

BOARD OF CORRECTIONS

**March 2, 2023
Forsyth, Georgia**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sheriff Barry H. Babb
Mr. Duke Blackburn
Mr. Thomas Culpepper
Mr. Wayne Dasher
Mr. Ester Fleming Jr.
Mr. Gary Gullede
Mr. Larry Haynie – Chairman
Sheriff Stacy Jarrard
Sheriff Donnie Pope
Mr. Rossie Ross
Mr. Alton Russell
Mr. W. D. Strickland
Ms. Rose Williams

CONFERENCE CALLS:

Mr. Chris Clark
Mr. J.C. “Spud” Bowen
Ms. Janelle King
Mr. Luis “Lou” M. Solis Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Guy A. Daughtrey
Ms. Andrea Shelton

ATTORNEY GENERAL’S OFFICE:

Ms. Elizabeth Crowder, Attorney General’s Office
Ms. Kathleen Jacobs, Attorney General’s Office

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:

Mr. Alan Watson, Chief of Staff
Mr. Peter Adams, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Jay Sanders, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Randy Sauls, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Adam Baswell, Director of OPD
Mr. Jamie Clark, Director of Engineering and Construction Services
Mr. Terry Edge, Director of OPD
Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Public Affairs
Ms. Gwendolyn Hogan, Executive Assistant
Ms. Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison
Ms. Alyssa Kendricks, Public Affairs Office
Dr. Marlah Mardis, Assistant Statewide Medical Director
Ms. Dawn Mock, OIT
Mr. John Richey, Deputy Director, Office of Professional Standards
Mr. Henry Rutherford III, Director of OIT
Ms. Donna Tebought, Director of Office of Reentry Services
Mr. Chris Tiller, Director of GCI
Ms. Betsy Thomas, Director of Human Resources
Mr. Rob Thrower, Legislative Liaison
Dr. Steven Turner, Chaplain
Mr. Matthew Wolfe, Director, Office of Professional Standards

VISITORS:

Mr. John Mayes, Former Board Member
Ms. Terri Mayes, Spouse of Mr. John Mayes

First, Chairman Larry Haynie called to order the March meeting for the Board of Corrections (“the Board”) at 10:00 a.m. and Board Liaison, Simone Juhmi, recorded the minutes. Chairman Haynie then asked Chaplain Steven Turner to deliver the invocation. Following such, Chairman Haynie led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. Then Chairman Haynie recognized all guests and visitors, and the Board meeting, being duly convened, proceeded with business.

Chairman Haynie then confirmed the following individuals were present via conference call: Board Members Chris Clark, J.C. “Spud” Bowen, Janelle King, and Mr. Luis “Lou” M. Solis Jr.

Chairman Haynie presented the March 2, 2023 Agenda to the Board for approval. Mr. Wayne Dasher made a motion to approve the Agenda, which was seconded by Mr. W. D. Strickland and Ms. Rose Williams. The Agenda were voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Chairman Haynie presented the February 2, 2023 Minutes to the Board for approval. Mr. W. D. Strickland made a motion to approve the Minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Alton Russell. The Minutes were voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Next, Chairman Haynie presented a Board Resolution to Mr. John Mayes. Mr. Mayes was appointed to the Board of Corrections in 2004 by Governor Sonny Perdue. Since that time, he has faithfully served on the Board for eighteen years as well as serving as Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary of the Board while holding the Fourteenth seat.

The resolution was presented and a photo was taken of Mr. Mayes for his years of service on the Board of Corrections.

COMMISSIONER’S REPORT

To begin the Commissioner’s Report, Chief of Staff Alan Watson briefly discussed the Commissioner’s Dashboard, which is a four-page overview highlighting key areas and significant events within the Agency.

Chief of Staff Watson stated that today would be Mr. Terry Edge’s last board meeting. Mr. Edge is the Director of the Office of Professional Development, and he is retiring after 36 years. Chief of Staff Watson then introduced Mr. Adam Baswell, who will assume the position of Director of the Office of Professional Development position. Chief of Staff Watson then introduced Mr. Matthew Wolfe, who is the new Director of the Office of Professional Standards. Mr. Wolfe thanked the Commissioner for the opportunity.

Chief of Staff Watson then asked Ms. Betsy Thomas, Director of Human Resources, to give a brief Recruitment Effort Update.

Ms. Thomas began her report by giving a brief overview of the salary increases that went into effect on July 1, 2022. Some of the highlights from her presentation were discussing correctional officer salaries, the recruitment campaign, facility recruitment efforts, statewide hiring events, and the recruitment process enhancements.

To close, Ms. Thomas discussed retention initiatives, hiring results, turnover analysis, and the next steps regarding recruitments.

This concluded the report of Ms. Thomas.

Next, Chief of Staff Watson asked Mr. Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner, Facilities Division, to give an update on the Officer Tablet Rollout.

Mr. Holt began his presentation by announcing several warden changes throughout the system. Then, Mr. Holt discussed some general background information on the tablets such as the Special Projects Unit being tasked with the project back in March 2017, and the vendor being 4F Applied Technologies LLC: NoteActive. In addition, the pilot was conducted at Phillips State Prison between December 2018 and February 2019, and the program is a collaboration between the Facilities Division, the Office of Information Technology, and Enterprise Project Management Office.

Mr. Holt continued with discussing the implementation of the officer tablets. Some of the highlights were that the tablets were to replace traditional paper based logbook practices of officers and employees with facilities, to continue to propel GDC forward with technology that will allow for efficient data entry, data tracking and data accessibility, and to serve as a tool to aide with recruitment and retention. Mr. Holt discussed additional items that the tablets offer such as the design to adhere to Georgia Department of Corrections policies and comply with ACA Standards,

allow individual identification and authentication: SCRIBE ID as pin and signature, documentation of duties, administrative segregation rounds, counselor rounds, medical rounds, mental health rounds, duty officer rounds, yard call, security checks, chow call, sick call, releases, intakes, in-house moves, detail locations, key and equipment, and medical information.

In addition, Mr. Holt discussed the duties and tasks icons on the tablet, offender accountability, logbook entry, and the implementation of the electronic logbook platform within 18 prison facilities.

To close, Mr. Holt discussed the Go-Live timeline for several facilities and the Phase Style Rollout plan.

This concluded the report of Mr. Holt.

Next, Chief of Staff Watson asked Dr. Marlah Mardis, Assistant Statewide Medical Director, with the Office of Health Services, to give a Hepatitis - C Update.

Dr. Mardis began her presentation by discussing that the “Hepatitis-C Virus is a Silent Killer.” Some of the highlights from Dr. Mardis presentation were discussing the Hepatitis-C Virus prevalence, Hepatitis-C Virus (HCV) causes an infection of the liver, it spreads through contact with blood by an infected person, sharing of needles or contaminated equipment. It can result in a life-threatening condition leading to liver failure (cirrhosis), cancer and death. Also, Hepatitis-C Virus (HCV) prevalence in the United States is about 2% and the prison population infection rate is estimated at 12-31%.

Dr. Mardis continued with recent study indications, improving outcomes and decreasing further burden on the agency, establishing a statewide database of offenders with the disease, improving education provided to the offenders on the disease process and prevention, refining policies, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s) to ensure that the agency remains up to date with effective, cost-efficient delivery of health care services that meets medical standards, and providing treatment to those offenders who medically qualify per the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD).

To close, Dr. Mardis discussed the Georgia Department of Corrections Hepatitis-C stats, screening, offenders opting-out of the testing, diagnosis, enrollment in Chronic Illness Clinic (CIC), total offenders with diagnosis (male and female), and treatment.

This concluded Dr. Mardis’ report.

Next, Chief of Staff Watson asked Ms. Donna Tebought, Director, Office of Reentry Services, to give an update on the Partnership with State Road and Toll Authority.

Ms. Tebought began with discussing the State Road and Toll Authority (SRTA) is a state-level, independent authority created to operate tolled transportation facilities within Georgia and act as the transportation financing arm for the state. SRTA manages the collection of tolls on Georgia’s Express Lanes System through the use of Peach Pass. In 2017, SRTA combined with the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) to jointly provide the services of both state authorities. The GRTA Board continues to oversee developments of regional impact, air quality reporting, and regional transportation plan approval.

To continue, Ms. Tebought discussed Metro Transitional Center, the Peach Pass partnership, image reviewer (reviews license plates to issue violation notices and video toll statements to the correct customer traveling on I-75 and I-85), participants obtaining OJT credits and transferable skillsets, innovative approach for participants to earn skills needed for employment with a state agency upon release.

To close Ms. Tebought discussed accomplishments, participants, proficiency rating, SRTA plans to expand Peach Pass roads, GDC expansion to other facilities, implementing a new virtual monitoring conferencing support, and display a real-time tracking visual for participants.

This concluded Ms. Tebought’s report.

To end, Chief of Staff Watson asked Ms. Alyssa Kendrick, Marketing Specialist II, with the Office of Public Affairs, to present the short Metro Reentry Video.

This concluded the Commissioner's report.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Haynie began the Chairman's Report by giving an update on the Board of Corrections Georgia Prison Warden's Association scholarship fund.

Then, Vice Chairman Wayne Dasher gave a brief update on the April board meeting in Glennville and showed a short video of the Law Enforcement Appreciation Cookout.

Chairman Haynie stated that he would like to change the April 13th Glennville board meeting to April 12th in Statesboro and cancel the July and August board meetings for the summer months, unless there is business that requires Board approval.

Chairman Haynie then asked the Board for a motion. Mr. Wayne Dasher made the motion, Mr. Alton Russell seconded the motion, and the motion were voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

Under Old or New Business, Chairman Haynie asked for a motion to approve honorary resolutions for:

Correctional Officers Week: Recognizing the week of May 7 - 13, 2023, for the faithful and dedicated service performed by correctional officers each day.

National Nurses Week: Recognizing the week of May 6 - 12, 2023, for the vital role nurses play in the healthcare industry, and for their commitment in providing healthcare to each individual.

Chairman Haynie asked for a motion to approve both resolutions. Mr. W. D. Strickland made a motion to approve the resolutions, which was seconded by Mr. Alton Russell and Mr. Ester Fleming Jr. The resolutions were voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

There being no further business, Chairman Haynie reminded the Board that the next Board of Corrections meeting is on April 12, 2023, at the Holiday Inn, in Statesboro, Georgia.

The board meeting was adjourned.

Larry Haynie, Chairman

Ester Fleming Jr., Secretary

Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison