

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, October 11, 2022 - 10:00 a.m.**

### Advisory Committee Members

Jolena Grande  
Nichol Montague  
Margaret “Maggie” McMillan  
Jean Okuye  
Jacob Jett  
Maria Mangini

### Stakeholder Members

C. Micheli  
Darin Drabing  
Nicholas Bothwell  
Rev. Jason E. Bense

Cemetery and Funeral Bureau (Bureau or CFB) Staff: Gina Chiaverini Sanchez, Bureau Chief, Sandra Patterson, Deputy Chief, Mona Mathews, Associate Management Auditor, Alexxia Gallegos, Licensing Analyst and Carolina Sammons, Legislative Analyst.

Department of Consumers Affairs (DCA or Department) Staff: Judie Bucciarelli, Bureau Liaison, Michael Kanotz, Staff Counsel, Rose Turner, Legislative Affairs Office, Lisa Rangel, Business Modernization, Trisha St. Clair and David Bouilly, meeting moderators.

### **1. Introduction and Opening Remarks.**

Bureau Chief, Gina Sanchez, called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m. welcoming those in attendance. Ms. Sanchez indicated that the meeting is open to the public in Sacramento. The meeting is also available via the WebEx and teleconference platforms. Ms. Sanchez provided instruction on the conduct of the meeting including how to make public comment, conducted Advisory Committee Members roll call, and introduced the meeting moderator, CFB and Department’s staff members.

### **2. Public Comment Items Not on Agenda.**

Ms. Sanchez asked if there was anyone who would like to make public comments about items not on the agenda. No public comments were received.

### **3. Update from the Department of Consumer Affairs’ Representative.**

Ms. Judie Bucciarelli reported on:

- DCA new appointment of Melissa Gear as Deputy Director of Board and Bureau Relations.
- DCA’s new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Steering Committee (DEI).
- In accordance with Governor Newsom’s Executive Order, DCA will start revising its strategic planning process to incorporate more inclusive public engagement, data analyses and embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion into its strategic planning process.
- In person meeting guidelines and COVID-19 guidelines. Boards and bureaus that choose to hold in-person meetings are expected to follow the state and local guidelines regarding COVID-19 safety measures.

- DCA will be partnering with the State Controller's Office (SCO) to share information with consumers and certain licensees regarding the unclaimed property program.
- DCA is updating its Workload and Succession Plan.

Ms. Sanchez thanked Ms. Bucciarelli for her presentation and opened the meeting for committee members and or public comments. There were no comments made.

**4. Update on Bureau Activities:** Ms. Sanchez reported on:

a. Staffing:

Ms. Sanchez announced the staffing changes since the previous Advisory Committee Meeting.

b. Budget:

Ms. Sanchez provided an overview of the Bureau's Fund Condition and referred to the handout provided. As a result of recent enacted legislation (SB 1443) a fee increase was established, the Bureau will see an increase in revenue effective January 1, 2023. The fees defined in this bill will address the Bureau's annual deficit, as well as sustain operations for at least the next 5 years.

Ms. Sanchez opened the meeting for committee members comments.

Committee Member Jolena Grande asked if the budget months in reserve would stabilize as it appears the fund is on a downward trajectory even with the fee increase. What is the Bureau anticipating in budget year plus one, or budget year plus two?

Ms. Sanchez stated the fund condition reflects a fully expended budget each year. Historically, the Bureau shows a savings anywhere from \$300,000 to \$500,000 which helps continue normal operations and a healthy three to six months in reserve. Any future legislation or unanticipated events; however, could result in the Bureau's need for additional resources in future years.

Ms. Sanchez opened the meeting for public members comments. There were no public member comments received.

c. Business Modernization:

Deputy Chief, Sandra Patterson presented about the latest stage of the Business Modernization Project (BizMod) as the Bureau has started developing its new information technology platform "CFB Connect." Ms. Patterson introduced Ms. Lisa Rangel, Project Director, with the DCA's Office of Information Services to provide a brief overview of this project.

Ms. Rangel provided a high-level overview of the DCA BizMod initiative as it relates to the Bureau, along with the stages and current status, and looks forward to keeping the momentum moving forward throughout the project.

Ms. Sanchez thanked Ms. Rangel for the overview and opened the meeting for committee members and or public comments. There were no comments made.

d. Annual Trust Reports:

Ms. Mathews reported that the Audit Unit can be contacted by email at [auditcfb@dca.ca.gov](mailto:auditcfb@dca.ca.gov). Ms. Mathews reported that Assembly Bill (AB) 293, funeral establishment; preneed unclaimed property becomes effective January 1, 2023. Also, regarding the increase to cemeteries endowment care fund rates, a letter was sent out in December 2021 to each licensed cemetery informing them of the new endowment care rates effective January 1, 2022. Ms. Mathews stated the annual mandated trust reports are due May 1 for funeral establishments, and June 1 for cemeteries. Ms. Mathews then reported on the handouts that showed the annual and quarterly reporting statistics.

e. Consumer Guide to Funeral and Cemetery Purchases

Ms. Sanchez reported the release of the revised Consumer Guide to Funeral and Cemetery Purchases. The guide is available for committee members review and comments. Ms. Sanchez indicated the comment period will close at the end of October and welcome any input. Ms. Sanchez anticipates the new guide will be available for distribution early next year.

Ms. Sanchez then opened the meeting for member comments on Agenda Item number 4.

Committee Member Grande commented regarding updates to the fee structure as well as revisions to the consumer guide, will there be revisions/edits to the applications for licenses?

