



# Louisiana State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors

## Meeting Minutes

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On Tuesday April 21, 2026, the Louisiana State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors (“LSBEFD”) conducted a scheduled in-person meeting at the board office located at The Executive Towers 3500 N. Causeway Boulevard Suite 1232 Metairie, Louisiana 70002 in accordance with La. R.S. 37:831, et seq and other applicable law.

### Call to Order

Board Member and Treasurer Charles Joseph Eagan, III presided over the calling the meeting to order at 9:16 AM. Opening remarks were given by Mr. Eagan stating the mission statement and the purpose of the LSBEFD.

### Roll Call

#### Present Board Members

Anna Wilbert Breaux  
Troy Dennard  
Gregory McKneely  
Charles Joseph "Joe" Eagan, III  
Terry Luneau

#### Absent Board Members

Stephen Boudeaux  
Rev. Shelton C. Dixon  
Willie Davis, Jr.  
Kelly Rush Savoy

A quorum was present.

#### Others Present

Kim W. Michel, Executive Director  
R. DeMale Bowden, Jr., Deputy Executive Director  
Carrie L. Jones, General Counsel  
Chanel Debose, Prosecuting Attorney

### Invocation

Board Member Troy Dennard led the invocation

### Pledge of Allegiance

Board Member Terry Luneau led the Pledge of Allegiance

### Public Comments

Presiding Board Member Eagan asked if there were any public comments. There was no one present to give public comments nor were there any public comment requests submitted via e-mail or online via Microsoft TEAMS by virtual participants.

### Adoption of Agenda

Deputy Executive Director Bowden asked the board to amend the agenda by adding Item 11.D. Review of request for an individual to begin an internship.

*Board Member Terry Luneau moved to accept the agenda with the addition of agenda item 11.D, which was seconded by Board Member Troy Dennard. The motion passed unanimously.*

### Consent Agenda

- a. Executive Director/Deputy Executive Director/Inspector’s Report
- b. Financial Report – FY 25.26 Budget Projection v Actual to Date
- c. Complaint Review Report

*Board Member Terry Luneau moved to accept the reports listed in the consent agenda, which was seconded by Board Member Anna Wilbert Breaux. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **Approval of Meeting Minutes – March 11, 2026, meeting minutes e-mailed**

*Board Member Troy Dennard made a motion to approve the March 11, 2026, meeting minutes with changes as described by General Counsel Jones and Board Member Anna Wilbert Breaux, which was seconded by Board Member Gregory McKneely. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **Unfinished Business**

### a. Report from the Inspector / Investigator Committee

Deputy Executive Director Bowden gave a report that the committee has received 18 resumes for the Inspector/Investigator position. The committee members are reviewing resumes and will be reaching out to candidates in the near future.

*Board Member Terry Luneau moved to accept the Deputy Executive Director's Report, which was seconded by Board Member Anna Wilbert Breaux. The motion passed unanimously.*

### b. Updates on House and Senate Bills

Mrs. Jones provided an update on bills being monitored during the 2026 regular legislative session.

## **New Business**

### a. Resolutions – Bryant E. Mitchell, Sr., Thaddeus Richardson, Jr., & Annie T. Rollins

Deputy Executive Director Bowden gave remarks about the Resolutions of Respect in the recent passing of a LSBEFD licensee, registered intern, and funeral establishment owner.

*Board Member Troy Dennard moved to adopt the resolution of respect, which was seconded by Board Member Terry Luneau. The motion passed unanimously.*

### b. Attorney contract amendment – September 2026 for Breazeale Sachse and Wilson, LLP

*Board Member Terry Luneau moved to accept the Attorney contract amendment – September 2026 for Breazeale Sachse and Wilson, LLP, which was seconded by Board Member Gregory McKneely. The motion passed unanimously.*

### c. Attorney contract amendment – October 2026 for John W. Becknell, Hearing Officer

*Board Member Gregory McKneely moved to accept the Attorney contract amendment – October 2026 for John W. Becknell, Hearing Officer, which was seconded by Board Member Terry Luneau. The motion passed unanimously.*

### d. Attorney contract amendment – August 2026 for Sher Garner Cahill Richter Klein & Hilbert, L.L.C.

*Board Member Terry Luneau moved to accept the Attorney contract amendment – August 2026 for Sher Garner Cahill Richter Klein & Hilbert, L.L.C., which was seconded by Board Member Gregory McKneely. The motion passed unanimously.*

### e. Monthly Intern Reporting going to Online Submission

Deputy Executive Director Bowden presented a proposal to transition intern monthly case reports to online submissions only.

*Board Member Anna Wilbert Breaux made a motion to accept the proposal submitted by Deputy Executive Director Bowden which will require interns monthly case reports to be submitted online only, which was seconded by Board Member Troy Dennard. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **Disciplinary Matters**

### a. Board Staff Follow-Up 25.26.0019/25.26.0016 - Admission and Consent

In the Matter of White Oaks Funeral Home, Gregory Strother, Oakdale, Deputy Executive Director Bowden provided the board with an update as requested at the March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. At the time of the board meeting the complainants had not been made whole and the demand letter issued on March 24, 2026, was deemed Unclaimed/Returned to Sender. Per U.S.P.S., the demand letter could not be delivered on April 16, 2026, at 9:33 am in Oakdale, LA. It was held for the required number of days and returned to the board.

b. Formal Hearing:

The hearing in the Matter of Wilfred Fields, Fields Funeral Home, L.L.C., and Mike Collado began at 10:03 AM, with Mr. John Becknell presiding as the hearing officer. Mr. Wilfred Fields was present as owner and operator of Fields Funeral Home. Mr. Mike Collado was present on behalf of himself. Ms. Chanel Debose served as Prosecuting Attorney on behalf of the board. The parties made opening statements. Witnesses were sequestered. Mr. Bowden was called to testify as a board witness and questioned on cross-examination. Ms. Vernoica Branch was called to testify virtually as a board witness and questioned on cross-examination. A recess was taken from 1:02 PM until 2:02 PM. Ms. Shasta Keys was called to testify as a board witness and questioned on cross-examination. Nine (9) board exhibits were admitted into evidence. Respondents did not offer any testimony or call any witnesses. The parties made closing arguments. The hearing concluded at 3:33 PM and the board entered executive session for deliberation.

*Board Member Troy Dennard moved to go into the executive session to deliberate and discuss ongoing litigation, personnel matters, general administrative matters, and to discuss the internship request, which was seconded by Board Member Anna Wilbert Breaux. The motion passed unanimously. The executive session began at 3:45 PM. A roll call was taken. Board Members Anna Wilbert Breaux, Troy Dennard, Charles Joseph "Joe" Eagan, III, Gregory McKneely, and Terry Luneau were present. Chairman Stephen Boudeaux and Board Members Rev. Shelton C. Dixon, Willie Davis, Jr., and Kelly Rush Savoy were absent.*

**Executive Session (pursuant to LA R.S. 42:17)**

- a. Report on Litigation
  - i. Marybeth Harrington v LSBefd - Nicholaus Oshea Barber-Cypress Funeral Services, CDC Orleans Parish, State of Louisiana, Docket # 20124-00124
  - ii. Gary Lewis, New Orleans Funeral and Cremation Service v LSBefd, CDC Orleans Parish, State of Louisiana, Docket # 2024-06195
  - iii. Gary Lewis, New Orleans Funeral and Cremation Service v LSBefd, CDC Orleans Parish, State of Louisiana, Docket # 2024-06196
  - iv. Gary Lewis, New Orleans Funeral and Cremation Service v LSBefd, CDC Orleans Parish, State of Louisiana, Docket # 2025-00465
- b. Personnel Matters
- c. General Administrative Matters
- d. Review of request for an individual to begin an internship.

