

# Washington State Home Inspector Advisory Licensing Board meeting minutes

November 30, 2023

David Ittner (00:02):

... my best. All right. Good morning. I am David Ittner, Chair of the Washington State Funeral and Cemetery Board. The time is now 9:00 AM on Thursday, November 30th, 2023, and I'm calling this special board meeting to order. We will be providing an opportunity for public comment later in this meeting. As a courtesy, we encourage everyone to mute their mics on your phone if you called in when you are not speaking, to reduce the background noise when others are speaking. Also, for board members to help us capture information correctly, please state your name when making comments. Thank you. All right, roll call. Susan, would you please call roll? Board members, please respond if you are in attendance.

Susan (00:47):

I'll start with you. Chair Ittner.

David Ittner (00:50):

Here.

Susan (00:52):

Vice Chair. Gutierrez-Mora.

Gutierrez-Mora (00:54):

I'm here.

Susan (00:54):

Board Member Cameron.

Cameron (00:55):

Here.

Susan (00:55):

Board Member Lessord.

Lessord (00:55):

Here.

Susan (00:55):

Board member Little.

Little (00:55):

Here.

Susan (00:56):

Board member Smock.

Smock (00:58):

Present.

Susan (01:00):

And board member Ward

Ward (01:03):

Here.

Susan (01:15):

Thank you.

David Ittner (01:17):

All right. Thank you, Susan. Item number three, approval of agenda. We'll need a motion for approval.

Cameron (01:25):

I move that we approve as presented. This is Cameron.

David Ittner (01:29):

Thank you, Cameron. Is there a second?

Gutierrez-Mora (01:30):

I'll second.

David Ittner (01:36):

All right. Are there any additions or corrections to the agenda? All right. Hearing none. All in favor?

All (Group) (01:46):

Aye.

David Ittner (01:50):

Any opposed? Hearing none. Motion passes. Item number four, approval of minutes. We need a motion for approval.

Gutierrez-Mora (02:01):

This is Pete, so moved.

David Ittner (02:04):

All right. Thank you. Pete. Is there a second?

Little (02:08):

This is Rick and I'll second that.

David Ittner (02:11):

Thank you, Rick. Any additions or corrections to the minutes? All right. Hearing none. All in favor say aye.

All (Group) (02:20):

Aye.

David Ittner (02:24):

Any opposed? All right. Motion passes. All right. Moving on to item number five, awards recognition. I'm going to turn it over to Sydney for this piece.

Ward (02:40):

Thank you. Good morning. And it is my pleasure to introduce a new staff team member to the board this morning, program specialist Jason Lynn joined us back in September as our military and military spouse engagement coordinator, and I will turn it over to him to let you know a little bit more about himself.

Jason Lynn (03:00):

Thank you. Good morning, everyone. Thanks for having me and inviting me here to be able to speak a little bit about who I am and what I'm doing here at the Department of Licensing. As Sydney said, I'm the new military military spouse liaison, so I came on about two and a half months ago. Really excited to be here. I'll take a few minutes and just talk a little bit about my background. I was born and raised in Florida and attended the University of Alabama where I graduated with a degree in finance. I went on to serve 20 years in the Navy. Met my wife there. I have three kids. I was a linguist in the Navy for most of that time, but my wife is from Washington, so we were really excited to have the opportunity to come back and settle down and retire here in Washington State. So I left the military in August and came on board here in September.

(04:04):

Over this role, I'm really excited about, I'm excited that we're starting to look at the military and military spouse community with business licensing. There's a lot of work going into this to try and help that community as they navigate the military life and helping them to continue to be able to pursue their goals and their careers within the professions that we help and oversee and regulate. So yeah, I'm just really excited I'll be working with you. I know we put out some training in October. I think we're making a lot of progress. It's about a 30 minute YouTube video. It talks about the military spouse culture, their experience. It really highlights a lot of the challenges for that community with regards to their licensing. So if we need to get that training done by the end of the year, so you'll be hearing more from us, just reminders to try and get that done. It was put out by the Department of Veterans Affairs, so I really look forward to working with you and like I said, if you need anything, you can always reach out to me.

David Ittner (05:32):

Great. Thank you.

Ward (05:35):

And just as a real quick reminder for the board, anyone who has not completed that training yet, you'll be getting an email from me reminding you and including all of the links later today. And then from here out, we'll be sending weekly reminders to anyone who has not completed it, trying to get everybody done and ready to go for the new year.

David Ittner (05:55):

Great. Well, Jason, first off, we appreciate your service and we're thankful that you joined us and look forward to working with you.

Jason Lynn (06:02):

Thank you.

David Ittner (06:08):

Okay, moving on to item number six, new business consideration of an internship license extension, Sydney.

Ward (06:17):

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is an application for an internship license extension. I think we're getting pretty familiar with these at the moment. This is a request from Danielle Garner and her letter was included in the packet for the board to review that they're requesting a one-year extension of their funeral director intern license.

David Ittner (06:44):

Okay. Do any members of the board have any comments or questions with regards to the request?

Cameron (06:55):

This is Cameron. I move that we approve the request as presented.

David Ittner (07:02):

Okay. Thank you. Cameron. Is there a second?

Little (07:07):

This is Rick and I'll go ahead and second that.

David Ittner (07:10):

All right. Thank you, Rick. Any discussion in regards to the request? All right, hearing none. All in favor say aye.

All (Group) (07:25):

Aye.

David Ittner (07:29):

Any opposed? Hearing none. The motion passes. Item 6.2, consideration of an internship license extension. Sydney.

Little (07:43):

Real quick Chair, I need to recuse myself from this particular one because she's an employee of mine.

David Ittner (07:51):

All right, thank you, Rick.

Ward (07:55):

Great, thank you. And again, this is another internship license extension request. This time from Robin Watson. And Robin's letter was again included in the packet for the board today. And this is a request for a two-year extension of the funeral director intern license.

David Ittner (08:15):

All right. Thank you. Sydney,

Cameron (08:17):

This is Cameron. I approve the request or I make a motion to approve. The request as presented.

David Ittner (08:24):

Thank you. Cameron. Is there a second?

Gutierrez-Mora (08:29):

This is Pete. I'll second.

David Ittner (08:30):

All right. Move first and the second. Any discussion? All right. Hearing none. All in favor say aye.

All (Group) (08:41):

Aye.

David Ittner (08:45):

Any opposed? And we have Rick as an abstention, is that correct?

Cameron (08:54):

Yes.

David Ittner (08:55):

Yep. Okay. All right. Thank you. Motion passes. Item 6.3, national exam statistics. Looks like Sydney, you'll be speaking to this as well.

Ward (09:14):

Yes, as best as I can. So we did receive some statistics on our national exam rates. I can pull them up on my side a little bit better. You can see what we're doing.

(09:33):

So nationally it looks like we are at around an 80% pass rate on the NBE arts portion of the exam, and around a 70% pass rate on the sciences portion of the exam. And then from the Lake Washington Institute of Technology, in the arts portion, in both portions, we have a 95% pass rate. So very, very good pass rate for Washington State at this particular time. And we can get into some of the more specific statistics, but really we just wanted to provide this information to the board so that you can see how Washington is doing in relation to the rest of the country.

David Ittner (10:26):

All right. Thank you. Sydney. Any discussion or comments relative to the statistics presented?

Cameron (10:34):

This is Cameron. Just one comment. First of all, I love this information, so thank you for including it. One suggestion for maybe the next time we present this information is to also include the report from Mount Hood Community College. They're technically not in Washington, but given the fact that they're

on the border, I think we have candidates in Washington that are going through that program. So it'd be nice to see how they're performing as well.

Ward (11:05):

Absolutely. We'll make sure to do that.

Cameron (11:09):

This is great information though. Thank you.

David Ittner (11:17):

All right, thank you so much Sydney. Let's see. Moving on to item 6.4, the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Board's annual meeting. Sydney, I'll turn it back over to you.

Ward (11:30):

So this is our annual item for the conference next year. It is going to be held from February 20 to 29th in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. We do have a grant for one board member to attend. I believe Dante attended last year in Arizona. And so, one to see who the board would like to delegate for that grant this year.

David Ittner (11:57):

All right, well I know that Rick and Pete, you guys have generally been attending this conference, I've attended once. Really enjoyed it. So I guess we'll open it up for volunteers discussion. Any comments on that particular piece?

Little (12:25):

This is Rick. I plan to go regardless. So I'll be there.

Cameron (12:32):

Sydney, is the grant just for a first time attendee or is it for anyone who's representing our licensing board?

Ward (12:39):

It is for anyone representing our licensing board. And then there's also a grant for our staff member and that space is usually taken by Pam.

Cameron (12:53):

Thank you.

Gutierrez-Mora (12:54):

Well this is Pete and unfortunately I will not be able to attend. I'm going to be in Hawaii actually for my niece's wedding during that week.

Cameron (13:03):

Oh darn.

Gutierrez-Mora (13:04):

I know it's a rough gig, but I don't want to miss it. It's a quality, quality loss. Rick can attest to these. If there are any other board members that would like to go, I would highly encourage you to do that. And pending my non-involvement, if no other board members would go, I would make a motion to have Rick as our designee and use that money for the trip.

David Ittner (13:37):

All right.

Lessord (13:39):

This is Angie. I went once in 2018, so I guess that was five years ago and loved it and I'm always willing to go and would like to go, but don't need to go. Just put that out there.

David Ittner (13:58):

Okay.

Cameron (14:02):

My recommendation would be that we let Angie use the grant since Rick is going regardless. And Rick obviously has deep pockets.

Little (14:13):

Not as deep as yours Cameron.

David Ittner (14:19):

Okay. So we have Rick and Angie. A motion for, or a recommendation for each one. From a logistical perspective, how do we deal with that?

Gutierrez-Mora (14:38):

Yeah, this is Pete. With the knowledge that Angie would like to go, I'd like to withdraw my nomination to use the grant money for Mr. Little based on, yeah, the size of his wallet. And I second that we send Angie to represent Washington.

David Ittner (14:56):



All right, this is Dave. I will second that motion. Can I second that? I think I can...

Cameron (15:04):

Actually, you can't as the chair, so I will. This is Cameron. I will second the motion.

David Ittner (15:10):

Thank you, Cameron.

Lessord (15:11):

I've really thrown us into chaos.

Smock (15:14):

No, you haven't. I think I...

David Ittner (15:16):

Yeah, this is perfect. All right, so we have a first and we have a second. Any discussion? And the motion is for just, well, we'll repeat it here at the end. All right. All in favor. Say

All (Group) (15:31):

Aye.

David Ittner (15:34):

Any opposed? All right. The motion to send Angie as our, so we have two things. We have the delegate piece and we have the, or the, and then the, what is it called? The scholarship or the...

Ward (15:52):

The grant.

David Ittner (15:53):

The grant. So are we saying that Angie will be both the recipient of the grant and the delegate or is Rick the delegate? There's two components.

Ward (16:04):

That is entirely up to the board. The motion was for Angie to use the grant. So if you would also like to designate her as the delegate, you can. But knowing that Mr. Little is also going to be attending, either one can be the delegate.

Cameron (16:18):

Right?

Lessord (16:19):

I think it makes more sense for Rick to be the delegate.

David Ittner (16:22):

Perfect. Okay. So we have the motion passes for Angie to be the recipient of the grant. And so we will need also a motion for Mr. Little to be the delegate.

Cameron (16:34):

So this is Cameron. I move that we let Deep Pockets Little be the official delegate at the ICFSEB annual meeting.

David Ittner (16:48):

All right. Do we have a second?

Gutierrez-Mora (16:49):

This is Pete...

Connie (16:52):

This is Connie. I second it.

David Ittner (16:57):

All right. I think that was Pete. Pete was first on that one. Any discussion regarding Mr. Deep Pockets?

Little (17:04):

Yes. The discussion is I don't have deep Pockets. Not as deep as Cameron.

David Ittner (17:13):

All right. Okay. All in favor say aye.

All (Group) (17:17):

Aye.

