QUORUM:** A quorum was established with four members in attendance.
- EMERGENCY EGRESS:** Dr. Van de Water provided emergency evacuation instructions.
- PUBLIC COMMENT:**
- Isabel Berney, Blacksburg, VA  
Ms. Berney is in favor of establishing a new level of licensure.
- Sandra Holmes, Hampton Roads, VA  
Ms. Holmes is in favor of establishing a new level of licensure.
- Scott Johnson, First Choice Consulting for SCI  
Mr. Johnson is in favor of establishing a new level of licensure.
- Sammy Oakey, Roanoke, VA  
Mr. Oakey is in favor of establishing a new level of licensure.
- Veronica Wemath, Newport News, VA  
Ms. Wemath is in favor of establishing a new level of licensure.
- Paul Hazelgrove, SCI Virginia  
Mr. Hazelgrove is in favor of establishing a new level of licensure.
- Bob Brown, Richmond, VA  
Mr. Brown is in favor of establishing a new level of licensure.
- Larry Spiaggi, Legislative Chair for Virginia Funeral Directors Association  
After polling the Association, Mr. Spiaggi stated that they are in opposition to the new level of licensure.
- Suzanne Stuart, Williamsburg, VA  
Ms. Stuart is in favor of establishing a new level of licensure.
- Michael Doherty, Fairfax, VA  
Mr. Doherty stated that there is a work force waiting list in Fairfax and that embalming still needs to be done even though cremation rates are increasing.
- Robert Gallagher, Fairfax, VA  
Mr. Gallagher is in opposition to the new level of licensure.
- Randy Minter, Warrenton, VA  
Mr. Minter is in opposition to establishing a new level of licensure.

Bruce Keeney, Association of Independent Funeral Homes of Virginia

Mr. Keeney stated that the Association of Independent Funeral Homes of Virginia currently has no position as to the necessity of this new level of licensure.

Robert Finch, Jr., President, VFDA

Mr. Finch stated that the Virginia Funeral Directors Association is in opposition to the new level of licensure.

Tim Smith, Hampton, VA

Mr. Smith is in opposition to establishing a new level of licensure.

Elizabeth Haire, Keswick, VA

Ms. Haire is in favor of establishing a new level of licensure.

Bill Faulkner, Jr., Virginia Beach, VA

Mr. Faulkner stated that he is in favor of establishing a new level of licensure.

Rhonda Keyes Pleasants, Virginia Morticians Association and JTCC/TCC

Ms. Keyes stated that the Virginia Morticians Association is in opposition of establishing a new level of licensure.

Ms. Keyes also stated that The Virginia Community College System, specifically John Tyler Community College and Tidewater Community College express that there are lot of steps that must be completed prior to the VCCS agreeing to establish a curriculum for a new level of licensure.

Fred Caston, Virginia Mortician Association

Mr. Caston stated that the Virginia Morticians Association is in opposition to establishing a new level of licensure.

Blair Nelsen, SCI

Mr. Nelsen stated that there has been a decline in the number of mortuary school graduates and a decline in the number of funeral homes in the state. Mr. Nelsen would like to see the ability for specialization in the funeral industry, similar to physicians and nurses.

Written comment will be received until 5:00 p.m. on June 30, 2015.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no other business to conduct, the public hearing adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

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Virginia Van de Water, Ed. D  
Chair

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Elizabeth A. Carter, Ph.D.  
Executive Director for the Board