The board returned from executive session at 4:45 PM and a roll call was taken. The following board members were present: Anna Wilbert Breaux, Troy Dennard, Charles Joseph "Joe" Eagan, III, Terry Luneau, and Gregory McKneely. Chairman Stephen Boudeaux and Board Members Rev. Shelton C. Dixon, Willie Davis, Jr., and Kelly Rush Savoy were absent.

In the Matter of Wilfred Fields, Fields, Funeral Home, L. L. C. and Mike Collado, the following board action was taken:

*Board Member Troy Dennard made a motion, which was seconded by Board Member Gregory McKneely that:*

*No violations are found against Mike Collado and all charges be dismissed with prejudice.*

*A roll call vote was taken, Board Members Anna Wilbert Breaux, Troy Dennard, Charles Joseph "Joe" Eagan, III, and Gregory McKneely voted yes. Board Member Terry Luneau recused himself. Chairman Stephen Boudeaux and Board Members Rev. Shelton C. Dixon, Willie Davis, Jr., and Kelly Rush Savoy were absent.*

*Board Member Troy Dennard made a motion, which was seconded by Board Member Anna Wilbert Breaux that:*

*Wilfred Fields and the entity operating as Fields Funeral Home violated La. R.S. 37:846(A)(5) for unprofessional, unethical, or dishonest conduct by Mr. Fields's misrepresentations communicated to the family with respect to the late Daiquan Jahiem Branch's final viewing at the church. It was stated at the funeral that the casket key was not available; however, testimony at the hearing provided that Mr. Fields was concerned about the smell.*

Wilfred Fields and the entity operating as Fields Funeral Home is fined \$500.00 plus attorney fees and costs to be paid within thirty (30) days of receipt of the Board Order.

*A roll call vote was taken, Board Members Anna Wilbert Breaux, Troy Dennard, Charles Joseph "Joe" Eagan, III, and Gregory McKneely voted yes. Board Member Terry Luneau recused himself. Chairman Stephen Boudeaux and Board Members Rev. Shelton C. Dixon, Willie Davis, Jr., and Kelly Rush Savoy were absent.*

*Board Member Gregory McKneely made a motion, which was seconded by Board Member Troy Dennard that: Wilfred Fields and the entity operating as Fields Funeral Home violated La. R.S. 37:846(A)(5) for unprofessional, unethical, or dishonest conduct by failing to have a licensed embalmer and funeral director or a licensed funeral director present at the funeral of the late Daiquan Jahiem Branch.*

Wilfred Fields and the entity operating as Fields Funeral Home is fined \$1,000.00 plus attorney fees and costs to be paid within thirty (30) days of receipt of the Board Order.

all fines, attorney fees, and costs shall be paid by cashier's check or money order and failure to pay may result in automatic suspension of the establishment license, which shall be imposed by the Executive Director and subject to ratification by the Board.

*A roll call vote was taken, Board Members Anna Wilbert Breaux, Troy Dennard, Charles Joseph "Joe" Eagan, III, and Gregory McKneely voted yes. Board Member Terry Luneau recused himself. Chairman Stephen Boudeaux and Board Members Rev. Shelton C. Dixon, Willie Davis, Jr., and Kelly Rush Savoy were absent.*

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED** that

The request for an individual to begin an internship was taken under advisement.

Action on compliant(s)# 25.26.0019/25.26.0016 - Admission and Consent in the Matter of White Oaks Funeral Home, Gregory Strother, Oakdale were tabled until the next board meeting.

### **Closing Remarks**

Closing remarks were given by Presiding Board Member Eagan.

### **Adjournment**

*Board Member Troy Dennard moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Board Member Terry Luneau. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:51 PM.*



*Stephen G. Boudreaux, Chairman of the Board*



*Kelly Rush Savoy, Secretary of the Board*