

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**Wednesday, May 28, 2025 - 10:00 a.m.**Advisory Committee Members

Jasmine L. Berrios
Jolena M. Grande
Margaret McMillan
Kenneth Nathaniel Beard
Rev. Jason E. Bense
Kirk Jeffrey Gilles
Eloise Kaeck

Stakeholder Members

Doyle Christensen
Patrick Woods
Rebecca Langdon
Roger Decker
Steve Crawford
Whitney Reuling
Rich Flammer
Levi Winegar

DCA Staff

Michael Kanotz
David Bouily
Elizabeth Dietzen-Olsen
Samuel Dyer
Matt Nishimine
Leslie Barmby

Cemetery and Funeral Bureau (Bureau or CFB) Staff: Gina Chiaverini Sanchez, Bureau Chief, Sandra Patterson, Bureau Deputy Chief, Michelle Arthur, Audit Manager, Melissa Orias, Program Support Manager, and Almer Generoso, Legislative Analyst.

1. Opening Remarks/Roll Call of Members.

Bureau Chief, Gina Sanchez, called the meeting to order at approximately 10:01 a.m. and welcomed those in attendance. Ms. Sanchez indicated that the meeting is open to the public in Sacramento and available via WebEx and teleconference platforms. Ms. Sanchez provided instruction on the conduct of the meeting including how to make public comment and introduced the meeting moderator who provided instructions for participating in the meeting. Ms. Sanchez conducted roll call of committee members along with welcoming new members.

2. Public Comment on Items Not on Agenda

Members of the public attending via WebEx or in attendance in Sacramento attending in person were provided the opportunity to comment.

3. Update from Department of Consumer Affairs Representative

Ms. Barmby provided an update on Governor Newsom's proposed 2025-2026 state budget which included a proposal to split DCA oversight agency into California Housing and Homelessness Agency & Bureau Consumer Services Agency. The Commission report will offer reports to the Governor and the Legislator while also offering recommendations. The Business and Consumer Services Agency if approved will become operative on July 1st, 2026. In addition, Ms. Barmby detailed on where to get detailed information on in the reorganization plan BCSH's website. Ms. Barmby provided information on Governor Newsom's executive order on updating the hybrid telework schedules for state agencies and departments. Lastly, Ms. Barmby congratulated the Bureau and its staff for its continued service for consumer protection.

Ms. Sanchez and opened the meeting for comments. The Advisory Committee members and the public members had no comments.

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

a. Update on Staffing:

Ms. Sanchez announced that CFB has vacancies with one being filled by Mr. Generoso taking the role of the Advisory Committee liaison and Legislative/Regulatory analyst while, still having an Associate Management Auditor and a Field Representative role that is close to being filled with new staff.

b. Budgets:

Mr. Nishimine introduced himself and Sam Dyer from DCA's budget office and their roles as managing and completing the economic and fiscal impact of regulatory packages. Mr. Nishimine indicated the balance reserve, and it's decline due to structural imbalanced.

Committee Member Beard noticed the fee increase and its projection and the possibly not meeting the projection due to inflation. Ms. Sanchez informed how the Bureau has been structurally imbalanced but mentioned that with the fee increase's goal was to offset the Bureau until the next Sunset meeting.

Committee Member Gilles asked what the settlement was along the fee structure with Ms. Sanchez informing Mr. Gilles what the settlement along with DCA staff member Michael Kanotz providing additional information for the settlement.

Committee Member McMillan asked if being structurally imbalanced was a normal occurrence for DCA. Mr. Nishimine provided the background of the imbalanced along how each department is affected differently.

Committee Member Grande asked what it would look like if more and more licensees choose not to renew their licenses along with a new fee study. Ms. Sanchez responded that she will not expect a decline in renewals and will inform the public/committee if such a situation arises.

c. Business Modernization:

Bureau Deputy Chief Sandra Patterson provided an update on BizMod moving the Bureau's outdated payment system to CFBConnect which streamlines and make it easier to applicants to apply and pay for licenses. In addition, adding an online complaint form which makes filing a complaint easier to do via online.

Committee Member Beard asked if there is a processing fee for online application. Ms. Patterson answered that there is no online fee.

d. Audit Unit Update:

Audit manager Michelle Arthur reported on the progress and impediments of this project. Ms. Arthur reported the following:

- Annual Reports are due for the Cemetery June 1st or 120 days after the close of the fiscal year upon written request with an extension up to 9 months. Cemetery side was 89% on time or about 170 establishments with 2% being late, 5% not report, 4% which are not due yet.
- For Funeral side, 53% were on time or about 576 establishments. 45% were, about 499 establishments and 2% have not reported which equals to 21 establishments.

- Enforcement actions have been taken on those establishments who have reported late or not reported at all.
- Quarterly reports due dates.
- Four hydrolysis facilities with most reporting on time and disciplinary action has been taken on facilities who have not reported on time.

Advisory Committee Member Ms. Grande complimented the Bureau for the update following with the question on why there are delays of reports and what actions is the Bureau taking to remedy the deficits.

Ms. Sanchez stated that CFB does not have data on why there are delays however, stating that the Bureau is talking a plethora of actions on late reporting. One being social media reminds, online reminds, and warning referral program.

There were no public comments received.

5. Current 2025 Legislation: Mr. Generoso reported on the handout for this agenda item.

- Senate Bill 777 (Richardson, Chapter 7) Abandoned Endowment Care Cemetery
- Senate Bill 861 (BP & ED, Technical/Non-substantive request to amend BPC 27 to add hydrolysis and reduction facilities)
- Senate Bill 344 (Pierson) Disposition of human remains: scattering at sea

Committee member Gilles asked where SB 777 is in its cycle.

Ms. Sanchez stated it is still early in its development and provided where to find more information on the senator's website.

There were no public comments.

6. 2025 Regulatory Update:

Mr. Generoso provided an overview of AB 35, Reduction of human remains, and the disposition of reduced human remains. The regulatory text has an implementation date of January 1st, 2027.

Ms. Sanchez provided additional information in the bill's status along with its corresponding application text that is slated to be released when it is ready.

Committee member Kaeck commented on how the homeless in LA county is so vast, any unclaimed bodies could be naturally reduced.

Ms. Sanchez clarified that any unclaimed bodies is not under the jurisdiction of the Cemetery and Funeral Bureau, but the county/city it is located in.

Ms. Tessa had a public comment asking for best way to track for zoning and application.

Ms. Sanchez answered that zoning will be through the county and the Department of Public Health prior to applying to CFB.

Ms. Ruling made a public comment on how the vessels work and its connection with the Department of Public Health.

Ms. Sanchez stated that she and CFB is not aware of CDPH's guidance, but it is available on their site however, she informed Ms. Ruling to email her for further information.

There were no further public comments

7a. Licensing Statistical Report and Update on Examination Development.

Mrs. Orias presented on this agenda item referencing the PowerPoint Statistics. he fiscal year July 1 through December 31, 2024.

1. Starting with the performance measures of the licensing and applicants.
2. Next, Mrs. Orias stated that CFB is on track to meet licensing
3. Renewals are mostly done online. 60%
4. Pass rates for examinations more specifically, funeral directors pass rates increasing with past exam pass rate being 50 percent.

No public comment was received.

7b. Update on Examination Development:

Mrs. Orias stated the following examination development.

1. Common application deficiencies with applying online being best way to offset deficiencies.
2. In July CFB will bring the occupational analysis for cemetery manager category to provide information on industry trends.
3. Cemetery managers workshops will begin in July and will be held in-person and teleconference.

No public comment was received.

8. Enforcement Statistical Report. Ms. Sanchez presented on this agenda item and referenced the handouts.

Summary of Enforcement and Compliance included: Number of complaints vs the entire fiscal year. Common violations which are failure to display license, failure to display prices.

Committee member Kirk wanted to know the discrepancy of the first number on inspections.

Ms. Sanchez clarified it only contained the first half of the fiscal year so the numbers are still not complete, but inspections are ongoing and on time.

There were no public comments made.

9. Adjournment – meeting was adjourned at 11:18 A.M.