

BOARD OF CORRECTIONS

March 5, 2026

Forsyth, Georgia

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Alton Russell

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:

Ms. Tina Piper, 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. Louis DeBroux, Assistant Commissioner, Research, Strategic Planning, Government Affairs
Mr. Jackson Defore, Assistant Commissioner of Finance and Admin
Mr. Randy Sauls, Assistant Commissioner of Health Services Division
Mr. Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner, Facilities Division
Ms. Komola Edwards, Director of Human Resources
Dr. Kenneth Ellis, Statewide Chaplain
Mr. Benjamin Ford, Facilities Division Director
Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Office of Communications
Mr. Cliff Hogan, Director of Data Management and Research
Ms. Gwendolyn Hogan, Executive Assistant
Ms. Jamie Holloway, Criminal Intelligence Analyst Supervisor
Ms. Angela Ivestor, Deputy Director, OIT
Mr. David Jones, Director of Engineering, Construction Services
Ms. Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison
Mr. Robert Keim, Office of Professional Standards
Ms. Quana Kemp, Admin Assistant
Ms. Dawn Mock, Office of Information Technology
Ms. Janine Robinson, Executive Director of Georgia Correctional Industries
Mr. Charles Vinson, Office of Information Technology
Mr. Bryan Wilson, Interim General Counsel
Mr. Matthew Wolfe, Director of Office of Professional Standards

VISITORS:

Mr. Bruce Carlisle, Former Board of Corrections Member

First, Chairman Ester Fleming Jr. called to order the March 5, 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 new Board of Corrections member Sandra D. Hudson - Fourteenth District, and board members Duke Blackburn, J. C. "Spud" Bowen, Thomas Culpepper, Ester Fleming Jr. and Rossie Ross signed their official oaths for their reappointments on the Board of Corrections.

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

Next, Chairman Fleming and Commissioner Tyrone Oliver presented a board resolution to Mr. Bruce Carlisle. Mr. Carlisle was appointed to the Board of Corrections in July 2023 by Governor Brian P. Kemp. Mr. Carlisle faithfully served on several committees on the Board of Corrections while holding his seat.

The resolution was presented and a photo was taken of the presentation. Mr. Carlisle thanked the Board and the Georgia Department of Corrections.

Chairman Fleming presented the Agenda to the Board for approval. Sheriff Stacy Jarrard made a motion to approve the Agenda, which was seconded by Mr. W. D. Strickland. The Agenda was voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Chairman Fleming presented the January 29, 2026, Minutes to the Board for approval. Mr. W. D. Strickland made a motion to approve the Minutes, which was seconded by Ms. Kellie Brownlow. The Minutes were voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

COMMISSIONER’S REPORT

To begin the Commissioner’s Report, Commissioner Oliver briefly discussed several events such as the Georgia Department of Corrections participation in the Special Olympic Polar Plunge charity event on February 21st. Commissioner Oliver stated that \$26,601 dollars was raised for the event. Commissioner Oliver also discussed the new surgical unit opening at Augusta State Medical Prison, the Amended Fiscal year 2026 Budget being signed, the \$2000 supplement for employees, Managed Access system, the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget hearing set for next week Thursday, March 12th, the ModCorr at Dodge State Prison, Guidehouse & Moss Group assistance, recruitment and retention, Mr. Adam Baswell, Director of the Office of Professional Development retiring at the end of March after 31 years of service to the Georgia Department of Corrections.

Commissioner Oliver also 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 1230

This bill would establish a ban on operating drones (or allowing use of land as a launching site) above prisons, jails, and other places of incarceration, except for law enforcement. Violation of this statute would be a misdemeanor.

HB 1267

As pertains to the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) /Georgia Correctional Industries (GCI) (Section 10-5b1), bill requires all dealer license plates to be made of metal and feature raised text and designs created by stamping dies (embossed).

HB 1398

This bill would require jails to conduct a urine test on all women held beyond (72) hours to test for pregnancy, which would be a factor in determining bail. Pregnancy would also be used as a sentencing factor, with deferral of incarceration for up to (12) months post-partum, after which woman would surrender herself to the Department of Corrections. Offenders would be on probation during this time, without any fines, fees, or restitution, and would allow probation check-ins to be conducted by phone or other electronic communications.

This bill would also prohibit custodial authorities from requiring pregnant offenders to squat and cough during a strip search, and would prohibit the use of handcuffs, waist shackles, leg irons, or restraints of any kind on a pregnant offender in the second or third trimester of pregnancy, and only during the post-partum period if there are compelling reasons of an immediate risk of harm to herself, staff, or others, or if she is a substantial flight risk.

The provisions of the bill prior to incarceration are not of concern to GDC, other than the decision of how a female offender is brought into custody if she fails to report after the loss of a pregnancy, or after the statutory period for post-partum.

HB 949

This bill prohibits the launching or landing of drones on agricultural land without consent

- This may impact our ability to fly drones, including for interdiction purposes
- GCI may be asked to launch drones from their farms

HB 1061

“The Mandi Ballinger Act”

Original bill would move 17-year-old offenders to DJJ custody; substitute bill establishes a 2-year study committee investigating raising Juvenile Court jurisdiction to 17

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. This may impact GDC healthcare contracts.

HB 990

This bill provides financial assistance for the care of retired Law Enforcement canines. This would provide support for dogs that age out of the K-9 program.

HB 1011

This bill prohibits many chases in residential areas. This may limit GDC’s ability to pursue escaped or absconded offenders, and those attempting to introduce contraband.

HB 371

This bill requires GDC and the Department of Community Supervision to create Peer Mentor programs and establish programs in every state prison, county jail, and municipal jail. GDC would not be able to comply with the bill as written because it requires us to create programs in jails, but GDC does not operate jails.

HB 997

This bill shifts all cost of state prisoners to GDC from the day after sentencing; jail subsidy begins immediately upon conviction. This bill would have a significant financial and logistical impact on GDC:

- This bill would make GDC responsible for at least an additional (59) days per offender
- Makes GDC responsible from moment of sentencing (even before GDC is notified), eliminates 15-day window to pick up offender after GDC notified
- Makes GDC responsible for transport costs of offenders

SB 452

This bill would increase the maximum employer contribution to a 401(k) for certain state law enforcement officers (POST certified)

- Increases employer matching funds by 2% per creditable year of service above (5) years, up to a maximum of 15% matched

SB 392

“Waste Reduction Act of 2026”

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

- House and Senate Budget Offices will designate which agencies will be required to submit the zero-based budgets each year

SB 470

"Emergency & Public Safety Signal Protection Act"

This bill would ban possession or operation of signal jammers in the State of Georgia, with an exemption for Law Enforcement agencies.

SB 539

This bill would exempt certain baby products and feminine hygiene products from taxation (would save tax \$ on purchases for Commissary)

SB 592

"One Strike Act" significantly increases penalty certain offenses, including for sex crimes against minors under age 12, to maximum of LWOP, and eliminates possibility of parole for those previously convicted. Also eliminates sentencing under First Offender statute for serious violent felonies. If passed, it would create significant pressure on Facilities' operational capacity.

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

Next Commissioner Oliver asked Mr. Matthew Wolfe, Director of Office of Professional Standards, to do a Digital Forensic Unit Update.

Mr. Wolfe began by introducing Ms. Jamie Holloway, Criminal Intelligence Analyst Supervisor. Mr. Wolfe stated that Ms. Holloway would discuss the Digital Forensic Unit with us. Ms. Holloway began by giving a brief overview of the Intelligence Division staff members.

Some of the highlights discussed were the Criminal Intelligence Unit currently having 16 analyst who cover over 80 facilities and the Analyst monitors all Jpay email and attachments, monitor and analyze phone calls, monitor social media platforms, complete backgrounds, assist criminal investigations division and other outside law enforcement with criminal cases, review downloaded data from contraband devices seized, initiate staff compromise cases via analyzed data, complete shakedown reports, facility analysis, intelligence bulletins, and intelligence reports. Predicative analysis based of intelligence to mitigate contraband introduction.

Ms. Holloway went on to say that analysts utilize over 20 databases in order to complete their daily tasks. The intelligence division upholds a database that was built by the unit itself that contains millions of individuals names and addresses, phone numbers, aliases and other information pertinent to investigations exceeding hundreds of terabytes.

Ms. Holloway continued by discussing that during a law enforcement investigation, officers will properly identify, seize, document and submit digital evidence to the Digital Forensics Unit in accordance with the Georgia Department of Corrections, Standard Operating Procedures and Guarded Exchange Standard Operations Procedures.

Ms. Holloway closed with discussing digital devices (cellphones and tables, SIM card, SD cards, drones, special projects, Contraband Device Interdiction System (CIS) which is an FCC authorized; prison-based technology designed to detect, locate and disable unauthorized cellular devices. The prevention of contraband devices accessing cellular networks while still allowing authorized devices to place authorized calls, the top priority in keeping our facilities and public safe, what the CIS does such as identify suspected contraband cellular devices operating within facilities, validating device data through multiple data points, flags devices for investigative review, confirms eligibility for termination and coordinates lawful termination actions. Ms. Holloway lastly gave some statistics at the closure of her report.

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

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Under the Chairman's Report, Chairman Fleming advised the Board that we collected a total of six hundred dollars (\$600.00) towards the 2026 Georgia Prison Warden's Association Board of Corrections scholarship fund. The Board will continue to collect for this scholarship until the two thousand-dollar (\$2000) goal is met.

Chairman Fleming discussed the 2026 Board Calendar advising that he would like to make the following changes and updates to the locations:

- June 4th – Forsyth to June 3rd – Buford
- July 2nd – Cancelled
- August 6th – Cancelled
- October 1st – Forsyth to September 30th – Forsyth

There were some discussions; however, Chairman Fleming clarified that the Board may do possible facility tours. Mr. W. D. Strickland made the motion to approve the new dates and locations, which were seconded by Mr. Rossie Ross and Mr. Lou Solis Jr. The motion were voted approved” by the Board as presented.

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

Correctional Officers Week: Which recognizes the week of May 3 - 9, 2026, for the faithful and dedicated service performed by correctional officers each day.

National Nurses Week: Which recognizes the week of May 6 - 12, 2026, for the vital role nurses play in the healthcare industry, and for their commitment in providing healthcare to each individual.

Chairman Fleming asked for a motion to approve both honorary resolutions. Mr. Rossie Ross made a motion to approve the resolutions, which were seconded by Mr. W. D. Strickland. The resolutions were voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Next, Mr. Bryan Wilson, Interim General Counsel, for the Office of Legal Services, presented the Proposed Board Rule Amendment for Final Adoption to the Control of Critical Materials 125-3-1-.06 and Training 125-2-1-.06.

Mr. Wilson gave a brief synopsis statement stating the purposes of these proposed amendments are to expand authority for use of new generation Tasers and other less-than-lethal devices and munitions and correct typographical errors.

Mr. Wilson also explained the difference between existing and proposed rules were Paragraph (a)(2) is amended to add an additional exception to the rule and to correct a typographical error. Paragraph (a)(3) is modified to replace the words “the maintenance or re-establishment of” with the words “establish, maintain or regain control of any offender or a facility” and to correct a typographical error.

In addition, Mr. Wilson then discussed the Proposed Rule Amendment for Final Adoption on 125-2-1-.06 Training and gave a brief synopsis statement of purpose and main features of proposed rule. Mr. Wilson stated the purposes of these proposed amendments are to extend the time for a newly hired correctional officer to complete BCOT and delete obsolete language related to probation officer certification.

Mr. Wilson also explained the difference between existing and proposed rules were “Paragraph (1)(b) is amended to change 60 days to 120 days. Paragraph (2)(a)(1) is amended to change 60 days to 120 days. Paragraph (2)(b) is deleted in its entirety.

Mr. Wilson also expressed to the Board that no one attended the Public Hearing and that no one sent any written responses, so therefore he asked Chairman Fleming to ask the Board for final approval.

Chairman Fleming then asked for a motion to approve both Proposed Rules Amendment for Final Adoption.

Mr. John B. Edwards made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. Lou Solis Jr., and Mr. Duke Blackburn. The Proposed Rule Amendment for Final Adoption on Rule 125-3-1-.06. Control of Critical Materials, and the Proposed Rule Amendment for Final Adoption of 125-2-1-.06 Training, were voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Last on the agenda, Chairmen Fleming asked if there was a need to go into Executive Session and Commissioner Oliver expressed there was, so that the Board could consult with legal counsel pertaining to legal matters.

Chairman Fleming then asked for a motion to go into Executive Session. Mr. J. C. “Spud” Bowen made a motion to move into the Executive Session, which was seconded by Mr. John B. Edwards. The vote for the Board to move into Executive Session were voted “approved” by the Board.

Chairman Fleming asked for a motion to approve moving out of Executive Session. Sheriff Stacy Jarrard made the motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. W. D. Strickland. The vote for the Board to move out of Executive Session were voted “approved” by the Board.

Chairman Fleming asked for a motion to approve moving back into Regular Session. Mr. Thomas Culpepper made the motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. Rossie Ross. The vote for the Board to move back into Regular Session were voted “approved” by the Board.

Chairman Fleming reminded the Board that the next Board of Corrections meeting is on Thursday, April 2, 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