



ABFSE 64th Annual Meeting
Friday, April 17, 2026
Houston Marriott West Loop by the Galleria - Houston, Texas

*****These minutes will be presented for approval at the 65th Annual Meeting in Detroit, MI *****

The meeting was called to order by President, Cody Lopasky (Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service) at 9:30 AM (Central).

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice President, Tony Moore (Northampton Community College).

The Invocation and Prayer of Remembrance were given by Brian Mullins (Dallas Institute of Funeral Service). The following were remembered in prayer: John M. Mitchell, Paula Penepent, Philip Penepent, Jr., and James Richeson.

President, Cody Lopasky welcomed everyone and was glad everyone enjoyed their time visiting Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service and the National Museum of Funeral History.

Mark Evelyn (Wayne State University) was appointed parliamentarian.

Roll Call was conducted by Vice President, Tony Moore (Northampton Community College).

Association Members

CANA (Cremation Association of North America)

NFDA (National Funeral Directors Association)

NFD & MA (National Funeral Directors & Morticians Association) Institutions

Institutions

American Academy McAllister Institute
American River College
Arapahoe Community College
Arkansas State University-Mountain Home
Brightpoint Community College
Cape Cod Community College
Carl Sandburg College
Chandler-Gilbert Community College
Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science
Columbus Technical College
Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service
Community College of Baltimore County-Catonsville
Cypress College
Dallas Institute of Funeral Service

Delgado Community College
East Mississippi Community College
Fayetteville Technical Community College
FINE Mortuary College
Florida State College at Jacksonville
Gupton-Jones College of Funeral Service
Jefferson State Community College
John A. Gupton College
Lake Washington Technical College
Malcolm X College
Mercer County Community College
Miami Dade College
Mid-America College of Funeral Service
Milwaukee Area Technical College
Mount Hood Community College

Nassau Community College
North Shore Community College
Northampton Community College
Northeast Texas Community College
Northwest Mississippi Community College
Ogeechee Technical College
Piedmont Technical College
Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science
Salt Lake Community College
San Antonio College
Southwest Tennessee Community College

St. Petersburg College
State University New York - Canton
Tidewater Community College
University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana
University of District of Columbia
Community College
University of Minnesota
Vincennes University
Wayne State University
Worsham College of Mortuary Science

Staff: Robert C. Smith III, Michael G. Landon, Trudy R. Ellmore

ABFSE Team Chair: Neal Henning and David Edds

COA Public Member: Harriette Scott

ABFSE Executive Committee: Cody Lopasky, President; Joseph Finocchiarro, Past President;
Tony Moore, Vice-President; Erin Wilson, Secretary/Treasurer

Forty-nine (49) of fifty-eight (58) members and one (1) association were present. A quorum was declared by Vice-President, Tony Moore.

Vice President Moore gave a very special thanks to our Gold Sponsors Passare / Funeral Directors Life who hosted the Reception Wednesday evening, and Anubis Publications who will host the Recognition Luncheon following the annual meeting.

Bronze Sponsors and Exhibitors were also thanked for their participation in our annual conference, especially to Mr. Bruce Likly and TribuCast for the livestream. Mr. Likly could not be with us, but Ms. Miguel Cary was warmly welcomed and appreciated for running the livestream in Mr. Likly's absence.

Bronze Sponsors included: Frigid Fluid Company, Library and Information Resources Network (LIRN), RynoFlip, LLC and Tuesday Evening Publications.

Those watching the livestream were asked to sign the guest book.

Our Exhibitors included:

NFDA
CANADA
NFD & MA
Anubis Publications, Inc.
Answering Service for Directors (ASD)
Frigid Fluid Company
FSERC
Funeral Women Lead
Library & Information Resource Network (LIRN)
Mortifin Consulting and Training

National Museum of Funeral History
NBE Exam Prep
RynoFlip, LLC
Passare/Funeral Directors Life Insurance
Pierce College Books
The Dodge Company
The International Conference of Funeral Service
Examining Board.
TribuCast®
Tuesday Evening Publications

Before the adoption of the Agenda, President Lopasky invited Secretary/Treasurer, Erin Wilson to the podium to give a special announcement.

Ms. Wilson addressed a special matter related to her position as Secretary/Treasurer of the ABFSE Executive Committee. Recognizing that leadership and prioritization of the organization, Ms. Wilson announced her intention to step down from the role of Secretary/Treasurer effective immediately. She thanked the Executive Committee for their leadership and reiterates her commitment to furthering funeral service education.

President Lopasky expressed thanks from everyone to Ms. Wilson for her work on the Executive Committee and extended best wishes in all her future endeavors.

MOTION: Leili McMurrough (Worsham College of Funeral Service, (second) Lisa Meehan (Dallas Institute of Funeral Service) to acknowledge the resignation of the ABFSE Secretary/Treasurer, Erin Wilson, effective today and to enter into the Minutes the Secretary/Treasurer position as vacant.

VOTE: Motion was unanimously carried.

President Lopasky said with the Secretary/Treasurer position now vacant; this necessitated an addition to the Agenda.

Amendment to Agenda:

MOTION: Gary Brown (St. Petersburg College), (second) Jeffrey Zealley (Salt Lake Community College) to amend the agenda to add under New Business the election of an ABFSE Secretary/Treasurer in order to fill, the now, vacant position.

VOTE: Motion was unanimously carried.

Amended Agenda

MOTION: James Bullard (Fayetteville Community College), (second) Matt Buel, (Arkansas State University-Mtn. Home) to accept the amended agenda.

VOTE: Motion was unanimously carried.

Approval of 2025 Minutes

President, Cody Lopasky called for approval of the April 11, 2025 63rd Annual Meeting Minutes as presented which were emailed to the membership thirty (30) days prior to the meeting.

MOTION: David Penepent (State University of New York-Canton), (second) Howard Beckham (Florida State College) to approve the April 11, 2025 63rd Annual Meeting minutes.

VOTE: Motion was unanimously carried.

Report from the President Cody Lopasky

- Executive Committee Officers continue to meet every Friday by video conference. Business gets accomplished.

- We need to keep an eye on the Department of Education. Regardless of where you sit on the political spectrum, federal financial aid and accreditors affect us all. If we keep an eye on that, we can take action when, or if, needed.
- Several of us attended meetings of The Conference. A discussion was had and an idea proposed that a review of tasks that perform poorly at the national level may be because there is a disconnect. What is the reason for that disconnect? The Conference has agreed to discuss this. An Ad Hoc Committee was formed. A performance threshold of seventy percent (70%) was agreed upon. Any task, nationwide, that performs less than seventy percent (70%) will be reviewed. The Ad Hoc Committee is meeting with The Conference this summer in conjunction with the curriculum workshop.
- Vigilance: There has been an increase in scams and phishing scams. Please watch your email. Letters and email from Air Quality Research services are not tied to accreditation.

President Lopasky expressed personal appreciation to Mr. James Robinson who was in attendance. His mother passed away last week, yet he is here. Thank you James.

Report from the Executive Director, Robert C. Smith, III

Acknowledgement of staff, ABFSE Officers, Executive Committee, COA, Committees, especially Program Committee under Faith Haug's leadership, Site Visitors. Thank you to Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service for hosting us and providing a delightful evening.

Annual Report Summary

The Annual Report requires attention to detail by schools in order to collect good data. Please take it seriously. Information is used by the schools for assessment, by the profession for understanding, by the public in their education selection and decisions, and for accreditation. The deadline is February 15. It uses data from student tracker, faculty database and more.

There were no late reports. Ten (10) reports were re-opened due to errors – most occurred by those programs that did not attend training sessions.

Complete 2025 results will be available after Annual Conference. Schools will be notified.

There are fifty-eight (58) accredited school / programs in thirty-three (33) states and Washington, D.C. ABFSE has three (3) member associations. There are two (2) programs pursuing candidacy. We've had 4-5 inquiries about candidacy. At least two (2) are likely to progress.

Selected data points for 2025:

New enrollees 3434.	Graduates 1910.
Total Enrollment 7116	Attrition 1067
Male-Females ratio (graduates) 23% / 77%.	

Impact of Distance Education:

- Sixty percent (60%) report offering some funeral service courses via Distance Education.
- Twenty-six (26) out of fifty-eight (58) had Distance Education graduates.

- 49.4% of all graduates were Distance Education.
- Ten (10) of fifty-eight (58) have 100% Distance Education graduates (no traditional classroom instructions)

Annual Report Concerns:

- There were too many requests to re-open reports to fix errors. Please proof read and/or have a 2nd person to review.
- Errors in initial student tracker entries are due to multiple people doing entries, not consistent in entry approach, and no proofing/reviewing entries.
- The cost of making corrections: programmer time to work with schools to fix errors at two (2) schools cost ABFSE \$1,800+. If that happens again, the cost will be put back to the schools.
- December and January sessions addressed most of the common errors. Did you attend?

Persistence Pass Rate:

- PPR will be utilized to evaluate 2026 results: all attempts to retake NBE within one (1) year from graduation will be considered for the persistence pass rate; retake successes in that period will be used to evaluate compliance with Standard 10.4.1 (70% pass rate).
- Pass rate adjustments will be considered at the end of the year.
- Provide specific graduation date in student tracker to facilitate evaluation. Eleven (11) schools did not for 2025.
- A Town Hall to review PPR expectations is anticipated.

External Pressures:

- US Department of Education – this is our accreditor recognition every five (5) years. The current process began August 2023. ABFSE had our appearance before NACIQI March 25, 2026 in Washington, DC.
- National Advisory Council for Academic Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) - Department staff and NACIQI recommended approval for five (5) years with follow up report in twelve (12) months. We are waiting for the Senior Department Official's written decision in ninety (90) days.
- Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) – this is voluntary recognition with a seven (7) year recognition period with a mid-cycle review. Our current term is 2022-2029). The mid-cycle review was due 4/1/26. Recognition indicated ABFSE is meeting quality assurance standards.

Textbooks:

- Embalming textbook – Sharon Gee-Mascarello is looking into a 7th edition. Budgeted \$25,000 to \$28,000 in royalties.
- Cleveland textbooks - Orders are processed and shipped from ABFSE office. National chains are running college bookstores. The Funeral Service Law in the United States textbook is undergoing an update for a 3rd edition to accompany curriculum outline.

Announcements/Reminders:

- ABFSE website has valuable information
- Curriculum workshop will be in June at San Antonio College.
- Textbook survey must be completed by May 15.
- Directory information will be send to each program after this conference – update June 1.
- Update faculty database
- Register for annual conference
- Accreditation renewal fee increase in 2026-2027 by \$500 (\$8000)
- Reminder: Each program must have two (2) full time funeral service faculty by January 1, 2027.

2027 65th Annual Conference will be held in Detroit Michigan April 13-16. The host school is Wayne State University.

The Executive Director announced his retirement as pending in 2027. Next April will be the last meeting as Executive Director.

Report from the Past President Joseph Finocchiaro

Since our last meeting I have presented several times on my “Myths and Misconceptions of Funeral Service Education” online and at state funeral director associations. In the upcoming months I have another two such presentations scheduled. Each one of these builds knowledge about the ABFSE and the International Conference and encourages participation of practitioners to engage in the workplace task survey, item writing, and even considering offering their talents and knowledge as part-time educators.

In addition to this I will be presenting at Wilbert.EDU this fall using a class lecture I used when I was actively teaching. This will introduce a whole class of professionals to what students can experience in mortuary school, giving them some insight into what experience can be found in the modern classroom.

Consistency in how an organization governs itself is a very important thing to the morale, reputation, and health of both the organization and its members. It is easy to make assumptions or speculate as to the reasoning when you are not part of the body engaging in the discussion. It is important to know that the track record and history of this organization shows that each individual concern is addressed uniquely, they are engaged in robust discussion and decisions try their best to be consistent taking into account the unique circumstance of each issue. Rules, fairness, equity, and even traditional expectations are all part of a healthy discourse and decision-making. This includes the circumstance when the sitting president of the American Board initiated an inquiry into his own ability to continue serving in his office prior to the meeting in Boston, MA in 2023 to ensure that the topic could be reasonably researched, discussed, and properly addressed during the executive meeting at that time. As necessary and as discovered, deficiencies and clarifications are rectified and become codified into our governing documents to ensure the health and integrity of the organization. If you ever find a policy or procedure confusing or in apparent conflict, please make sure to make your question known to the elected officers and executive director.

I continue to serve on the Bylaws Committee and attend the weekly officer meetings.

Financial Report – Robert C. Smith, III

All of ABFSE financial reports have been reviewed by Executive Committee. The ABFSE is in an excellent financial position. We had a mandate to have adequate reserves two times the operating revenue and we have more than surpassed that.

We have been told by the Department of Education that there need to be two full-time employees at the ABFSE. The budget is set for that. The financial reports are available to anyone who is interested in reviewing them. The budget for FY 2026-2027 has been approved by Executive Committee and includes funds for transition for new staff.

MOTION: Nicholas Ricci (Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science, (second) Howard Beckham (Florida State College-Jacksonville) to accept the President, Executive Director, Past President, and Financial Reports.

VOTE: Motion was unanimously carried.

President Lopasky expressed appreciation for the Executive Director's financial management of ABFSE funds.

A question was asked requesting clarification regarding the current Secretary/Treasurer position vacancy and other historical decisions made in similar circumstances.

Past President Joseph Finocchiaro responded with the explanation for the reason he brought up his situation as ABFSE sitting president from 2023 when he was president of Dallas Institute. At that time, he was promoted to Chief Executive Officer and President of Pierce Mortuary Colleges; yet maintained the president position at Dallas Institute for four (4) months to the detriment of his health. With these considerations, Mr. Finocchiaro brought his situation to the Executive Committee regarding the appropriateness of a sitting president to remain in the office if he were to resign as a college president.

There are some misconceptions about Pierce Mortuary Colleges that need to be dispelled today. The three schools (Dallas Institute, Gupton Jones College and Mid-America College) are all parts of Pierce Mortuary Colleges Inc. It is not an arm of the Wilbert Group. It is not owned by Pierce Chemical. It is its own educational not-for-profit. There is a campus administration with four (4) teaching buildings. The way this organization has treated the organization was that PMC 'corporate' was a separate institution from the schools themselves. Inquiries were made to the schools determining that Pierce Mortuary Colleges Inc. cut their paychecks and handles their human resource [department].

When you look at the organizational charts of every one of the schools, the Chief Academic Officer is the person who reports directly to the board and to the CEO of Pierce Mortuary Colleges Inc. – a single purpose institution. All of this evidence was brought to the Executive Committee. The expectation has, and always has been, and to my understanding whether or not it

was evident in the documentation, it was never questioned. In order to be an officer in this organization, you must be a member of the organization. That was my assumption in 2023 and that was the assumption when Dr. Francis Solis at San Antonio College got his position when Dr. Moreno took over. Historically this organization has essentially insisted, whether it is right or wrong, that in order to remain an officer the qualification for membership must be maintained. The question was, “Is the CEO of Pierce Mortuary Colleges sufficient in order to maintain membership?” Based on the data and discussion, the decision was made for me to remain in the position until my term ended.

In the current situation, I have recused myself completely from the matter because I am, unfortunately, the CEO of Pierce Mortuary Colleges and in February we made the decision to remove the office of President from all of our schools. And I felt it was a tremendous conflict of interest for myself to engage in any conversation regarding membership eligibility of Secretary/Treasurer Wilson. So, I have no comment to make about that because I was simply not a part of it out of respect for the process and to maintain the integrity of this organization. But that is the reason this organization permitted me to stay versus whatever action it is taking now.

And ultimately, Pierce Mortuary Colleges Inc. is a single purpose mortuary college with three (3) campuses. So, it is very hard for me to distinguish when some corporate entities that administer financial aid compliance, registration compliance and faculty is not part of that institution. The COA has heard some of those arguments as justification for how we are running our organization. If feel that the decision that was made by this organization was accurate based on the information presented.

President Lopasky responded saying when Secretary/Treasurer Erin Wilson’s appointment changed, she is correct that there are holes in the ruling documents regarding the situation. The Executive Committee voting members met in a special meeting to discuss the situation. A vote was taken that time would be given until the Annual Meeting to allow Ms. Wilson to find a position that met the requirements for her continued service in the position or resign. Ms. Wilson new position is not one that meets the requirements to continue service on the ABFSE Executive Committee. That is how we got to today.

A question was asked regarding what the process would be under New Business. President Lopasky explained that due to the fact there is no time for the CUC to establish a Nominating Committee, the Bylaws would be followed and nominations from the floor would be received to fill and complete the unexpired term. There is no expectation or assumption that the individual who fills the term will continue. At the next Annual Meeting there will be elections for new officers. There is not a guarantee of the elected process. Being elected for any position is not a guarantee of moving into the next for any variety of reasons nor is there any obligation to move forward.

Qualifications for the position as outlined in the ABFSE Bylaws (Chapter II Bylaws, Article V, Section C-Qualifications) are: Candidate credentials for the officers of the ABFSE (i.e., President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Immediate Past President) shall be at least: 1) a full-time faculty or administrator at an ABFSE accredited institution or program; 2) a current or

past member of an advisory committee of the ABFSE; and 3) have attended ABFSE annual meetings for at least three (3) of the previous five (5) years.

Question for Clarification: If a person has been nominated for COA, and is elected to be an Officer, must they remove their name from the nomination for COA? Answer: Yes.

Advisory Committee Reports

Scholarship Committee, Sara Moss (NFDA)

Sara was unable to attend the meeting. The Executive Director, Robert C. Smith, III gave the report.

April 9, 2026

American Board of Funeral Service Education
Robert C. Smith III, Executive Director
992 Mantua Pike, Suite 108
Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097

Dear Mr. Smith,

The scholarship committee discussed scholarship awards via email the week of April 6, to finalize the evaluation of the scholarship applications submitted for Spring 2026. Eight undergraduate applications were evaluated by the committee. The committee awarded scholarships as follows:

Applicant	Institution	Scholarship Donor	Amount Awarded
MarTeze Hammond	John A. Gupton	NFDA	\$2,500
Taylor Price	Pittsburgh Institute	NACMS	\$2,000
Elizabeth Mikkelsen	Hudson Valley	ASD	\$1,250
Precious Montgomery	Gupton Jones College	ASD	\$1,250
Amanda Schmidt	Pittsburgh Institute	McComb	\$1,000
Madryn Hegelmann	Wayne State University	Champion	\$1,000
Kileigh McDaniel	Carl Sandburg	Champion	\$500
		Total awarded	\$9,500

Please let me know if you have any questions!

Respectfully,
Sara Moss, MS, FT, LFD
ABFSE Scholarship Committee Chairperson

Curriculum Committee, Jzyk Ennis (Jefferson State Community College)

The Curriculum Committee met Wednesday, April 15, 2026. They discussed the current curriculum notices of motion, the curriculum review process, the importance of completing textbook surveys and the upcoming 2026 Hilgenfeld Curriculum Workshop.

Importance of textbook surveys for curriculum:

We are tasked with selecting the educator members who will serve as reviewers of our curriculum in the summer workshop. A call for resumes went out earlier this year.

Once the curriculum is reviewed this summer, those revisions will come back to the Curriculum Committee for us to determine what changes, if any, we will propose for those outlines. Once we do that in the fall, the revised outlines will go out to the Program Directors and Presidents. If you are a Program Director or President, please forward those emails to your teaching faculty, especially in these disciplines.

There will then be a “public comment” period on the proposed changes. We have a standardized form you must use (on the website) to submit comments on proposed revisions. The Curriculum Committee will then review those comments and determine if any additional changes need to be made to proposed outlines. If so, another round of sending those out will occur.

The three outlines to be reviewed this summer are:

- 1) History of Funeral Service and Embalming
- 2) Sociology
- 3) Pathology

The Curriculum Committee selected the following educators as reviewers:

History of Funeral Service and Embalming (Chair: Jeff Zealley)

Donaldson, Diane	Community College of Baltimore County-Catonsville
Evely, Mark	Wayne State University
Jackson, Edwin	Community College of Baltimore County-Catonsville
Robinson, James	Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service
Zealley, Jeff	Salt Lake City Community College

Sociology (Chair: Jake Smith)

Arvidson, Robert	Worsham College of Funeral Service
Ennis, Jzyk	Jefferson State Community College
Grande, Jolena	Cypress College
Jenkins, Jessica	Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service
Smith, Jake	Brightpoint Community College

Pathology (Chair: Dan Shea)

Fredrickson, Jennie	Lake Washington Institute of Technology
Johnson, Tawanna	Dallas Institute & Fayetteville Technical College
Schooley, Katelynn	Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science
Shea, Dan	Cape Cod Community College
Ziegenhorn, Kimberly	Worsham College of Funeral Service

Thank you to all who submitted resumes. Please apply again. We could only select five per outline and we try to make sure everyone is represented in many ways.

Committee on Accreditation, Mark Evelyn (Wayne State University)

At the April 14-15, 2026 meeting in Houston, Texas the COA:

Completed five (5) comprehensive reaccreditation reviews.

Reviewed eight (8) assessment plans.

Reviewed three (3) follow up reports for low NBE scores.

Reviewed four (4) responses to stipulations.

Reviewed four (4) probation responses.

Reviewed 172 Appendix J exemption requests for 139 students.

Reviewed nineteen (19) programs for first-time NBE pass rates below 70% in 2025.

Reviewed four (4) programs for 2025 graduation rates below 60%.

Reviewed four (4) programs for 2025 employment rates below 60%.

Received and reviewed ABFSE financial reports.

Discussed the definition of new enrollees in the context of revisiting the graduation/retention rate standard.

NBE Liaison Committee, Kevin Patterson (Des Moines Area Technical Community College)

Kevin was not able to attend the meeting. Sarah Stopyra, Vice Chair, presented the report in his absence.

The NBE Liaison Committee met virtually several times over the past year. On April 16, 2026 the Committee welcomed representatives from The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards at a meeting in conjunction with the ABFSE meeting.

During that meeting, the Committee presented questions to Conference representatives. Questions asked came from both ABFSE members as well as follow-up from previous questions asked of The Conference. Focal points were the percentage of candidates opting to release results to schools and if that has changed, The Conference's process of reaching out to candidates who have not yet taken the exam within 6 months, and how the Conference is assisting the ABFSE office with compiling persistence pass rate data.

Guests in attendance then received an update from the Conference, including the mention of the Virtual Educators Forum, to be hosted by ICFSEB on September 15, 2026.

College and University Council, Eboné Dukes (Northwest Mississippi Community College)

Virtual meeting on March 13, 2026. Twenty-nine (29) out of fifty-eight (58) programs were present. ABFSE Executive Director Robb Smith and Assistant Executive Director Mike Landon were invited guests.

ABFSE Advisory Committee reports were presented followed by a report from Robb about ABFSE's attendance at the ICFSEB Annual Conference. There were eleven (11) educators present representing nine (9) different colleges. Four (4) educators are also state board members. Mark Evelyn was appointed to the Conference's Board of Directors.

The Curriculum Outlines' Notices of Motion were reviewed, as were two (2) general topic Notices of Motion. One being the Mentorship Program to continue and a Mentorship Committee to be established as a standing committee.

The slate of names for COA nominations was concluded at the morning meeting Friday, April 17, 2026 for public, private and CUC representatives.

Program Committee, Faith Haug (Arapahoe Community College)

The committee has met several times in 2026. Topics offered the remainder of the year include, but are not limited to Creating Personal Touch Online, AI Tools for Instructors (Pitfalls of AI), Deathcare Avenues in Allied Professions with FS/MOR degree, Deathbots/AI in funerals.

We'll be sending out attendee survey sometime early next week. Planning for Detroit, MI will begin. Please share ideas and suggestions with us.

Bylaws Committee, Audrina Dollar (Pierce Mortuary Colleges, Inc)

The committee met in Oct/Nov 2025 to review a Model Apprentice Act. One minor adjustment was made and the Act can now continue through proper channels for comment and adoption.

There have been no new meetings since that time.

Accreditation Liaison Committee, Erin Wilson (Dallas Institute of Funeral Service)

There have been no new committee meetings since last report. The committee has reached out to new program directors explaining who we are and what we do. No other issues have been brought to the committee for the COA.

NFDMA, Kyle Ledford – No report was presented due to Mr. Ledford's absence.

NFDA – No report was presented. They are having a convention in Washington, DC and no one could be here to provide a report.

CANA, Barbara Kemmis

Happy Birthday Cremation. It is the 150th anniversary of the first cremation in the United States. We are expanding the National Museum of Funeral History exhibit of the first cremation and taking it on the road as a traveling exhibit.

We are doing many activities this year. Planning a podcast takeover of your experience and prediction of the future of cremation.

The legal definition of cremation has expanded to include composting.

To support the work of ABFSE, we are developing enhanced teaching tools which can be found on the CANA website.

Seeking stories from all types of funeral professionals across the country.

The CANA Board decided to accept complimentary membership to all ABFSE accredited schools and programs. This was a matter of equity for the CANA Board.

We work with thirteen (13) schools for 700 students certified crematory operator cremation program.

MOTION: Jeff Zealley (Salt Lake City Community College), (second) David Penepent (SUNY-Canton) to accept the Advisory Committee reports.

VOTE: Motion was unanimously carried.

Unfinished Business - Cody Lopasky, President

The Strategic Plan is ongoing. An update was presented during conference week. We will be working with a Strategic Plan organization to update the existing strategic plan this fall.

New Business - Cody Lopasky, President

Curriculum Outlines

Funeral Service Management

MOTION: Mark Evelyn (Wayne State University), (second) Leili McMurrough (Worsham College of Funeral Service) to accept the Funeral Service Management outline and glossary, with revisions shown and any subsequent technical corrections be approved for use in the classroom by the ABFSE.

Discussion occurred regarding a certain term which was eliminated from the outline and glossary. The Curriculum Chair reminded attendees that comments should have been made during the two (2) open comment periods instead of during the Annual Conference when the outlines are being approved.

Call for the vote.

VOTE: Yes-13; No-19; Abstain-16

Motion is defeated

Cremation

MOTION: Jzyk Ennis (Jefferson State Community College), (second) Leili McMurrough to accept the Cremation outline and glossary, with revisions shown and any subsequent technical corrections be approved for use in the classroom by the ABFSE.

VOTE: Yes-47; No-1; Abstain-0

Motion carried by majority vote

Restorative Art

MOTION: Jzyk Ennis (Jefferson State Community College), (second) Leili McMurrough to accept the Restorative Art outline and glossary, with revisions shown and any subsequent technical corrections be approved for use in the classroom by the ABFSE.

VOTE: Yes–48; No–1; Abstain–0
Motion carried by majority vote.

Funeral Service Management

MOTION: David Penepent (SUNY-Canton), (second) Howard Beckham (Florida State College) to strike “Theory Z” from the outline and glossary and return everything that was struck regarding “Servant Leadership” back to the curriculum outline. Then the outline and glossary should be approved any subsequent technical corrections be approved for use in the classroom by the ABFSE.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Standard 5.6.5

MOTION: Mark Evelyn (Wayne State University), (second) Gary Brown (St. Petersburg College) to revise Standard 5.6.5 to eliminate the requirement of nine (9) upper division general education credits for a bachelor degree.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Advisory Committee Addition

MOTION: Cody Lopasky (Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service, (second) Faith Haug (Arapahoe Community College) to amend the ABFSE By-laws, Article VII.C. Advisory Committee Membership to add *Mentorship Committee* as a permanent Advisory Committee. - 10. Mentorship Committee. Sections 1-3 of Article VII.C. (Qualifications, Term and Appointment and Committee Leadership) will apply.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Funeral Service Law with FTC

MOTION: Mark Evelyn (Wayne State University), (second) Gary Brown (St. Petersburg College) that it be reflected in the Curriculum Standard 5.5.4 - Legal, Ethical, Regulatory three (3) minimum semester (4 quarter) credits. *Amend Standard 5.5.4 so that 5.5.4.a reads as follows: 5.5.4.a Funeral Service Law with FTC. Std. 5.5.4.d delete (Federal Trade Commission)*

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Election - Secretary/Treasurer

The ABFSE Bylaws were shown for position qualifications. The person would fill the remainder of unexpired term. A new election of officers is scheduled for 2027.

President Lopasky called for nominations from the floor. They were as follows:

- Faith Haug (Arapahoe Community College)
- Jolena Grande (Cypress College)
- Lisa Meehan (Dallas Institute of Funeral Service)

MOTION: Jzyk Ennis (Jefferson State Community College), (second) James Bullard (Fayetteville Technical College) to close nominations.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

All three (3) nominees were asked if they were willing to accept that nomination. All agreed.

Ballots were passed out to all program representatives. One vote per program.

A short recess was taken for two (2) staff members to count the results.

Election Results: Faith Haug (Arapahoe Community College) was elected to complete the term of secretary/treasurer.

Closing Comments – President Cody Lopasky

Thank you all for coming to our wonderful city of Houston. Stay tuned for 2027.

Question: What happens with Faith Haug being on the ballot for COA?

Answer: The Parliamentarian replied that one name has now been disqualified by their election to the Secretary/Treasurer position and proceed with the remaining two names on the ballot.

Adjourn

MOTION: Cody Lopasky (Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service), (second) Don Cymbor (AAMI) to adjourn.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM.