

July 14, 2026

The Virginia Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers convened for a full board meeting on Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at the Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, 2nd Floor, Board Room #2, Henrico, Virginia.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

S. Jonathan Hines, FSL, President
K. Scott Hickey, MD, Vice-President
Blair Nelsen, FSL, Secretary-Treasurer
Jason Graves, FSL
Tommy Owens, Citizen Member
Amanda Perry, FSL
John Piotrowski, FSL

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

R. Thomas Slusser, FSL
Eric Wray, II, FSL

DHP STAFF PRESENT FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING:

David E. Brown, Agency Director
Sarah Georgen, Board Administrator
Annette Kelley, MS, CSAC, Deputy Executive Director
Matt Novak, Agency Regulatory Coordinator
Cecelia Robinson, Senior Licensing Program Coordinator
Corie E. Tillman Wolf, JD, Executive Director
Yetty Shobo, PhD, Director, Healthcare Workforce Data Center
Barbara Hodgdon, PhD, Deputy Director, Healthcare Workforce Data Center

BOARD COUNSEL:

Sara Blose, Senior Assistant Attorney General, Board Counsel

OTHER GUESTS PRESENT:

Barry Robinson, Virginia Morticians' Association
W. Scott Johnson, Hancock, Daniel & Johnson, LLC
Katie Hellebush, Virginia Funeral Directors Association
Larry Phillips, Virginia Funeral Directors Association*
Angela Bezik, Virginia Funeral Directors Association

**Participant indicates attendance to count toward continuing education requirements*

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Hines called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. and asked the Board Members, staff, and Board Counsel to introduce themselves.

With seven Board Members present at the meeting, a quorum was established.

Mr. Hines read the mission of the Board, which is also the mission of the Department of Health Professions (DHP).

Mr. Hines reminded the Board Members and audience about microphones, computer agenda materials, breaks, sign-in sheets, and attendance for continuing education requirements.

Ms. Tillman Wolf then read the emergency egress instructions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Hines opened the floor to any edits or corrections regarding the draft minutes for the Board Meeting held on April 14, 2026, and two Formal Hearings held on April 14, 2026, and June 9, 2026. Hearing none, the minutes were approved as presented.

ORDERING OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Hines opened the floor to any additional items to add to the agenda.

Upon a **MOTION** by Mr. Nelsen, properly seconded by Dr. Hickey, the Board voted to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Barry Robinson, Virginia Morticians Association (VMA), provided public comment. He expressed appreciation to the Executive Director, Corie Tillman Wolf, for presenting at the VMA annual convention.

Mr. Robinson inquired about a concern identified by the advisory board at Brightpoint Community College, noting that approximately half of the students who complete the Funeral Director curriculum subsequently return to pursue an embalming program. He requested clarification regarding how these individuals should be relicensed under the newly adopted regulatory framework and whether completion of an additional internship would be required. Mr. Robinson further recommended that the Board consider adopting a Guidance Document or implement changes during the periodic review to ensure consistent interpretation and application of licensure requirements.

BOARD RECOGNITION AND REMEMBRANCE

Mr. Hines reported that Bernie Henderson, former Director of the Department of Health Professions (DHP) and citizen member of the Board of Pharmacy, passed away on June 8, 2026. He devoted decades to public service in roles across state government, including leading major agencies such as DHP and later serving as

Senior Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth, while remaining active in regulatory work and community service even after retirement. Mr. Hines stated that Mr. Henderson was also well known for his leadership in the funeral profession through Woody and Nelsen Funeral Homes.

Mr. Nelsen remarked that the Commonwealth has lost a dedicated public servant and friend. He highlighted Mr. Henderson's extensive service in various governmental, professional, and volunteer roles across the Commonwealth, noting his continued commitment to both public and community service throughout his life. Mr. Nelsen also spoke to the personal impact of Mr. Henderson's legacy, describing him as a dear friend and deeply engaged citizen.

Dr. Brown added that Mr. Henderson's service dated back to the 1990s, when he served as Director of DHP while Dr. Brown was a member of the Board of Medicine. Dr. Brown described Mr. Henderson as a remarkable, insightful, and witty leader who significantly influenced Dr. Brown's own decision to return to DHP.

