



## District Meeting Minutes (Districts 1 & 2)

Thursday, February 20, 2020 – 10:30 a.m.  
Palm Coast, FL

### **Present:**

*Kortney Adams, NS Board of Registration of Embalmers & Funeral Directors*  
*Kelsi Alger, VT Office of Professional Regulation*  
*Dr. Mark E. Bailey, MD Board of Morticians & Funeral Directors*  
*Robert Barnes, ICFSEB District 1 Director/ME Board of Funeral Service*  
*Gabriel Gilman, VT Office of Professional Regulation*  
*Duane Hills, DC Board of Funeral Directors*  
*Randolph Horton, DC Board of Funeral Directors*  
*Michele P. Kutta, MD Board of Morticians & Funeral Directors*  
*Linda Lyter, WV Board of Funeral Service Examiners*  
*Nicole McClendon, DC Board of Funeral Directors*  
*John McDowell, WV Board of Funeral Service Examiners*  
*Mia Mimms, VA Board of Funeral Directors & Embalmers*  
*Blair Nelsen, ICFSEB District 2 Director/VA Board of Funeral Directors & Embalmers*  
*Kelley Palmatier, VA Board of Funeral Directors & Embalmers*  
*S. Keith Parsell, DE Board of Funeral Services*  
*Robert C. Smith III, ABFSE*  
*Corie Tillman Wolf, VA Board of Funeral Directors & Embalmers*  
*Heidy Weirich, PA State Board of Funeral Directors*  
*Asanti Williams, DC Board of Funeral Directors*

### **I. Call to Order and Introductions**

Conference District Director, Blair Nelsen, called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m. EST. The meeting began with introductions of The Conference District Directors and representatives from Districts 1 & 2.

### **II. Update on Conference Initiatives**

Mr. Nelsen and Conference Candidate Services Manager, Allie Sparkman, gave an update on recent Conference initiatives. An overview of the updated ADA policies and handbook was given and Mr. Nelsen recommended attendees familiarize themselves with it at their convenience. The request for several volunteers for upcoming 2020 committees and projects was mentioned, as well as the announcement of The Conference Delegate Grant expansion to one individual from each member board for the 2021 Annual Meeting in Houston, Texas.

### **III. Current Regulatory Issues**

#### **A. Single vs. Dual Licensed vs. Other Licenses – Pros and Cons**

Discussion amongst members included diversity in the industry, specifically in regards to the number of females entering the profession and the need for funeral homes to be willing to hire women in the workplace. There was also a lengthy discussion regarding licensee misconduct and whether it is correlated to the level of education required for licensure. The overarching consensus among the group was that there did not seem to be an increase in complaints or discipline based on education requirements; more complaints seemed to be based on criminal activity rather than technical ability to operate. Several states also mentioned the lack of regulation of crematories; or the regulation of crematory establishments occurred recently. Finding the right balance of how much education should

be required in the funeral service profession was also addressed. The recently adopted funeral director license in Vermont was discussed by participants at length with other boards noting similar proposals, however, those pathways were faced with resistance. Vermont relayed that it had been a huge collaborative effort between the board, the association, and the legislature.

#### **B. Legislative Updates**

The group shared various licensure and regulatory issues that many boards are currently facing, as well as recently passed bills. Vermont's new pathway to funeral director licensure was discussed, as well as their intent to offer a similar in-state track for embalmers in the future. Nova Scotia noted new updates allowing funeral homes to be established in locations such as strip malls, whereas previous regulations only allowed for free-standing buildings or the connection to flower shops. Pennsylvania and New Jersey have both recently begun allowing food consumption in funeral homes. West Virginia began waiving licensing fees for low-income and military applicants. District of Columbia shared the "second-chance-law," which will allow the online posting of pricing.

#### **C. Internet Sales**

Internet sales were not discussed in this forum.

#### **D. Update on Membership Polls**

Throughout the year, member boards can request for The Conference to poll other jurisdictions on various regulatory and licensure questions. The results of the recent polls were shared with the district representatives during the meeting.

#### **IV. District 2 Election to Board of Directors**

Blair Nelsen, from the Virginia Board of Funeral Directors & Embalmers, was re-elected as District 2 Director of The Conference Board of Directors.

#### **V. Adjournment**

The meetings of districts 1 & 2 adjourned at 12:02 p.m. EST.