

**MINUTES**  
**Memorial Society of Georgia (MSOG) Annual Meeting**  
**Sunday, March 20, 2016**  
1911 Cliff Valley Way, Atlanta, GA 30329

The Annual Meeting of the Memorial Society of Georgia was held on Sunday, March 20, 2016. Present from the Board of Directors were: John Lantz, President; John Vacher, Treasurer; Kathleen Nixon-Lancelot, Secretary; Chan Brown, Director; Paul Lowry, Director; John Mackey, Director; and Darryl Neill, Director. Guests present were: Terry Beale, MSOG Membership Coordinator; and Perry Mitchell, President of the Georgia Chapter of Compassion and Choices. Approximately 70 additional members were in attendance.

Agenda: The meeting agenda was distributed at the door and is attached to these minutes.

Call to Order: John Lantz called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. John welcomed all attendees and invited everyone to attend the Death Expo in the adjoining Social Hall immediately after the meeting.

Membership/Treasurer's Report: John Vacher provided a combined Membership/Treasurer's report. Highlights included:

- There were 321 new members in 2015, versus almost 900 in 2010. The year 2016 is projected to bring in 468 new members, based on the year-to-date trend.

- The Society's net worth is strong, based on particularly high income over expenses in 2010. Net worth has been slowly declining since that time, but is still high, currently at about \$38K.

- By category, newsletter and contract help remain the two largest expense categories. Overall expenses have been declining since 2010, with 2015 expense approximately 390% lower than the level of average expenses over the past 5 years.

- Based on current spending projections, we need approximately 425 new members per year to break even.

- The reduction in the level of new members over the past few years is undoubtedly influenced by reduced efforts at publicity, due to the Board's focus on other key issues, such as the move to an electronic membership records and processes and development of the new contract.

President's Report: John Lantz summarized recent funeral industry trends, including the availability of lower priced cremation services. These changes in the industry led the Board to work on updating the Society's business plan, which was developed 40 years ago. Significant components of the plan to raise our profile include hosting the national FCA conference here in Atlanta June 24/25, holding the Death Expo (the 2016 version of last year's Funeral Fun Fair), beginning a push for volunteers to help with various tasks, and introducing a new, more comprehensive contract with our Cooperating Funeral Directors.

Nominating Committee: John announced that Paul Lowry has been appointed to join the Board of Directors, and is ready to have his appointment ratified by the membership. John moved that Paul be elected to a 3-year term on the Board. Lyn Conley seconded, and the motion passed with no dissent.

Membership Information On-line: Paul Lowry reported that we have been exploring the feasibility of having our member database available on-line for Funeral Directors to be able to access, which would enable them to quickly and easily verify membership in cases where they do not have a member record already on file. This would be done in a way that protects the confidentiality of membership data, and might also be set up

to enable members to check their own records to verify their status and contact info, and also ascertain which Funeral Director they are enrolled with. The target for having this project completed is six months.

Advance Directives and POLST On Line Project: Perry Mitchell of Compassion and Choices gave a presentation on POLST (Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment) and how they differ from Advance Directives. Effort is currently underway to get POLSTs more readily known and used throughout Georgia, including an on-line registry. The Memorial Society of Georgia will be working with Compassion and Choices on this initiative. More information is available at [gapolst.org](http://gapolst.org).

New Contract Description and Discussion: John Lantz explained the major differences between the Current/Old Contract (which has been used since the early days of the MSOG) and the New Contract, which was developed over the past several months to better serve our members. Of the 29 Cooperating Funeral Directors who have been in our network, five have signed the new contract, 22 are currently continuing under the old contract, and two have given notification that they are withdrawing from the MSOG network. John reiterated that MSOG members may change their CFD selection at any time. A brief question and answer session followed.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Beale  
Acting Recording Secretary  
March 21, 2016