David Ittner (17:17):

Any opposed? All right. Motion passes. Thank you. We finally got through that one. Alright my apologies as board chair on that particular. Okay, moving on to item 6.5, discussion and consideration of forming an inspection committee. I'll turn it over to Sydney.

Ward (17:37):

Thank you. And I will just be introducing this item with the caveat that Pam and Grace can jump in as needed. But this is actually a request from our central Investigations and Audits unit for the board to consider forming an inspection committee so that our inspectors can bring forward issues to a smaller committee rather than waiting for the quarterly board meetings just because they get a lot of questions and different things that they need board perspective on from the subject matter expertise side of things. And they would like to have a consensus. And so this would be probably a monthly meeting and a space where they can bring these issues forward to you guys, get some input, have some dialogue with you, and then take that feedback back and use it for their inspections, investigations and audits. So this would be a three member committee and again would meet monthly and we'd look at changing the members on an annual basis so that way you wouldn't be in a lifetime commitment for a once-a-month meeting. It would just be for the year and then we'd look at shaking it back up the following year.

Cameron (18:56):

So just quick question, do we want one person from the funeral side and one from the cemetery side then? That what you're kind of thinking?

Ward (19:09):

Yeah, we can, and that would help provide us with a more well-rounded perspective. That would be great.

David Ittner (19:18):

Okay. So let's see. Need a motion to form the committee. Do we need volunteers before we present that motion?

Ward (19:30):

Yes, preferably. You can wrap it all up in a one motion.

Dante (19:36):

I can sit that committee. This is Dante. I can sit on that committee.

David Ittner (19:41):

All right. Thank you, Dante.

Cameron (19:43):

This is Cameron. I would be willing to be the cemetery representative or a cemetery representative.

David Ittner (19:49):

Perfect. Dante and Cameron.

Little (19:52):

This is Rick and I can do the either/or so.

David Ittner (19:58):

All right, perfect. I think that'll work. So is there a motion to form the...what are we calling this committee... the inspection committee as presented with Dante, Cameron and Rick as committee members?

Cameron (20:21):

This is Cameron. I so move.

David Ittner (20:25):

All right, thank you. Cameron. Is there a second?

Little (20:27):

This is Rick. I'll go ahead and second that.

David Ittner (20:30):

Thank you. Any discussion? All right.

Gutierrez-Mora (20:39):

This is Pete. Yeah, this is Pete. Just kind of a quick question as I'm reading through the premise of this. And I understand the need and there's a lot of confusion out there. But with this committee then, if we have other licensees coming to the committee with questions regarding legalities or rules and regulations, could this wind up being considered to be legal advice on behalf of the board?

Ward (21:12):

No. That is something that we as staff would be safeguarding and making sure that the board is not providing legal expertise or legal advice because that's a space we definitely don't want you guys getting into. That creates a risk for the board. This is just going to be more subject matter expertise, particularly on investigations and audits. Things like common practices and stuff that staff just doesn't work in every single day. As amazing as Pam is, she's not on the ground like you guys are every single day. So just some things and some updates that have changed in the twenty-four years that Pam has been with DOL rather than on the ground. So just providing different input and perspective that she doesn't see.

Cameron (22:01):

I have another, I just have a quick question. In having three board members on this committee, does that cause a problem considering that would be kind of a board meeting in itself or is that.

Ward (22:17):

No.

Cameron (22:17):

Okay.

Ward (22:18):

So being that this is a committee myself, and or Susan, usually both of us, will also be in there in addition to Pam and probably Grace. And hopefully eventually our second investigator as well. And Susan and I's responsibility is to make sure that if we're getting into a territory where it needs to go before the full board for a determination that we are kind of being that stopgap and can move things up to that level. So we'll be making sure you guys aren't providing any legal advice or legal interpretations, that you're sticking with the outlined responsibilities for the committee and then also helping you guys put together a monthly or a quarterly report, excuse me, to provide to the board regularly. So, if you guys are seeing a pretty common issue that's coming up again and again and it needs to go towards something like a WAC review or needs the full board to provide input, you guys will always have that ability to say, nope, we're going to...