



**People's Memorial Annual
Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2020
9:00 - 10:00 am
Meeting Held via Zoom**

9:05 Welcome - Cheryl Jennings, Acting President

- Recognition of the services and legacies of our immediate board past president, Dr. Margaret Kitchell, and Paul Hensel, a recent PMA board member, who both passed away this spring and introduction of PMA board and staff members who will be presenting. Cheryl also explained how voting and Q&A via Zoom will work.

9:09 Approval of Agenda and 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes - Meghan Walker, Secretary

- Members approved the Agenda and 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes

9:12 Annual Report - Nora Menkin, Executive Director

- Nora acknowledged changes that PMA and TCFH have undertaken in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic.
- We have signed contracts with two funeral homes in Central Washington.
- Nora shared information and photos of the new office space, including the chapel, sanctuary, waiting room, arrangement rooms, and classroom.
- In 2019 we hosted 22 presentations reaching over 1,000 people. We now offer our programming online, allowing us to continue during the stay home order.
- Recognition of PMA and TCFH staff members.
- Advocacy: Senate Bill 5001 was passed in 2019 making Washington State the first state in the U.S. to allow both natural organic reduction (human composting, recomposition) and alkaline hydrolysis (also known as aquamation or water cremation) as final disposition options in addition to cremation and burial services. That law went into effect yesterday.
- Our advocacy work continues with our petitioning the Federal Trade Commission to amend the Funeral Rule to require funeral homes and cemeteries nationwide to make their price lists publicly available on their websites, so that people don't have to literally go door to door during a pandemic, or any other time, to gather pricing information. A link was provided in the Zoom chat to allow members to submit comments to the FTC

9:20 Financial Report - Ashley Topacio, Treasurer Jeff Cohn, Business Manager

- Fundraising efforts generated contributions 15% higher than budget. With this solid showing, we were also able to considerably reduce the subsidy we have been receiving from The Co-op Funeral Home. We were set to end the year in a favourable position when we received a generous \$22,000 bequest that put the organization firmly in the black.

- Unfortunately, we did not meet our new membership goal by about 400 individuals.
- Our cremation assistance fund helped twenty families who otherwise could not meet the cost of a simple cremation for a loved one.
- We finished the year well under budget, with a net of \$34,000. The Association ended the year with sufficient cash reserves to cover more than twelve months of operations.
- We started the year by outsourcing our removal services and in anticipation of an increase in cases, we brought in Anthony Estrella as a part-time funeral director to help carry the workload, and reduce the potential for burnout with our three full-time funeral directors.
- The Co-op Funeral Home wound up the year with income up 2% and expenses down 1% over prior year, finding ourselves just shy of a break even point.

9:25 Presentation and Election of Board Member & Alternate Candidates – Cheryl Jennings

- Membership approved the candidacy of
 - June Michel,
 - Carrie Andrews,
 - Ann Norman,
 - Doris Mannies,
 - Sandra VanderVen, and
 - Nina Schoen

as board members.

- Membership approved the candidacy of
 - Danny Geiger,
 - Frances Palmer, and
 - Andrea Fitzgerald

as alternate board members.

9:29 Recognition of Retiring Board Members – Erika Campbell, Board Member

- Recognition of Elizabeth Coplan, Ashley Topacio, Mary Kay Voytilla, Jeremy Dragt, Frances Case

9:30 Volunteer of the Year - Beverly Tryk, Administrative Assistant

- Recognition of Jessie Fossmo

9:32 Looking ahead - Nora Menkin, Executive Director

- We are now updating our strategic plan which will include extending our end-of-life and after-death educational programs throughout the state using more webinar formats.
- This year, 2020, we will be conducting our biennial Funeral Home Price Survey.

- We are expanding our fundraising efforts to continue to provide all of our information and educational programs to our members and the community for free.
- We are increasing our partnerships with like-minded organizations. PMA members qualify to be members of Salal Credit Union

9:35 Support People's Memorial Association - Danny Geiger, Board Member

- Danny encourages members to support PMA and invites members to consider PMA during estate planning and to donate to PMA during the GiveBig fundraising campaign May 5th and 6th. The board of PMA has raised a matching gift challenge of \$2500 to support People's Memorial Association during the Give Big campaign.

9:38 Questions & Answers

Questions were asked via Zoom chat include

- How many people have joined the meeting? (About 100, comparable to our in-person meeting!)
- What are some volunteer opportunities? (Opportunities include making phone calls for our funeral home price survey and help with future events. Members can email for information.)
- Is PMA registered on Amazon Smile? (yes!)
- What's the timeline of availability for alkaline hydrolysis? (We'd hoped to be able to say that it would be available in May, but due to travel restrictions it will take longer. Keep an eye on our social media! It is currently available in Oregon and we can arrange that for members.)
- How has COVID-19 affected the day-to-day happenings at PMA and TCFH? (We have a new administrative intern who has been valuable with increased calls and emails seeking information. TCFH is doing all arrangements remotely to keep staff and members safe. Funerals and services can still be held with small groups of immediate family members. We are confident that our partner funeral homes can still provide quality services to meet member needs.)
- Comments that the Zoom format is working and those who live outside the Seattle area seem especially enthusiastic!
- Can people in Oregon use our services? (We are a Washington State non-profit, but there are a couple organizations in Oregon doing similar work and we can put you in touch with some contacts there.)
- Comments explaining alkaline hydrolysis. (We will have a webinar later this month offering information!)
- What can members do to market to communities in Northern Washington counties? (We have a partnering funeral home on Whidbey Island that serves some of the northern counties and one of our new board members lives north, providing a presence there.)
- Is this meeting recorded? (Yes, and will be available on Facebook.)
- Info about Recompose and will our disposition forms be updated? (We have an updated form that includes alkaline hydrolysis and Recomposition but members need to choose a

second alternative since these options are not yet available in Washington. If members have filled out a form they can write in these options and initial but should also discuss their wishes with their next of kin.)

- Will the slides from the presentation be available? (Yes, we will offer information about that in a follow-up email tomorrow.)
- Is there a partner company for memorial stones/monuments? (Yes, we contract with Pacific Coast Memorials. Cemeteries all have different practices, however, so you need to check with the cemetery to see if this option is available.)
- Information on how to make anatomical donations? (You need to register ahead of time with local universities or studies but know that bodies might be denied due to various reasons.)

10:00 Closing and Adjournment - Cheryl Jennings, Acting President