AGENCY REPORT

Dr. Brown provided an update on departmental activities, reporting that DHP is preparing to implement an upgraded licensing software system that has been positively received in other states. He noted that, having served through four gubernatorial administrations, each characterized by rapid movement, the current administration has placed a strong emphasis on healthcare affordability, access, and workforce support, and DHP continues to engage actively in these statewide discussions. Dr. Brown discussed the Rural Health Transformation Program and its four categories of grant funding and associated program initiatives. Dr. Brown will report to the Board on the impact of these administrative initiatives over time.

Dr. Brown further reported an increase in cross-agency collaboration, highlighting efforts to identify areas of overlap and to engage multiple agencies in coordinated meetings.

With no questions, Dr. Brown concluded his report.

STAFF REPORTS

Executive Director's Report – Corie E. Tillman Wolf, JD, Executive Director

In Memoriam

Ms. Tillman Wolf recognized the contributions of a former DHP Agency Director and former member of the Board of Pharmacy, Bernard "Bernie" Henderson, Jr. She stated that Mr. Henderson previously served as President of Woody and Nelsen Funeral Homes. She stated that he was a strong advocate for safeguarding the public within the funeral services sector and consistently supported staff development by facilitating tours of the Woody location on Parham, providing new staff members with valuable insight into funeral home operations.

Board Updates

Ms. Tillman Wolf reported that Laws and Regulations presentations were conducted in June for both the Virginia Funeral Directors Association (VFDA) and the Virginia Morticians' Association (VMA).

She stated that recent licensee communications included an email blast issued on June 15, 2026, regarding the declinable preneed funeral guarantee fee, as well as the May News Brief, which was distributed to 2,314 licensees and received a 72.3% open rate. Of those views, 60% were on desktop devices and 40% on mobile devices, with the most frequently accessed links directing readers to information on the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) relocation, Guidance Document 65-3, and the license lookup tool.

She also reported that an earlier communication regarding the OCME office relocation was sent on April 16, 2026.

Ms. Tillman Wolf also provided an update on efforts to update materials to reflect the newly implemented declinable preneed funeral guarantee fee. She noted that emergency regulations became effective on June 15, 2026, and that updates to the Preneed Questions and Answers disclosures have been posted, with revisions to Appendix I and the inspections form still pending. She stated that clarification related to this topic, contained in a guidance document, would be considered by the Board later in the meeting. Proposed regulations are planned for discussion at the Board's October meeting, and inspector training related to these regulatory changes is underway.

In addition, she reported that updates to the regulations concerning preparation room requirements are scheduled to take effect on July 16, 2026.

International Conference Updates

Ms. Tillman Wolf provided an update on upcoming meetings and training opportunities offered through The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards (The Conference). She stated that Board Member Regulatory Training is scheduled for August 26, 2026, in Vail, Colorado, and the 2027 Annual Meeting will be held February 23–25, 2027, in Hilton Head, South Carolina.

Ms. Tillman Wolf announced that the International Conference is also seeking volunteers to serve on the Job Task Analysis Committee. Additionally, board members were informed of ongoing membership polls addressing several topics, including the regulation of pet crematories, administrative disciplinary costs, and the definition of direct supervision.

2026 Board Meeting Schedule

Ms. Tillman Wolf provided the remaining board meeting dates for 2026.

- October 20, 2026

Ms. Tillman Wolf announced the schedule for the 2027 Board meetings.

- January 12, 2027
- April 13, 2027
- July 13, 2027
- October 19, 2027

With no questions, Ms. Tillman Wolf concluded her report.

Discipline Report – Annette Kelley, MS, CSAC, Deputy Executive Director

As of May 31, 2026, Ms. Kelley reported the following disciplinary statistics:

- 29 Patient Care Cases
 - 0 at Informal
 - 1 at Formal
 - 5 at Enforcement
 - 19 at Probable Cause
 - 4 at APD
- 136 Non-Patient Care Cases
 - 0 at Informal
 - 3 at Formal
 - 39 at Enforcement
 - 89 at Probable Cause
 - 7 at APD
- 13 at Compliance

Ms. Kelley reported the following Total Cases Received and Closed:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| • Q2 2023 – 10/21 | • Q1 2025 – 17/17 |
| • Q3 2023 – 11/13 | • Q2 2025 – 22/4 |
| • Q4 2023 – 27/11 | • Q3 2025 – 24/25 |
| • Q1 2024 – 24/22 | • Q4 2025 – 15/11 |
| • Q2 2024 – 23/32 | • Q1 2026 – 29/5 |
| • Q3 2024 – 19/28 | • Q2 2026 – 28/28 |
| • Q4 2024 – 21/37 | • Q3 2026 – 35/3 |

With no questions, Ms. Kelley concluded her report.

Licensure Report – Sarah Georgen, Board Administrator

Licensure Statistics – All Licenses

Ms. Georgen provided an overview of the licensure statistics and license count trends, noting that the data remained unchanged from the previous board meeting because the fiscal year quarter had not yet been analyzed.

License	December 31, 2025 (Q2 2026)	March 31, 2026 (Q3 2026)	Difference (+/-)
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Branch Establishment	91	95	+4
Continuing Education Provider	13	13	0
Courtesy Card	143	147	+4
Crematories	141	142	+1
Embalmer	5	7	+2
Embalming Internship	5	6	+1
Funeral Director	74	85	+11
Funeral Directing Internship	47	49	+2
Funeral Establishment	433	433	0
Funeral Service Internship	189	190	+1
Funeral Service Licensee	1,608	1,626	+18
Surface Transportation and Removal Services	54	57	+3
Funeral Supervisor	408	437	+29
Total (*not incl. supervisors)	2,803	2,850	+47

Ms. Georgen reviewed the trends of licensure counts of Funeral Service Licensees, Embalmers, and Funeral Directors since Q1–2021. She reported a 157% increase in Funeral Director licenses since the licenses were bifurcated in 2021.

2026 CE Provider Renewals

Ms. Georgen provided information regarding the completed 2026 Continuing Education Provider renewals.

Updates 2026

Ms. Georgen reported that application updates have been made to ensure clarity and formatting. She also reported on the successful launch of the online Manager of Record change request and online payments.

With no questions, Ms. Georgen concluded her report.

BOARD COUNSEL REPORT – Sara Blose, Senior Assistant Attorney General

Ms. Blose had no matters to report to the Board.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY REPORTS – Matt Novak, Agency Regulatory Coordinator

Legislative Report

Mr. Novak provided a report on agency legislation passed during the 2026 General Assembly session related to the process for licensure fees and the assessment of administrative disciplinary costs in Board orders.

With no questions, Mr. Novak concluded his report.

Report on Status of Regulatory Actions

Mr. Novak provided an overview related to pending regulatory actions.

BREAK

The Board took a break at 10:45 a.m. and reconvened at 10:55 a.m.

BOARD ACTIONS

Consideration and Adoption of Guidance Document 65-__ - Guidance on the Calculation of the Declinable Preneed Funeral Guarantee Fee – Virginia Code § 54.1-2800

Ms. Tillman Wolf provided information on the consideration of a Guidance Document related to the calculation of the declinable preneed funeral guarantee fee. The proposed Guidance Document will provide guidance to licensees on how to calculate the declinable preneed funeral guarantee fee based upon a discrepancy that currently exists between the Board's Emergency Regulations and the language of the Virginia Code. As there will be a delay in the effective date of a new Guidance Document, Ms. Tillman Wolf advised that a motion would also assist in providing timely guidance to licensees.

Upon a **MOTION** by Mr. Owens, and properly seconded by Mr. Graves, the Board voted to provide the guidance that funeral licensees should calculate the declinable preneed funeral guarantee fee, if offered, based upon the guaranteed preneed supplies and services included in the funeral contract price as currently stated in the Code of Virginia. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Upon a **MOTION** by Mr. Owens, and properly seconded by Mr. Piotrowski, the Board voted to adopt the Guidance Document (65-8) on the Calculation of the Declinable Preneed Funeral Guarantee Fee as presented. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Adoption of Revisions to Appendix I (For Preneed Funeral Guarantee Fee)

Ms. Tillman Wolf provided information on the adoption of revisions to Appendix I to reflect the newly implemented declinable preneed funeral guarantee fee.

Upon a **MOTION** by Mr. Nelsen, and properly seconded by Mr. Owens, the Board voted to adopt the revisions to Appendix I for the declinable preneed funeral guarantee fee as presented. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Consideration and Initiation of a Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA) for Periodic Review of Regulations (18VAC65-20, 18VAC65-30, and 18VAC65-40)

Mr. Novak provided information on the consideration and initiation of a NOIRA for the periodic review of the Board's regulations.

Upon a **MOTION** by Dr. Hickey, and properly seconded by Mr. Owens, the Board voted to adopt a NOIRA to conduct a periodic review of regulations and implement identified changes to 18VAC65-20, 18VAC65-30, and 18VAC65-40. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Advancement of 2027 Legislative Proposal Regarding Funeral Service Interns – Criminal History Requirements Pursuant to Virginia Code § 54.1-2817

Ms. Tillman Wolf provided information on a legislative proposal for the 2027 General Assembly regarding funeral service interns and current bars to licensure that exist based upon criminal conviction history. Ms. Tillman Wolf provided the history of the proposal and the efforts to limit the current legislative proposal to the elimination of the reference to a conviction for embezzlement. The Board would then have the discretion to weigh whether prior convictions for embezzlement impact an applicant's ability to safely practice funeral services for purposes of approving intern registration applications.

Upon a **MOTION** by Mr. Graves, and properly seconded by Mr. Nelsen, the Board voted to advance the 2027 legislative proposal regarding funeral service interns, specifically the proposed amendments related to criminal history in Virginia Code § 54.1-2817 as presented. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Consideration of Request to Add Shenandoah Funeral Directors Association to the Approved Continuing Education Provider List

Ms. Tillman Wolf provided information on a request from Shenandoah Funeral Directors Association to be added to the list of approved Continuing Education Providers pursuant to 18VAC65-20-152 of the Board's Regulations Governing Funeral Services.

Ms. Tillman Wolf answered questions from the Board and provided information on possible actions for the Board's consideration. Board members requested additional information regarding the format of the educational programming, the presenters to be utilized by the organization, and how the organization will comply with the Board's laws and regulations related to continuing education.

Upon a **MOTION** by Mr. Owens, and properly seconded by Mr. Nelsen, the Board voted to defer action at this time and to reconsider the request at a subsequent board meeting. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

PRESENTATIONS

Virginia's Funeral Service Provider: 2026 Workforce Report – Barbara Hodgdon, PhD, Deputy Director, and Yetty Shobo, PhD, Director, Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Dr. Hodgdon summarized the findings from the 2026 Workforce Reports for Funeral Service Providers. Dr. Hodgdon and Dr. Shobo answered questions from the Board.

ELECTIONS

Mr. Hines stated that in accordance with the Bylaws, during the first meeting of the organizational year, the Board shall elect from its members a President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer.

Mr. Hines provided remarks regarding the process for making additional floor nominations.

Mr. Hines opened the floor for nominations for President of the Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers.

Mr. Nelsen nominated Dr. Hickey for the position of President. There were no other nominations. After a unanimous vote on the nomination motion, seconded by Mr. Graves, the nominations were closed.

Upon a **MOTION** by Mr. Owens, properly seconded by Mr. Graves, the Board voted to elect Dr. Hickey as President of the Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Mr. Hines opened the floor for nominations for Vice-President of the Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers.

Mr. Owens nominated Mr. Nelsen for the position of Vice-President. There were no other nominations. The nominations were closed.

Upon a **MOTION** by Mr. Piotrowski, properly seconded by Mr. Owens, the Board voted to elect Mr. Nelsen as Vice-President of the Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Mr. Hines opened the floor for nominations for Secretary-Treasurer of the Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers.

Mr. Hines nominated Mr. Piotrowski for the position of Secretary-Treasurer. There were no other nominations. The nominations were closed.

Upon a **MOTION** by Mr. Owens, properly seconded by Mr. Graves, the Board voted to elect Mr. Piotrowski as Secretary-Treasurer of the Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

BREAK

The Board took a break at 11:38 a.m. and reconvened at 11:43 a.m.

BOARD MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

Overview of Discipline Cases and Sanctions

Ms. Kelley provided a structured overview of agency responsibilities, investigative procedures, and the role of Board members in the disciplinary framework.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting date is October 20, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hines called for any objections to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no objections and with all business concluded, the meeting adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

Corie E. Tillman Wolf, JD, Executive Director

Date