

BOARD OF CORRECTIONS

January 29, 2026

Forsyth, Georgia

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sheriff Barry H. Babb
Mr. Duke Blackburn
Mr. J.C. "Spud" Bowen
Mr. Rodney Bryant
Mr. Chris Clark
Mr. Thomas Culpepper
Mr. John B. Edwards
Mr. Ester Fleming Jr. – Chairman
Sheriff Donnie Pope
Mr. Rossie Ross
Mr. Alton Russell
Mr. Luis "Lou" M. Solis Jr.
Mr. W. D. Strickland

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Ms. Kellie Brownlow
Sheriff Stacy Jarrard

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:

Ms. Elizabeth Crowder, Attorney General's Office

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:

Mr. Tyrone Oliver, Commissioner
Mr. Alan Watson, Chief of Staff
Ms. Latera M. Davis, Assistant Commissioner of Inmate Services
Mr. Jackson Defore, Assistant Commissioner of Finance and Admin
Mr. Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner, Facilities Division
Mr. Louis DeBroux, Assistant Commissioner, Research, Strategic Planning, Government Affairs
Mr. Adam Baswell, Director of Office of Professional Development
Ms. Komola Edwards, Director of Human Resources
Dr. Kenneth Ellis, Statewide Chaplain
Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Office of Communications
Mr. Cliff Hogan, Director of Data Management and Research
Ms. Gwendolyn Hogan, Executive Assistant
Ms. Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison
Ms. Quana Kemp, Admin Assistant
Ms. Dawn Mock, Office of Information Technology
Mr. Joel Tolliver, Office of Information Technology
Mr. Matthew Wolfe, Director of Office of Professional Standards

VISITORS:

Mr. Clay Davis, Chairman, Spalding County Board of Commissioners
Ms. Barbara Tahsler, Citizen

First, Chairman Ester Fleming Jr. called to order the January 29, 2026, meeting for the Board of Corrections ("the Board") at 10:00 a.m. and Board Liaison, Simone Juhmi, recorded the minutes.

Chairman Fleming then asked Chaplain Kenneth Ellis to deliver the invocation. Following such, Chairman Fleming led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Fleming welcomed and recognized all guests and visitors and the Board meeting, being duly convened, proceeded with business.

Chairman Fleming presented the Agenda to the Board for approval. Mr. W. D. Strickland made a motion to approve the Agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Thomas Culpepper. The Agenda was voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

Chairman Fleming presented the December 4, 2025, Minutes to the Board for approval. Mr. Rossie Ross made a motion to approve the Minutes, which was seconded by Mr. W. D. Strickland. The Minutes were voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

To begin the Commissioner's Report, Commissioner Oliver briefly discussed the Commissioner's Dashboard, which is a four-page overview highlighting key areas and significant events within the Agency.

Commissioner Oliver then asked Mr. Louis DeBroux, Assistant Commissioner Research, Strategic Planning, and Government Affairs, to do a Legislative Update.

Assistant Commissioner DeBroux presented and briefly discussed the following bills below:

- **HB 925** - Georgia Maternal Health Omnibus Act
This bill would mandate: Implicit Bias training for healthcare professionals involved in perinatal care (which could be integrated into existing Gender Responsive training); Expanded mental health care for prenatal and post-partum offenders. It would also require the Georgia Department of Corrections to establish policies for "reasonable accommodations" for pregnant employees, and the collection and distribution of data related to this program
- **HB 949** - This bill prohibits the launching or landing of drones on agricultural land without consent
- **HB 981** – This bill would expand the scope of practice for Advance Practice Nurses (APNs) and Physician Assistants (PAs) by expanding their ability to write prescriptions to include more drug classifications and for longer durations. This bill, if enacted, would provide an additional resource within the correctional setting by allowing these providers to expand their prescription writing privileges under the direction of their supervision physician
- **HB 990** – This bill provides for financial assistance for the care of retired law enforcement canines and would provide support for dogs that age out of the K-9 program
- **HB 997** - Jail subsidy begins immediately upon conviction
- **HB 1011** - Prohibits many chases in residential areas
- **SB 371** – Requires the Georgia Department of Corrections and the Department of Community Supervision to create Peer Mentor programs and establish programs in every state prison, county jail, and municipal jail
- **SB 392** - Requires all state agencies to go through a zero-based budgeting process not less than once every (10) years, and not less than once every (8) years

This concluded the report for Mr. DeBroux's Report.

Next Commissioner Oliver asked Ms. Latera Davis, Assistant Commissioner of Inmate Services Division, to do an Inmate Services Update.

Ms. Davis began by introducing Ms. Jennifer Irvin, Director of Academic Education (Education and Programs). Ms. Irvin began by stating that she would be discussing "Ensuring Quality and Accountability: Academic Education Accreditation (Status and Strategic Direction)."

Some of the highlights discussed were "Our Solid Foundation: The Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) Academic Education Continuum and GDC's school system goal, our opportunity to become national leaders, a credible plan to achieve a strategic imperative for the Georgia Department of Corrections, an accredited diploma being the bridge to post-release success, a strategic investment with compelling returns for the Board, the Agency, and for the students.

Ms. Irvin continued by discussing the blueprint for success being to achieve the gold standard of accreditation, Cognia being the premier national accrediting body, key outcome of accreditation

ensuring credits transfer and our diplomas being respected and recognized by employers and colleges, and the requirements for Cogna.

Ms. Irvin closed with discussing building momentum and our progress to date, executing the plan, current workstreams, next steps, scaffolded support needed for achieving the vision, and a legacy of leadership, safety, and opportunity.

This concluded the report for Ms. Irvin's Report and the Commissioner's Report.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Under the Chairman's Report, Chairman Fleming moved into Regular Session to approve a County Warden's appointment.

Chairman Fleming called upon Mr. Duke Blackburn, Chairman of the Board Facilities Committee, to give the Board the Committee's recommendation on Mr. Eric Sellers.

Mr. Blackburn stated that the Committee received the report on Mr. Eric Sellers – Warden of Spalding County Correctional Institution, and the Committee reviewed his report and would like to make a motion to approve Mr. Sellers appointment as the Warden of Spalding County Correctional Facility. Mr. Blackburn made the motion to approve the appointment and stated that the entire Committee formally recommended approval so there was no need for a second motion. The motion were voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

Chairman Fleming congratulated Mr. Sellers and Mr. Sellers thanked the Board for the opportunity.

Next, Chairman Fleming advised the Board that we would begin to collect for the 2026 Georgia Prison Warden's Association Board of Corrections scholarship fund. Chairman Fleming updated the Board on last year's total collected. Chairman Fleming expressed the Board would continue to collect for this scholarship until the (\$2,000) goal is met or until June, prior to the Warden's Conference.

Following such, Chairman Fleming expressed that he would not change the members on the Board Committee's until we have a fully staff Board. Chairman Fleming expressed that the 2025 Committee Assignments would remain.

Chairman Fleming discussed the 2026 Board Calendar advising that he get with Commissioner Tyrone Oliver to review two possible offsite board meeting locations in 2026. There was some discussion, and Chairman Fleming advised that he would give the Board an update at the next board meeting.

Under Old or New Business, Chairman Fleming asked to approve two honorary resolutions for two former board members, Mr. Bruce Carlisle and Mr. Gary Gullede. Mr. Alton Russell made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. W. D. Strickland. The motion was voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

Last on the agenda, Chairmen Fleming asked Ms. Jennifer Ammons, General Counsel, Office of Legal Services, to present an Approval of Property Resolution. Ms. Ammons stated she would present the Long State Prison – Atlantic Waste Services Easement.

Ms. Ammons stated that the State of Georgia owns and holds title to, and the Georgia Department of Corrections has custody of, property in Long County, Georgia, known as Long State Prison("the Property") located at 1434 US Highway 84 East, Ludowici, Georgia 31316.

Atlantic Waste Services ("AWS") operates a waste management facility adjacent to Long State Prison on property owned by the Long County Development Authority and requires ingress and egress across the Property to access its facility. AWS has requested a Revocable Lease Agreement ("RLA") for development and access improvements, to be followed by a permanent Non-Exclusive Easement to support continued access to the Long County Development Authority property.

AWS proposes to utilize the existing Highway 84 driveway currently serving Long State Prison and to modify the access route by adding a new intersection from the prison parking lot, together with additional paved access extending into the Long County Development Authority property.

AWS will be solely responsible for constructing all access improvements and for the ongoing maintenance of the roadway associated with the proposed RLA and easement. The proposed access improvements do not provide a benefit to the State; however, the Georgia Department of Corrections has determined that granting such access can be accommodated and will not interfere with the operations of Long State Prison.

Chairman Fleming asked for approval for of the Long State Prison – Atlantic Waste Services Easement resolution. Sheriff Donnie Pope made a motion to approve the property resolution, which were seconded by Mr. W. D. Strickland. The property resolution were voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Chairman Fleming reminded the Board that the next Board of Corrections meeting is on Thursday, March 5, 2026, at State Offices South at Tift College, in Forsyth.

There being no further business, the board meeting was adjourned.

Ester Fleming Jr., Chairman

Chris Clark, Secretary

Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison