

**VIRGINIA BOARD OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS & EMBALMERS  
FORMAL ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING - VIRTUAL  
MINUTES**

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**January 19, 2021**

**Department of Health Professions  
Perimeter Center  
9960 Mayland Drive  
Henrico, Virginia 23233**

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**CALL TO ORDER:** The formal hearing of the Board was called to order at 1:35 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** R. Thomas Slusser, Jr. FSL, President (In-Person)  
Kenneth "Scott" Hickey, M.D., Citizen Member (Virtual)  
Mia Mimms, FSL Member (Virtual)  
Joseph Frank Walton, FSL Member (Virtual)  
Jason Graves, FSL Member (Virtual)  
Joseph Michael Williams, FSL Member (Virtual)  
Muhammad Hanif, Citizen Member (Virtual)

**BOARD COUNSEL:** Erin L. Barrett, Assistant Attorney General (In-Person)

**DHP STAFF PRESENT:** Kelley Palmatier, Deputy Director (In-Person)  
Sarah Georgen, Licensing and Operations Manager (Virtual)

**COURT REPORTER:** Cheryl Maddox Reporting (Virtual)

**PARTIES ON BEHALF OF COMMONWEALTH:** Claire Foley, Adjudication Specialist (Virtual)

**COMMONWEALTH'S WITNESS:** Jennifer Challis, Senior Investigator, DHP (Virtual)

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Dalene Paull (Virtual)  
Krista Samuels (Virtual)  
Lauren Thomas (Virtual)  
Melody Morton (Virtual)  
Ali Amirshahi, Esq. (Virtual)  
Angela Pearson (In-person)

**MATTER:**

**Ashley Dawn Safewright**  
**Funeral Service Licensee**  
**License Number: 0502-901492**  
**Case No.: 194098**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A  
QUORUM:**

With seven (7) members present, a quorum was established.

**DISCUSSION:**

Ashley Dawn Safewright appeared before the Board virtually in accordance with a Notice of Formal Hearing dated October 28, 2020. Ms. Safewright was represented by legal counsel virtually, Ali Amirshahi.

The Board received evidence and sworn testimony on behalf of the Commonwealth and Ms. Safewright regarding the allegations in the Notice.

**CLOSED SESSION FOR  
MEDICAL RECORDS:**

Upon a motion by Dr. Scott Hickey, and duly seconded by Mia Mimms, the Board voted to convene a closed meeting, pursuant to §2.2-2711 (A) (16) of the Code of Virginia, for the purpose of consideration and discussion of medical and mental health records of Ashley Dawn Safewright, FSL, that are excluded from the Freedom of Information Act by Virginia Code section 2.2-3705 (A) (5). Additionally, she moved that Ms. Barrett, Ms. Palmatier, Ms. Georgen, Claire Foley, Jennifer Challis, Ashley Safewright and the Court Reporter attend the closed meeting because their presence in the closed meeting was deemed necessary and would aid the Board in its considerations.

**RECONVENE:**

Having certified that the matters discussed in the preceding closed session met the requirements of §2.2-3712 of the Code, upon motion by Dr. Scott Hickey, the Board reconvened in open session and announced its decision.

**CLOSED SESSION:**

Upon a motion by Dr. Scott Hickey, and duly seconded by Jason Graves, the Board voted to

convene a closed meeting, pursuant to §2.2-3711.A (27) of the Code of Virginia, for the purpose of deliberation to reach a decision in the matter of Ashley Dawn Safewright. Additionally, he moved that Ms. Barrett, Ms. Palmatier, and Ms. Georgen attend the closed meeting because their presence in the closed meeting was deemed necessary and would aid the Board in its deliberations.

**RECONVENE:**

Having certified that the matters discussed in the preceding closed session met the requirements of §2.2-3712 of the Code, upon motion by Jason Graves, the Board reconvened in open session and announced its decision.

**DECISION:**

Upon a motion by Jason Graves and duly seconded by Joseph Michael Williams, the Board moved to indefinitely suspend Ashley Safewright's license. The suspension is stayed upon proof of entry into Virginia Health Practitioners' Monitoring Program. The motion carried.

**VOTE:**

The vote was unanimous.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The Board adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

A recording of this meeting can be accessed at:

[https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/funeral/fun\\_calendar.htm](https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/funeral/fun_calendar.htm)

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**Department of Health Professions  
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**CALL TO ORDER:** The formal hearing of the Board was called to order at 3:59 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** R. Thomas Slusser, Jr., FSL, President (In-Person)  
Kenneth "Scott" Hickey, M.D., Citizen Member (Virtual)  
Mia Mimms, FSL Member (Virtual)  
Joseph Frank Walton, FSL Member (Virtual)  
Jason Graves, FSL Member (Virtual)  
Joseph Michael Williams, FSL Member (Virtual)  
Muhammad Hanif, Citizen Member (Virtual)

**BOARD COUNSEL:** Erin L. Barrett, Assistant Attorney General (In-Person)

**DHP STAFF PRESENT:** Kelley Palmatier, Deputy Director (In-Person)  
Sarah Georgen, Licensing and Operations Manager (Virtual)

**COURT REPORTER:** Cheryl Maddox Reporting

**PARTIES ON BEHALF OF COMMONWEALTH:** Claire Foley, Adjudication Specialist (Virtual)

**COMMONWEALTH'S WITNESS:** Wendy Ashworth, Senior Inspector, DHP (Virtual)

**RESPONDENT'S WITNESS:** Paulette Strawbridge, FSL (Virtual)

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Dalene Paull (Virtual)  
Krista Samuels (Virtual)  
Lauren Thomas (Virtual)  
Melody Morton (Virtual)

Jess Kelley (Virtual)  
Rebecca Ribley (Virtual)  
Angela Pearson (In-person)

**MATTER:**

**Steele-Bullock Funeral Home  
Funeral Establishment  
License Number: 0501-000638  
Case No.: 204082**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A  
QUORUM:**

With seven (7) members present, a quorum was established.

**DISCUSSION:**

Keith Bullock, FSL, MOR, appeared before the Board virtually representing Steele-Bullock Funeral Home in accordance with a Notice of Formal Hearing dated December 15, 2020. Mr. Bullock and Steele-Bullock Funeral Home were not represented by legal counsel.

The Board received evidence and sworn testimony on behalf of the Commonwealth and Mr. Bullock regarding the allegations in the Notice.

**CLOSED SESSION:**

Upon a motion by Dr. Scott Hickey, and duly seconded by Joseph Michael Williams, the Board voted to convene a closed meeting, pursuant to §2.2-3711.A (27) of the Code of Virginia, for the purpose of deliberation to reach a decision in the matter of Steele-Bullock Funeral Home. Additionally, he moved that Ms. Barrett, Ms. Palmatier, and Ms. Georgen attend the closed meeting because their presence in the closed meeting was deemed necessary and would aid the Board in its deliberations.

**RECONVENE:**

Having certified that the matters discussed in the preceding closed session met the requirements of §2.2-3712 of the Code, upon motion by Dr. Scott Hickey, the Board reconvened in open session and announced its decision.

**DECISION:**

Upon a motion by Dr. Scott Hickey and duly seconded by Jason Graves, the Board moved that Steele-Bullock Funeral Home be placed on indefinite

probation, imposed a monetary penalty, and that DHP will conduct two unannounced inspections. The motion carried.

**VOTE:**

The vote was unanimous.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The Board adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

A recording of this meeting can be accessed at:

[https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/funeral/fun\\_calendar.htm](https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/funeral/fun_calendar.htm)