

**BOARD OF CORRECTIONS**  
**January 15, 2015**  
**Atlanta, Georgia**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Ms. Rose Williams, Chairman  
Ms. Sonja R. Allen  
Mr. Duke Blackburn  
Mr. Mac Collins  
Mr. Wayne Dasher  
Sheriff Roger Garrison  
Mr. Bruce Hudson  
Mr. John Mayes  
Mr. J. M. "Bob" Plemons  
Mr. Tommy M. Rouse  
Mr. Alton Russell  
Ms. Andrea Shelton  
Mr. Jerry Willis  
Ms. Rocio D. Woody

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Mr. William S. Acuff  
Mr. Lee Anderson  
Mr. Carl L. Franklin

**CONFERENCE CALL:**

Sheriff Stacy Jarrard

**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:**

Commissioner Brian Owens  
Mr. Gregory C. Dozier, Assistant Commissioner  
Dr. L.C. "Buster" Evans, Assistant Commissioner  
Mr. Timothy C. Ward, Assistant Commissioner  
Dr. Jim DeGroot, MH/MR Clinical Services Manager  
Mr. Terry Edge, FOM of County Facilities  
Ms. Ronnia Fann, Inside Sales/Marketing Manager of GCI  
Mr. Walter Hudson, Investigations Unit  
Mr. Rick Jacobs, Director of Facilities Operations  
Ms. Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison  
Mr. Donald Jones, Investigations Unit  
Mr. Robert E. Jones, General Counsel  
Mr. Robert L. Jones, Warden of Carroll County  
Mr. Michael Kraft, Director of Probation Operations  
Mr. Ricky Myrick, Director of OIC  
Mr. Jay Neal, Executive Director of GOTSRS  
Mr. Dennis S. Nelson, Warden of Clayton County  
Mr. Sean Seymour, Campus Tech Support  
Mr. Tom Sittnick, Deputy Director of OPTD  
Mr. Arnold Smith, Director of OPTD  
Mr. Kenneth Sumner, Probation Operations  
Mr. Scott Poitevint, Director of Admin Division  
Dr. Steven Turner, Chaplain  
Mr. Norman Wilson, Executive Director of GCI

**ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:**

Mr. Joseph Drolet, Senior Assistant Attorney General

**VISITORS:**

Mr. Alfred Brooks, RESPECT Institute  
Ms. Kathryn Hamoudah, Southern Center for Human Rights  
Mr. Brandon Hembree, Massey, Watson, Bowers & Hembree  
Mr. Omar Howard, Heartbound Ministries  
Ms. Leona Rittenhouse, Massey, Watson, Bowers & Hembree  
Mr. Joel Slack, Director of RESPECT Institute  
Ms. Ashley Smith, RESPECT Institute

Chairman Rose Williams called the January meeting of the Board of Corrections to order at 10:00 a.m. and Board Liaison, Simone Juhmi, recorded the minutes. Chairman Williams asked Chaplain Steven Turner to give the invocation.

Chairman Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance and recognized all guests and visitors at the meeting.

Next, Chairman Williams confirmed Sheriff Stacy Jarrard was connected via conference call and the Board meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed to business.

Chairman Williams presented the January Agenda to the Board for approval. Mr. Wayne Dasher made the motion to approve, which was then seconded by Mr. John Mayes and the Agenda was voted approved by the Board as presented.

Chairman Williams presented the December Minutes to the Board for approval. Mr. Wayne Dasher made the motion to approve, which was then seconded by Mr. J. M. "Bob" Plemons and the Minutes were voted approved by the Board as presented.

### **COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Commissioner Brian Owens began his report by calling on Mr. Scott Poitevint, who was promoted to the Division Director of Administration effective January 16, 2015. Mr. Poitevint supersedes Ms. Becky East who recently accepted the position of Chief Financial Officer of the Georgia Department of Revenue. Mr. Poitevint briefly introduced himself and explained that in his new position he will be responsible for overseeing two main function areas for the agency: Financial Management and Asset Management.

Commissioner Owens resumed his report by discussing the Upcoming Events for January, February and March 2015. Significantly mentioned were the 2015 Legislative Session and the Joint Appropriations Hearing on January 20, 2015.

Commissioner Owens then reported on the Jail Backlog count, which is at 143. The total number of probationers waiting for placement is 387. Thus, the total number of state sentenced inmates in the state-wide jail system is 530. Commissioner Owens stated the Sheriff's count is at 2,933; both counts are correct.

To follow, Commissioner Owens asked Ms. Ashley Smith of the RESPECT Institute to give her personal testimony and give insight to what help aide in her recovery on living with schizophrenia. Afterwards, Ms. Smith distributed a postcard informing the Board about her authored book "What's On My Mind?" which is a collection of blog entries from overcoming schizophrenia. In addition, Mr. Joel Slack, founder of the RESPECT Institute followed by adding that these stories are empowering and healing for the presenter. Each graduate that completes the program with the RESPECT Institute is empowered to tell their stories at any venue. As a final point, Mr. Slack stated "The RESPECT Institute offers life-changing, transformational experiences for people as they learn how to tell their stories. We've watched people heal in those three days. Our graduates are also transforming their audiences by helping people to see the humanity beyond the illness. Once you're able to see that humanity, it's easier to treat someone with respect."

Next, Commissioner Owens asked Mr. Tom Sittnick, Deputy Director of Operations, Planning and Training Division to present a Mental Health Initiatives Update. Some of the highlights from Mr. Sittnick's report were defunding community programs, declaring a war on drugs, tough on crime legislation, national and state sponsored initiatives and the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) sponsored initiatives.

In addition, Mr. Sittnick continued his report by discussing some of the actions affecting GDC's mental health population such as the national and state sponsored initiatives: Criminal Justice Reform, Accountability Courts, Behavioral Health Coordinating Council and the Governor's Office of Transition, Support and Reentry. To finish, Mr. Sittnick spoke briefly on some of GDC's sponsored initiatives, community positions and programs which included the Mental Health Probation Officer Specialist, the Mental Health Counselors, Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), Mental Health Probation Officer Specialist Training, Day Reporting Centers (DRC's),

Integrated Treatment Facilities (ITF's), Reentry Mental Health (MH), Supported Living Unit (SLU), Transition Centers (TC's) and Open Doors to Recovery (ODR).

Next, Commissioner Owens called on Dr. L.C. "Buster" Evans, Assistant Commissioner of Education and Programs to present his report on Georgia's Correctional Education and Programs. In his report, Dr. Evans explained the purpose of correctional education by articulating that it decreases the recidivism rates for individuals who have received an education while incarcerated. In addition, it decreases the levels of violence while offenders are incarcerated and after release and it has a positive effect on children with incarcerated parents in pursuing their own educational endeavors. Plus, ultimately most inmates will be released.

To conclude, Dr. Evans spoke about the variables impacting recidivism rates, the chaplaincy programs, educational program participation, correctional program enhancements, vocational-technical education certificate programs, charter high program and the 100, 000 book initiative program.

This concluded the Commissioner's report.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Williams proceeded to move into Regular Session to approve two County Wardens. Chairman Williams called upon Mr. Alton Russell, Chairman of the Operations Committee to give the Board their recommendation of each candidate.

Mr. Russell stated that the Operations Committee had received two board packets for Mr. Robert L. Jones of Carroll County Correctional Institution and Mr. Dennis S. Nelson of Clayton County Correctional Institution. The Operations Committee has reviewed both reports and the Committee unanimously recommends appointment approval of Mr. Jones and Mr. Nelson. Mr. Russell made the motion to approve both County Wardens, which was seconded by Sheriff Roger Garrison and was then voted approved by the Board. Chairman Williams congratulated both Mr. Jones and Mr. Nelson on their appointments and asked if they each would like to say a few words to the Board. Both candidates thanked the Board for the opportunity.

Chairman Williams then called on Mr. Robert E. Jones, General Counsel to present the Approval of Rule 125-4-10, Program and Treatment Completion Certificate. Mr. Jones expressed that it states in the Board Rule, this certificate will be awarded to offenders who successfully complete certain programming and it will show that the offenders are making progress towards successful reentry into society. Moreover, the board previously approved this rule be posted for 30 days and now the rule is up for adoption by the Board. Therefore, Mr. Wayne Dasher made a motion to approve Rule 125-4-10, which was then seconded by Mr. J.M. "Bob" Plemons and Mr. Alton Russell and the Board voted and approved Rule 125-4-10 be adopted.

To continue, Chairman Williams gave an update on the Board of Corrections Flower Fund stating the balance as of today is \$415.81. The purpose of the Flower Fund is for board members, their families and any individual person the board chairman deems appropriate to send condolences on behalf of the Board of Corrections. Items that are purchased with this fund are sympathy and funeral flowers such as sprays or wreaths, get well and sympathy cards. In addition, the Flower Fund may be used to send a donation to an organization in lieu of flowers. The Board of Corrections members were asked to contribute to this fund if they wish to do so.

Subsequently, Chairman Williams updated the Board on the Committee Assignments. Chairman Williams stated on December 30, 2014, the Executive Board (Rose Williams, Jerry Willis and Alton Russell) met at 10:00 a.m. in Forsyth at Tift College, in the Commissioner's Conference Room to assign each member to a committee for the 2015 calendar year. Commissioner Brian Owens was also present at the meeting and he participated by making suggestions about the duties of the committees in terms of combining some of the committees. Plus, Board Member Sonja Allen was also in attendance but only observed the process of Committee Assignments.

As a result of the meeting, it was decided that some of the committees should be combined based on the similar responsibilities/duties of the committee.

Therefore, the new committees are Budget/Utilities, Correctional Industries/Food & Farm, Education/Programs & Recidivism, Health Services, Nominating and Operations/Facilities & Probation. Chairman Williams then asked each Committee to meet at least once this upcoming year and present out to the Board any significant updates from their meeting.

Chairman Williams continued asking for any Old or New Business. Chairman Williams stated a resolution honoring Ms. Becky East, who is the former Director of Administration Division was prepared. Ms. East recently accepted the position of Chief Financial Officer of the Georgia Department of Revenue and the we would like to honor her with a resolution for her leadership and continued commitment to the State of Georgia. Chairman Williams asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Wayne Dasher made the motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. Tommy Rouse and Mr. J. M. "Bob" Plemons and was voted approved by the Board. Chairman Williams stated the resolution will be presented to Ms. East at the next Board meeting in February.

Lastly, Chairman Williams asked Mr. Robert E. Jones, General Counsel of Legal Services, to present the property resolution for the Hancock Demolition. Mr. Jones stated in order to make any changes to a structure or building affixed to any state property we have to get permission from the State Properties Commission. This resolution is requesting your approval to tear down four quonset-hut style tents that were temporary housing facilities located at Hancock State Prison. These tents are eighteen years old and are well beyond their useful life and as a result of our lowering prison population we were able to vacate them and we are asking for permission to demolish these four tents. Mr. J. M. "Bob" Plemons made the motion to approve, which was then seconded by Sheriff Roger Garrison, and the property resolution was voted approved by the Board.

To end, Mr. Dasher spoke briefly about the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Law Enforcement Appreciation Cookout that will be held in Glennville on April 16, 2015. A flyer was distributed inviting the members.

Chairman Williams reminded the Board that the next meeting will be on February 5<sup>th</sup> at the James "Sloppy" Floyd Building in Atlanta, Georgia.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Rose Williams, Chairman

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Alton Russell, Secretary

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Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison