

BOARD OF CORRECTIONS

March 7, 2024
Forsyth, Georgia

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sheriff Barry H. Babb
Mr. Chris Clark
Mr. Thomas Culpepper
Mr. John B. Edwards
Mr. Ester Fleming Jr.
Mr. Larry Haynie – Chairman
Sheriff Stacy Jarrard
Ms. Janelle King
Sheriff Donnie Pope
Mr. Rossie Ross
Mr. Alton Russell
Mr. W. D. Strickland
Ms. Rose Williams

CONFERENCE CALLS:

Mr. Duke Blackburn
Mr. Bruce Carlisle
Sheriff Gary Gullledge
Mr. Luis “Lou” M. Solis Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. J.C. “Spud” Bowen

ATTORNEY GENERAL’S OFFICE:

Ms. Tina Piper, Attorney General’s Office

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:

Mr. Tyrone Oliver, Commissioner
Mr. Alan Watson, Chief of Staff
Mr. Jay Sanders, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Randy Sauls, Assistant Commissioner
Ms. Jennifer Ammons, General Counsel
Mr. Adam Baswell, Director of Office of Professional Development
Mr. Jamie Clark, Director of Engineering and Construction Services
Mr. Ronnie Cotton, Program Consultant 3
Ms. Beverley Crawford, Family Services Coordinator
Mr. Jackson Defore, Acting Assistant Commissioner of Administration & Finance
Ms. Jessica Eanes, Office of Public Affairs
Ms. Komola Edwards, Director of Human Resources
Mr. Benjamin Ford, Deputy Director of Facilities Operations
Ms. Elonda Glover, Bulloch County Correctional Institution
Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Public Affairs
Ms. Gwendolyn Hogan, Executive Assistant
Mr. Dexter Jenkins, Warden – Harris County Correctional Institution
Ms. Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison
Ms. Dawn Mock, OIT
Mr. Donald Robinson, Deputy Warden – Bulloch County Correctional Institution
Mr. Henry Rutherford III, Director of OIT
Mr. Stan Shepard, Director of Facilities Operations
Mr. Brian Sherrod, Deputy Director of GCI
Ms. Brooklyn Tegeler, Bulloch County Correctional Institution
Mr. Rob Thrower, Legislative Liaison
Mr. Joel Toliver, OIT
Mr. Robert Toole, Warden – Bulloch County Correctional Institution
Mr. Steven Turner, Chaplain
Mr. Matthew Wolfe, Director, Office of Professional Standards

VISITORS:

None

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.

Chairman Haynie welcomed, swore-in, and read the official oath for the appointment of new Board of Corrections Member Mr. John B. Edwards. Chairman Haynie recognized all guests, and the Board meeting, being duly convened, proceeded with business.

Chairman Haynie then confirmed the following individuals were present via conference call: Board Members Mr. Duke Blackburn, Mr. Bruce Carlisle, Sheriff Gary Gullledge, and Mr. Luis “Lou” M. Solis Jr.

Chairman Haynie presented the March 7, 2024 Agenda to the Board for approval. Mr. Ester Fleming Jr. made a motion to approve the Agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Alton Russell. The Agenda was voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Chairman Haynie presented the February 1, 2024 Minutes to the Board for approval. Mr. Alton Russell made the motion to approve the Minutes, which was seconded by Ms. Rose Williams. The Minutes were voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

COMMISSIONER’S REPORT

To begin the Commissioner’s Report, Commissioner Tyrone Oliver presented the Budget Update beginning with a brief overview of the Annual Fiscal Year 2024 Budget. Some of the highlights discussed were:

Departmental Administration: (Recruitment Advertising and Work Culture)

Food and Farm Operations: (Additional Offender Meals on Weekends)

Health: (Physical Health and Pharmacy Service Contracts)

Offender Management: (Transfer to Departmental Administration Program, County Correctional Institutions \$2 Per Diem Increase)

Private Prisons: (Bed Capacity Increase)

State Prisons: (Vocational Education Contracts with Technical College System of Georgia, Safety, Security and Technology Initiatives, Offender Call Monitoring, Radio Communications)

Transition Centers: (Operational Cost for Metro Re-Entry Phase IV)

Statewide Changes: (One-Time Salary Supplements - \$1,000)

Capital Outlay: (New State Prison Construction Washington County, Major Maintenance and Repairs, Purchase Augusta TC, Food and Farm Equipment Statewide)

To close, Commissioner Oliver discussed the total Amended Fiscal Year 2024 Budget (state funds).

Commissioner Oliver then asked Mr. Rob Thrower, Legislative Liaison, to give a Legislative Session Update.

Mr. Thrower began his report by giving a Legislative recap and pointing out key dates such as Sine Die (Day 40): Thursday, March 28th, the House releasing their version of the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget on Tuesday, March 5th, and Commissioner Oliver presenting to Senate Public Safety Appropriations on Wednesday, March 6th.

Mr. Thrower then briefly advised who the 2023-2024 Chairs were:

- **House Appropriations: Matt Hatchett (Dublin)**
- **House Public Safety: J Collins (Villa Rica)**
- **House Public Safety Appropriations: Bill Hitchens (Pooler)**
- **Senate Appropriations: Blake Tillery (Vidalia)**
- **Senate Public Safety/Appropriations: John Albers (Roswell)**

Mr. Thrower closed by discussing House Bill 1105 and stating that the bill enforces reporting requirements for jailers and local law enforcement to work with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The bill is sponsored by Representative Jesse Petrea and an earlier provision had a data posting requirement for the Georgia Department of Corrections. Mr. Thrower closed by stating that it passed the House on Crossover Day and is now in the Senate.

This concluded Mr. Thrower's report.

Commissioner Oliver then asked Ms. Beverley Crawford, Family Services Coordinator, to present a brief Family Services Update.

Ms. Crawford began her report by giving the Family Services Coordinator's purpose. Some of the highlights were that the unit provides direction and support to the family members of offenders who have contacted the Georgia Department of Corrections regarding their concerns. The unit serves as the planner for scheduled Family Days and the unit conducts research, data collection, and analysis.

Ms. Crawford closed by discussing the New Call Escalation Process, staff who belonged to the Family Services unit, how the Family Services unit gets contacted and their responses, the nature of calls and emails, and support and goals for the Family Services unit.

This concluded Ms. Crawford's report and the Commissioner's Report.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Under the Chairman's Report, Chairman Haynie began the Chairman's Report by moving into Regular Session to approve two County Warden's and a Deputy County Warden's appointment.

Chairman Haynie called upon Mr. Alton Russell, who is a member of the Board Facilities Committee, to give the Board the Committee's recommendation on Mr. Robert Toole, Mr. Donald Robinson, and Mr. Dexter Jenkins.

Mr. Russell stated that he would like to do all three candidates at one time in one vote. Mr. Russell stated that the Committee received the report on Mr. Robert Toole – Warden of Bulloch County Correctional Institution, and the Committee reviewed his report and would like to make a motion to approve Mr. Toole's appointment as the Warden of Bulloch County Correctional Facility.

In addition, Mr. Russell stated that the Committee received the report on Mr. Donald Robinson – Deputy Warden of Bulloch County Correctional Institution, and the Committee reviewed his report and would like to make a motion to approve Mr. Robinson's appointment as the Deputy Warden of Bulloch County Correctional Facility.

Lastly, Mr. Russell stated that the Committee received the report on Mr. Dexter Jenkins – Warden of Harris County Correctional Institution, and the Committee reviewed his report and would like to make a motion to approve Mr. Jenkins' appointment as the Warden of Harris County Correctional Facility.

Mr. Alton Russell made the motion to approve all three of the appointments, which was seconded by Mr. W. D. Strickland and Mr. Thomas Culpepper. The motion were voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

Chairman Haynie congratulated Mr. Toole, Mr. Robinson, and Mr. Jenkins and they each thanked the Board for the opportunity.

Next Chairman Haynie advised the Board that we collected a total of six hundred dollars (\$600.00) towards the 2024 Georgia Prison Warden's Association Board of Corrections scholarship fund. The Board will continue to collect for this scholarship until the fifteen-hundred-dollar (\$1,500) goal is met.

Chairman Haynie discussed the 2024 Board Calendar advising that he would like to make the following changes and updates to the locations:

- April 4th will be in Dublin (as stated previously)
- June 6th will be in Ringgold
- October 3rd will be in Statesboro
- December 5th will be in Savannah

There were some discussions as to where the April board meeting will be held and specifically what day. Chairman Haynie clarified, and Mr. Ester Fleming Jr. made the motion to approve the new locations, which was seconded by Mr. W. D. Strickland. The motion were voted approved" by the Board as presented.

Under Old or New Business, Chairman Haynie asked the Board to approve honorary resolutions recognizing the following:

Correctional Officers Week: Which recognizes the week of May 5 - 11, 2024, for the faithful and dedicated service performed by correctional officers each day.

National Nurses Week: Which recognizes the week of May 6 - 12, 2024, 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 honorary resolutions. Mr. Ester Fleming Jr. made a motion to approve the resolutions, which was seconded by Ms. Rose Williams. The resolutions were voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

Last on the agenda Chairman Haynie asked Ms. Jennifer Ammons, General Counsel of the Office of Legal Services, to present the Hart County Sewer Project/ Whitworth Women's Facility Revocable Lease Agreement and Easement.

Ms. Ammons stated that the State of Georgia owns and holds title to, and the Georgia Department of Corrections is in custody of property in Hart County, Georgia, known as the Whitworth Women's Facility ("the Property") located at 414 Valley Hart Road, Hartwell, Georgia 30643, and Hart County has need to install a force main that will directly connect the sewer lines of the new Hart County Jail to the wet well serving Whitworth Women's Facility. The wet well will then facilitate the transfer of sewage to the proper treatment facility.

Hart County has need of a Temporary Revocable Lease and a Non-Exclusive Easement for approximately 175 square feet (0.04 acres) and the Georgia Department of Corrections has determined that it can accommodate the easement request without causing harm to the operations of Whitworth Women's Facility.

Ms. Ammons asked the Board for a motion to approve the property resolution. Chairman Larry Haynie then asked for a motion to approve the resolution and Mr. Thomas Culpepper made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Mr. W. D. Strickland and Ms. Rose Williams. The resolution were voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

To conclude the meeting, Chairman Haynie reminded the members to sign a card for Board Secretary J. C. "Spud" Bowen, whose mother passed away.

The next board meeting is on April 4, 2024, at the Oconee Fall Line Technical College, in Dublin, Georgia.

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

Larry Haynie, Chairman

J.C. "Spud" Bowen, Secretary

Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison