

Summary of the April 18, 2024, Meeting of the MFDA Board of Directors

After calling the meeting to order, President Ross Meyering invited President-Elect Gregory McClary to offer an invocation. President Meyering then read a statement on antitrust avoidance and MFDA's Mission Statement.

Doug Misiuk, President of the MFDA Services Corporation Board, called the meeting of the MFDA Services Corporation Board to order in joint session.

AUDIT REPORTS

President Meyering introduced Kyle Schafer CPA, of Maner Costerisan, MFDA's independent auditor, to present the audited MFDA and MFDA Services Corporation 2023 financial statements, along with association governance and management letters. The audit found no significant deficiencies in internal control for either MFDA or MFDA Services Corporation. He also reported on agreed-upon-procedures conducted on MFDA's Political Action Committee.

The MFDA Services Corporation Board then recessed.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Becky Bechler, MFDA's Government Relations Consultant reported that because of special elections to fill two vacant House seats conducted the previous Tuesday, the winners of those elections would soon be taking their seats in the state House of Representatives, which would break the 54-54 partisan deadlock that has been in place in the House since November. She noted that this should allow for legislation that has been awaiting action in that chamber to move forward this spring. Executive Director Phil Douma reported that this should include Senate Bills 544 and 545, which passed the state Senate in March and have been awaiting action in the House of Representatives. She reminded Board members that Senate Bill 544 and 545 were introduced by state Senator Veronica Klinefelt (D-Eastpointe), and would require that removal services be registered with the state and meet specific equipment and operational standards. In addition, the measures would require that independent refrigeration facilities be licensed by the state and also meet facility and operational standards.

He also noted that House Bill 5043 and 5044, legislation that would require that all medical certification on death records be conducted through the state's Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) one year from the date of enactment and would make neglect or refusal to medically certify a death record a violation subject to licensing sanction, would likely receive a hearing this spring. Mr. Douma then presented a report of the April 3rd meeting of the Board of Examiners in Mortuary Science.

Ms. Bechler then reported that the legislature's first draft of the state Department of Health and Human Services 2025 budget would likely be released in the next week, which will

provide an indication whether MFDA's proposed increases in the state's indigent burial program would be included. Mr. Douma then reported that that MFDA Government Relations team was still awaiting draft legislation to legalize accelerated, contained decomposition, also known as "natural organic reduction," in the state of Michigan. Board members indicated that this legislation should be reviewed very carefully before being introduced.

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

Secretary/Treasurer Sarah Jensen-Vatter presented the minutes of the Board's March 7th meeting, which were unanimously approved as presented. Ms. Jensen-Vatter and Ms. Grabinski, MFDA's Financial Controller, presented the association's financial report through March 31, 2024, which was unanimously accepted for placement on file. Ms. Grabinski and Mr. Douma then presented the list of firms that have not paid their 2024 dues and are now, therefore, non-members. The Board then reviewed changes recommended by the Audit Committee to the association's Board Member and Staff Reimbursement Policy. Mr. Douma reported that the proposed changes would help clarify the rules for when overnight lodging would be paid prior to MFDA Board and committee meetings. He said the new policy would provide lodging for Board or committee members when a meeting is scheduled at 9:30 am or earlier, and expected travel time is 2 hours or more, or when a meeting is scheduled between 9:30 am to 11am and expected travel time is 3 hours or more. He also noted that the proposed policy would include exceptions for forecasted inclement weather. He also noted that the new policy would require that lodging arrangements be made through the MFDA office. After discussion, the Board approved the recommended changes to the expense reimbursement policy.

The Board then recessed to allow the MFDA Services Corporation Board to reconvene.

MFDA SERVICES CORPORATION

After the Services Corporation Board reconvened, Secretary/Treasurer Allison Bowerman Johnson presented of the Board's March 7th meeting, and March 13th virtual meeting minutes, which were unanimously approved as presented. Ms. Bowerman Johnson and Ms. Grabinski presented the Service Corporation's financial report through February 29, 2024, which was unanimously accepted for placement on file.

The MFDA Services Corporation then reviewed proposed changes to its reimbursement policy along the lines earlier approved by the MFDA Board. After discussion, the Services Corporation approved the proposed amendments to the expense reimbursement policy.

Ms. Grabinski and Prepaid Funeral Program Administrator Pete Fiero reported on the Master Escrow Plan™ portfolio performance. Mr. Fiero noted that the portfolios designed for the deposit of guaranteed price contracts grew between 8.73% and 14.06% for the previous 36 months.

President Misiuk then reported that Kylee Crane has been awarded the \$1,000 MFDA Endowed Scholarship at Wayne State University's Mortuary Science Program for 2024.

The Services Corporation Board then adjourned.

Board members then heard a presentation from John and Sandy O'Shaughnessy from Good Mourning Ministry, regarding their grief support programs including a film series called *The 7 Intentions of Mourning*. Mr. and Mrs. O'Shaughnessy informed board members that these materials are available for placement in funeral home libraries, and they would be interested in sharing more information regarding the ministry at MFDA district meetings.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Immediate Past President Roy Langolf reported that the Nominating Committee would be placing the name of District #6 Director Mark Evely before the membership at the Annual Meeting as its nominee for Secretary/Treasurer.

JURISPRUDENCE EXAM WORK GROUP REPORT

Mr. Douma presented an outline summarizing Michigan's Prepaid Funeral and Cemeteries Sales Act and Rules, as approved by the Jurisprudence Exam Work Group subcommittee on that topic. He noted that this outline along with the outline, of the mortuary science sections of Michigan's Occupational Code and rules-which were presented to the Board at its March meeting-complete two of the major components of the Jurisprudence Exam project.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Meyering reported on his several activities and meetings in which he has represented MFDA as President, including participation in the NFDA Advocacy Summit that took place March 20-22 in Washington, DC.

PRESIDENT-ELECT'S REPORT

President-Elect Gregory McClary and Chief Convention Planner Sandy West reported that 85 booths have been sold to 68 firms thus far, and that sponsorships were going well. She also reported that member registration would be open on Friday. Mr. McClary then presented proposed registration rates for the convention, which were unanimously approved as presented.

Ms. West then presented a proposed policy change that would allow convention Exhibitors and Sponsors to be given email addresses for convention registrants upon request. After discussion, the Board unanimously approved the policy revision allowing Exhibitors and Sponsors to obtain convention registrant email addresses.

President Meyering then presented the proposed members for the Convention Credentials and Resolutions/Rules Committees. The Board unanimously approved the Committee rosters.

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY REPORT

Amy Kleeman, MFDA's Director of Member Services reported on the 2023-2024 MFDA Leadership Academy, noting that there were 12 participants this year, all of whom will be recognized at the Honor's Recognition Ceremony being held in conjunction with MFDA's Convention in June. The Board then reviewed two proposals for a 2024-2025 Leadership Academy and accepted the proposal from Desiree Melfi Bozzo for a program she entitled Strategic Executive Leadership Foundations. The Board then asked Secretary/Treasurer Sarah Jensen-Vatter and District #2 Director Kiki Rodgers to work with Ms. Bozzo to develop the registration process and fee for this year's academy.

After District Director reports, President-Elect McClary thanked President Meyering for his year of extraordinary service to the association, as well as District #5 Director Tom Farley for his contributions to the MFDA Board over the previous seven years.

President Meyering also thanked outgoing MFDA Services Corporation Board President Doug Misiuk for his many years of contribution to both MFDA and MFDA Services Corporation.

The Board then adjourned its final meeting of the 2023-2024 session.