



**People's Memorial Annual  
Meeting Minutes  
April 22, 2023  
10:00am  
Meeting held via Zoom**

**10:00 Welcome - Ann Norman, Board President**

**10:04 Approval of 2023 Annual Meeting Agenda and 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes -  
Meghan Walker, Board Secretary**

- Members and Board unanimously approved the 2023 Annual Meeting Agenda and 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes

**10:07 Land Acknowledgement, DEI - Dennis Barnes**

- Dennis shared a video with our Land Acknowledgement and invited members to read along aloud.  
“We wish to acknowledge this land on which the People’s Memorial Association operates and assists families and individuals with their end-of-life needs. For thousands of years, this traditional land has been the home for many Indigenous peoples located across Eastern and Western Washington and has provided sustenance for life to its fullest. We are grateful to have the opportunity to respectfully work and provide assistance to the people of this land and to continue this tradition of recognizing life as well as end-of-life.”
- Dennis shared videos about why Equity and Inclusion are important, what we’ve done recently, and our future endeavors.
  - Recent activities include: We made Equity and Inclusion an ongoing commitment to the organization’s work. We transitioned from occasional committee meetings to a monthly responsibility to ensure consistent and meaningful progress.
  - We prioritized Board attentiveness to Diversity, with each Board meeting agenda including a DEI discussion.
  - We crafted the Land Acknowledgement shared earlier.
- Future activities. PMA will continue to actively self-reflect on our commitments and to systematically evaluate who we are serving, not serving, and why. We will mindfully diversify our associations.
  - PMA will find new ways to build upon the success of the Funeral Assistance Fund program, finding additional funding to help those in poverty honor their loved ones without going into debt.
  - Within the next two years PMA will present its Ducks in a Row series in Spanish and Chinese. This will expand opportunities for planning to individuals in the top two non-English languages in Washington in ways that are culturally appropriate.

## **10:14 PMA 2022 Annual Report & Spring Fundraiser - Amanda Stock, Executive Director**

2022 was another great year for PMA. Here are some highlights:

- The biannual Funeral Home Price Survey was completed. Thanks to the volunteers and board members who spent time collecting general price lists. We surveyed 209 Washington State funeral homes and of those 54% posted their price lists on their websites. The national average is 18%. Funeral homes expect this survey of us and report that families enter with this survey, knowing what to expect for the services they require. About 20% of funeral homes did not reply to our requests for information.
- Though alkaline hydrolysis was only legalized in Washington in 2019, we found that 57 funeral homes are now offering this service. Natural Organic Reduction, or human composting, also legalized in 2019, is now offered by 20% of funeral homes through four contractors. Over 70% of funeral homes have increased their prices for cremation and burial since 2020.
- Return Home is our new contracted partner for Natural Organic Reduction, so PMA members are now able to access reduced member pricing from both Return Home and Recompose.
- We hosted an intimate group of guests at our office in Seattle for our first in-person event since the COVID-19 pandemic. This event was in memory of those who lost their lives in the pandemic. Our guests enjoyed exploring PMA's history, our current projects, and all shared ideas about the future of the funeral industry. We celebrated all that PMA has done in its long history and honored the funeral directors for all their hard work during the pandemic.
- The Funeral Financial Assistance Fund remains one of the only sources of financial assistance for funerals in Washington State. Thanks to a grant we received in 2021 and to generous supporters we helped a record-breaking 41 families this year. This is 10 more than the previous year.
- More people than ever are donating their unused and unwanted cemetery plots to PMA. Donors are able to report that in-kind donation on their taxes. We then sell these plots at a steep discount to those in need and invest those funds back into the community. If you'd like to donate a plot, please email [info@peoplesmemorial.org](mailto:info@peoplesmemorial.org).
- Our contracted partners continue to provide our member families with exemplary service. 97% of families reported satisfaction with services and merchandise from our contracted funeral homes and 97% reported they received no upselling when meeting with the contracted funeral home.
- Our Annual Report is now available digitally to be mindful of how we use natural resources. Please visit our website for more information.
- Our spring fundraiser is happening now! Less than half of our budget comes from new member dues so we depend on generous donations from members like you to continue supporting our funeral education and advocacy efforts.

#### **10:21 Natural Organic Reduction (NOR) - Chris Ronk, TCFH Lead Funeral Director**

- Chris had the honor this year to serve The Co-op Funeral Home's first family to use this option. It was a perfect option for this family and their lifelong commitment to the environment. Members can work directly with our contracted providers, Recompose and Return Home, but families are also welcome to work with TCFH to make arrangements.
- Please visit PMA's webinar library to learn details about the process of Natural Organic Reduction.

#### **10:25 The Co-op Funeral Home 2022 Annual Report - Kim Forsythe, TCFH Managing Funeral Director**

- This last year has been one of big changes at The Co-op Funeral Home. The aftereffects of working during a pandemic took their toll and we lost half of our staff to burnout. By the end of the year we had three new interns and an administrative assistant.
- 2022 ended up being a much busier year both in volume and service requests. By the end of the year we'd served a total of 860 families. Cremation is still the most popular choice, with 89% of families opting for cremation. TCFH remains one of the top 5 busiest funeral homes in King County, and top 20 in Washington State.

#### **10:27 PMA Outreach & Education - Beverly Tryk, PMA Communications Manager**

- 2022 was a busy year for us on the education front, including guesting on our first podcast, hosting our first in-person event in our Queen Anne space, and hosting 35 of our own classes.
- Over 1,600 people joined us in 2022. Our Green Funerals Week continued to be popular, so we'll bring that back in 2023.
- We'll be hosting our Ducks in a Row series in person in Northgate, but if that's not convenient, please visit our webinar library to watch a class remotely.

#### **10:31 Break**

#### **10:39 Financial Report - Ann Norman, President**

- 2022 was another great year for PMA. We brought in a total of \$273k and ended the year with a net revenue over expenses of \$17k.
- Individual giving made up 62% of last year's income for a total of \$108k. We thank everyone who thought of us when deciding to donate.
- New member dues are the second largest source of income at 26%.
- Most of our expenses, 65%, or \$167k, went toward payroll and benefits. Operations costs (rent, utilities, etc.) account for 18%, or \$44k.
- TCFH's total income for the year was \$998k, about 7% more than expected. Member Sales continue to be the main source of income, at 83% or \$770k this year.
- TCFH's Expenses were low in 2022, spending \$897k. Our largest expense category is typically Payroll & Benefits. This year, Subcontractors ended up being the largest

category (e.g. crematory, transportation fleet, and courier services). Subcontractors account for 41%, or \$320k, this year.

**10:49 Volunteer of the Year - Presented by Beverly Tryk**

- Thank you to Volunteer of the Year Dick Switzer, who was a great help in gathering information for our most recent funeral home price survey!

**10:51 Election of Board Member and Alternate Candidates, Katy Roberts, Board Vice-President**

- Membership approves the candidacy of Carrie Andrews (re-election), Dennis Barnes, and Kirsten Kauffman.
- Membership approves the candidacy of Laurel Sexton as alternate board member.

**10:56 Transitions, Carrie Andrews, Board Member**

- Thanks to Char Barrett and A Sacred Moment for their years of support and collaboration.
- Thanks to Nina Schoen and Scott Segel for sharing their time and talents with PMA!
- Thanks to Amanda Stock for her leadership as Executive Director!

**10:58 Keynote: The Complicated History of 'Simple Funerals' - Deborah Strehle, Social and Cultural Historian; PhD Candidate at Yale**

Deborah Strehle's research has focused on the major tidal shifts that occurred in deathcare in the 1960s. She shared with us some highlights of her dissertation (including some historical records from PMA, which Yale arranged to have digitized!) in a presentation titled "The Complicated History of 'Simple Funerals'."

**11:22 Announce Raffle Winner, Closing and Adjournment, Ann Norman, Board President**

Thanks to Beverly Tryk and Bonnie Bizzell for their work putting together the Annual Meeting!

**Meeting adjourned at 11:25am**