Ms. Sanchez indicated a new fee schedule will be released by the effective date of January 1, 2023. As for the applications, some may require regulations to amend, however, as the Bureau moves forward, the applications will be carefully reviewed to make sure they are accurate and relevant to conform with the new statutes.

Committee Member Okuye encouraged Consumers Alliance members to review the Consumer Guide to Cemetery and Funeral Purchase and to make recommendations of things they would like included.

Ms. Sanchez reiterated that comments or recommendations are welcome. The comment period will close on October 31, 2022. If someone needs an extension, please contact the Bureau.

Ms. Sanchez then opened the meeting for public comment. There were no public comments received.

**5. 2022 Legislation Update:** Ms. Sanchez introduced Carolina Sammons, Bureau's Legislative Analyst to report on the chaptered Legislative bills for this year.

Ms. Sammons reported the following:

- Assembly Bill (AB) 351 Garcia (Chapter 399, Statutes of 2022), Reduction of human remains and the disposition of reduced human remains.  
This Bill has a delay implementation date of January 1, 2027. It requires the Bureau to license and regulate reduction facilities. This bill also requires a local registrar of births or deaths to issue permits for the disposition of reduced human remains.
- Senate Bill (SB) 1237 Newman (Chapter 386, Statutes of 2022), license: military service.

This Bill impacts boards and bureaus within the Department of Consumer Affairs. As it relates to the Bureau, it requires the bureau to waive license renewal fees for active-duty military members stationed outside of California.

- Senate Bill (SB) 1443 Roth (Chapter 625, Statutes of 2022), Professions and vocations  
This Bill extends the Bureau's sunset review from January 2024 to January 2025, and it also raises Bureau's fees.

Ms. Sanchez opened the meeting for public comments. There were no public comments made.

**6. Regulatory Update:** Ms. Sammons reported on the following Regulatory actions.

1. Assembly Bill (AB) 293, (Kalra, Chapter 514, Statutes of 2021), Preneed funeral arrangements: unclaimed property. On September 12, 2022, the Bureau filed the regulatory package with Office of Administrative Law. We are currently in the 45-day comment period which will close on November 8, 2022. This law takes effect on January 1, 2023.

2. Senate Bill (SB) 800, (Committee on Business, Professions and Economic Development, Chapter 573, Statutes of 2017), Professions and Vocations. As it relates to the Bureau, this bill authorizes licensed crematories within close geographical proximity of each other to request authorization from the Bureau to allow a licensed crematory manager to manage, supervise, and direct the business or profession of more than one facility. On August 25, 2022, the Bureau filed the regulatory package with Office of Administrative Law. We are currently in the 45-day comment period which will close on October 25, 2022.

Ms. Sanchez opened the meeting for committee and public members comments. There were no comments from the committee members.

**7a. Licensing Statistical Report and Update on Examination Development.** Ms. Sanchez led the discussion on this topic. Ms. Sanchez referred participants to the handouts provided and identified that data is for the end of fiscal year 2021-2022.

Ms. Sanchez spoke to the below statistics:

1. Licensing Performance Measures,
2. Licenses Issued Statistics,
3. License Renewal Statistics,
4. Exam Pass Rate Statistics, and
5. Most Common Application Deficiencies.

Ms. Sanchez opened the meeting for committee comments. There were no comments from the committee members.

**7b. Update on Examination Development:** Ms. Sanchez led the discussion on this item. The Bureau continuously works on examination development for the five examinations we administer. They are funeral director, embalmer, crematory manager, cemetery manager, and cemetery broker.

The Bureau has completed the examination development for the embalmers license category and was implemented in July of 2022. Also in July, the Bureau began the occupational

analysis examination for the funeral director category. There is an anonymous survey being conducted, it started September 1<sup>st</sup> and will close October 31<sup>st</sup> for all licensed funeral directors who are currently working or have worked in the industry in the past year. Ms. Sanchez encouraged qualified funeral directors to participate for the benefit of the occupational analysis. The examination development is scheduled to be held via teleconference in January of 2023. The participants receive a \$250 compensation per day and are reimbursed for their travel expenses.

Ms. Sanchez asked the committee and the public members if they had any comments or questions regarding Exam Development or on any agenda topic discussed. No comments or questions were made.

**8. Enforcement Statistical Report.** Ms. Sanchez led the discussion on this topic. Ms. Sanchez referred participants to the handouts provided and stated data is for the end of fiscal year 2021-2022. Ms. Sanchez spoke to the below statistics:

1. Inspections Conducted,
2. Complaint Received Statistics,
3. Citation Issued Statistics and,
4. Most Common Violations for cemetery and funeral establishments.

Ms. Sanchez opened the meeting for committee and public member comments. There were no public members comments.

Member Montague commented regarding the required signature on the preneed form. She has experienced that family members would refuse to sign the required form. How would the lack of signature on the form affect the funeral establishment when the Bureau conducts their inspection? Ms. Sanchez recommended making a notation on the form that the family refused to sign and maintain as part of the record. Also explain to the family that the form requires a signature.

Ms. Sanchez again opened the meeting for committee and/or public member comments. There were no other committee or public member comments.

**9. Proposed October 2022 Advisory Committee Meeting Date(s):** Ms. Sanchez proposed May 24, 2023, and October 11, 2023, from 10: a.m.- 12:00 p.m. for the next Advisory Committee Meeting.

Sanchez opened the meeting for committee member or public comments. There were no other committee or public member comments.

**10. Adjournment** – meeting was adjourned at 11:13 a.m.