

## **BOARD OF CORRECTIONS**

**May 5, 2022**

**Forsyth, Georgia**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Sheriff Barry H. Babb  
Mr. Duke Blackburn – Chairman  
Mr. Chris Clark  
Mr. Wayne Dasher  
Mr. Ester Fleming Jr.  
Mr. Larry Haynie  
Sheriff Donnie Pope  
Mr. Alton Russell  
Ms. Andrea Shelton  
Mr. W. D. Strickland  
Ms. Rose Williams

### **CONFERENCE CALLS:**

Mr. J.C. “Spud” Bowen  
Mr. Guy A. Daughtrey  
Ms. Janelle King  
Mr. John Mayes  
Mr. Luis “Lou” M. Solis Jr.  
Mr. Bill White

### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Sheriff Stacy Jarrard  
Mr. Tommy M. Rouse

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL’S OFFICE:**

Ms. Tina Piper, Attorney General’s Office

### **DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:**

Mr. Timothy C. Ward, Commissioner  
Mr. Alan Watson, Chief of Staff  
Mr. Peter Adams, Assistant Commissioner  
Mr. Jamie Clark, Director of Engineering & Construction Services  
Mr. Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner  
Mr. Jay Sanders, Assistant Commissioner  
Mr. Randy Sauls, Assistant Commissioner  
Ms. Jennifer Ammons, General Counsel  
Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Public Affairs  
Mr. Cliff Hogan, Director, Data Unit  
Ms. Gwendolyn Hogan, Commissioner’s Executive Assistant  
Ms. Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison  
Mr. Clay Nix, Director of Office of Professional Standards  
Ms. Amy Pataluna, Deputy Director, GCI  
Ms. Janine Robinson, Director of Fleet Operations  
Mr. Henry Rutherford III, Director of OIT  
Ms. Betsy Thomas, Human Resources Director  
Mr. Chris Tiller, Executive Director, GCI  
Dr. Steven Turner, Chaplain

### **VISITORS:**

Mr. Spencer Shelton, HeartBound Ministries

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

Chairman Blackburn presented the May 2022 Agenda to the Board for approval. Mr. W.D. Strickland and Mr. Alton Russell made a motion to approve the Agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Wayne Dasher. The Agenda was voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Chairman Blackburn also presented the April 2022 Minutes to the Board for approval. Mr. W.D. Strickland and Mr. Alton Russell made the motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. Wayne Dasher. The Minutes were then voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

### **COMMISSIONER’S REPORT**

To begin the Commissioner’s Report, Commissioner Ward thanked Mr. Wayne Dasher for hosting a great event down in Glennville and thanked everyone who toured Georgia State Prison.

Commissioner Ward introduced new team members Mr. Jamie Clark, Director of Engineering and Construction Services, and Mr. Henry Rutherford III, Director of Office of Information Technology.

Commissioner Ward mentioned the following announcements:

- Employee Appreciation Week – Commissioner asked Ms. Betsy Thomas to send the board members a list of the Employee Appreciation events going on around the state.
- Mr. Ahmed Holt and Ms. Betsy Thomas will be in Washington D.C. on May 12<sup>th</sup> for National Police Week. Four (4) officers from GDC who passed away due to COVID will be recognized on the National Memorial Wall (Nicholas Anderson Boutwell, Wayne Douglas Snyder, Onochie Sunday Ikedionwu, and Roger Joe Hodge).
- May 17<sup>th</sup> – possible execution.
- Visitation has been reinstated; kids under 5 may be able to visit since vaccines for those individuals are now available.
- Senior Leadership Offsite (May 9 –12<sup>th</sup> at Jekyll) – Will look at Mission, Vision Statement, and Top Five Priorities.

Commissioner Ward discussed the dashboard, which is a four-page overview highlighting key areas and significant events within the Agency.

Commissioner Ward then asked Mr. Sanders, Assistant Commissioner, Inmate Services Division, to give an Inmate Services Division Update.

Mr. Sanders began his presentation by thanking Mr. Alton Russell for kicking off the Education and Reentry Annual Training Conference in Columbus. Mr. Sanders then discussed the numbers on the Commissioner’s dashboard under Inmate Services.

In addition, Mr. Sanders discussed the Transfr VR Virtual Reality Training that is being used at Burruss CTC for juvenile offenders. Some of the goals for this system mentioned were:

- Providing career exploration that incentivizes youth offenders to choose an in-demand career path,
- Increasing youth offender enrollment and engagement in technical college programs, based on career interests and aptitudes, and
- Reducing recidivism rates by developing targeted career pathway plans.

Mr. Sanders continued by showing a Virtual Reality Training (3 min video) to the board members and he discussed career exploration – manufacturing, skill trades, automotive, public safety, warehousing and storage, hospitality and tourism, and skills training programs.

To close his presentation, Mr. Sanders discussed the following:

Automotive - The Automotive discipline gives students and job seekers the hands-on skills they need to obtain positions related to general automotive inspection and repair.

The Skilled Trades - Manufacturing and Construction: The Skilled Trades discipline gives students and job seekers the hands-on skills they need to get jobs related to the manufacturing of vehicles, foodstuffs, household goods, and other products. Trainees will also build fundamental construction skills related to the building of structures, including buildings and homes, roads, and other infrastructure.

Diesel Technology - The Diesel Technology discipline gives students and job seekers the hands-on skills they need to obtain positions related to general Diesel and Trucking inspection and repair.

Hospitality and Tourism - The Hospitality and Tourism discipline gives students and job seekers the hands-on skills they need to obtain positions in a hotel front desk environment and in a commercial kitchen.

Aviation Maintenance - The Aviation Maintenance discipline gives students and job seekers the hands-on skills they need to obtain positions related to general aircraft equipment inspection and repair.

This concluded Mr. Sanders' report.

Commissioner Ward then asked Mr. Randy Sauls, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Health Services, to give an Office of Health Services Update. Mr. Sauls began his presentation by discussing Health Literacy. Some of the highlights were promoting Health Literacy among the offender population, the Health Literacy Improvement Program at Mercer University School of Medicine, Health Literacy Improvement Program Memorandum of Understanding: 3 year medical students, Community Health Rotation, providing education to improve health literacy among offender participants instruction, health related topics, discussing 10 - two-hour blocks for a total of 20 hours of instruction, discussing 2-3 year medical students providing health education on each session and the first two blocks regarding Hypertension and Mental Health Awareness.

Mr. Sauls continued discussing future topics such as hypertension, general health, diabetes, communication, general preventative care guidelines, end of life planning, cholesterol, mental wellness, health insurance overview, physical wellness, and reading food and prescription labels.

To close, Mr. Sauls discussed HIV Reentry Coordination for the Georgia Department of Corrections Office of Health Services, receiving an HIV reentry grant from the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH), the goal of the reentry coordinator educating offenders on living and maintaining the treatment of HIV upon release, face to face interviews, HIV health literacy education, identifying and linking community HIV resources, identifying HIV providers and pre-scheduling appointments prior to offender release, and collecting data required in planning and evaluating program effectiveness.

This concluded the report of Mr. Sauls.

Commissioner Ward then asked Mr. Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner, Facilities Division, to give a Facilities Division update.

Mr. Holt began his presentation by discussing the Securus Unity Tablet Hardware. Some of the highlights were Securus providing the modern JP6 Tablet, safety features required for use in Corrections, Securus Tablet Corrections grade strength, fast performance, long battery life, quick charge time, and high resolution features.

In addition, Mr. Holt discussed the tablet applications, comprehensive educational programming, commissary ordering, continued access to Ashland University electronic messaging/digital mail center, religious programming and reading material, digital library, law library, media, forms/grievances, sick call, and video visitation. The Digital Mail Center (DMC) allows physical mail to be scanned and delivered electronically to incarcerated individuals directly from a tablet

or terminal. It reduces staff workload, is agency regulated, eliminates contraband being introduced through mail, and reduces clutter within cells.

Mr. Holt then discussed project phases. Phase One of the implementation plan shall include the initial installations of tablets (including basic functionality, media, electronic messaging capability, and basic offender education), video visitation, electronic trust account deposit application, debit release cards, and upgraded communications management platform (NextGen SCP).

To close, Mr. Holt discussed Phase Two of the implementation being incorporated: enhanced functionalities for the tablets including customized offender education, comprehensive Learning Management System (LMS), forms and grievance application, digital mail center (mail scanning), and law library (Fastcase). Phase Three included the implementation plan consisting of commissary ordering for tablets and communication validation process application/components and integration.

This concluded Mr. Holt's report.

Commissioner Ward asked Mr. Clay Nix, Director of the Office of Professional Standards (OPS), to give a brief OPS update on Female Security Threat Group (STG) Trends.

In his presentation, Mr. Nix discussed the current female STG stats and trends, charts depicting the current and past stats and trends of the overall female offender population, female STG populations in the Georgia Department of Corrections as of April 2022, the overall female population, the female STG trend comparison, the GDC top STG population distribution, the GDC top 3 female STG populations, and the overall disciplinary report comparison.

This concluded Mr. Nix's report and the Commissioner's report.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Duke Blackburn began the Chairman's Report by stating that there was an honorary resolution for former Board Member Mr. Tommy Rouse and Chairman Blackburn asked the board members to sign the resolution and pass it around. Chairman Blackburn told the Board that we would schedule Mr. Rouse's resolution presentation at a later date.

Chairman Blackburn asked the Board if they would like to discuss canceling the July and August board meetings for the summer months if there was no official business that must be voted upon.

Chairman Blackburn asked for a motion to approve canceling the July and August board meetings. Mr. Wayne Dasher made the motion to approve, which was then seconded by Mr. W.D. Strickland, and the motion canceling the July and August board meetings was voted approved by the Board.

Chairman Blackburn also discussed the possibility of board members visiting a facility at a later date.

Under Old or New Business, Chairman Blackburn asked Ms. Jennifer Ammons, General Counsel of the Office of Legal Services, to present the Augusta State Medical Prison – Demolition of 2 Buildings. Ms. Ammons stated that the Justice Center and Paint Shed must be demolished to make way for new construction. Ms. Ammons then asked for Board approval of this action.

Chairman Blackburn asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Alton Russell made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Sheriff Barry H. Babb. The resolution were voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

Chairman Blackburn called upon Ms. Janine Robinson, Administrative Support Division, Fleet Operations and Risk Management, to present the approval of employment for two (2) Fleet Operations Mechanic employees.

Ms. Robinson began by stating that Mr. John Waits and Mr. Jeremy Dhuivette, who worked for Fleet Operations under general supervision, maintains, diagnoses, inspects, and/or repairs engines, vehicles and other motorized equipment. The specific job responsibilities for these individuals, as defined by Standard Occupational Classification Manual, will include the following:

- 49-2096: Electronic equipment installers and repairers, motor vehicles  
Install, diagnose, or repair communications, sound, security, or navigation equipment in motor vehicles.
- 49-3023: Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics  
Diagnose, adjust, repair, or overhaul automotive vehicles.
- 49-3093: Tire Repairers and Changers  
Repair and replace tires.

Ms. Robinson stated both individuals displayed a strong work ethic, learn quickly, and are very capable.

After that, Chairman Blackburn asked for a motion to approve Mr. Waits and Mr. Dhuivette's employment. Ms. Andrea Shelton made the motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. Wayne Dasher. The employment of both individuals were voted "approved" by the Board.

To conclude the meeting, Chairman Blackburn reminded the members of the following:

- The next meeting is on June 2, 2022, at State Offices South at Tift College, in Forsyth, Georgia.
- Chairman Blackburn would like an update on the CAD employee Georgia Correctional Industries hired and to have a Georgia Correctional Industries presentation update.
- Recognizing Georgia Department of Corrections staff for Beyond the Call and offenders for Beyond the Walls recognitions.
- Secretary Andrea Shelton invited board members after the meeting to the "Master of Light" film preview at Burruss CTC.

The board meeting was adjourned.

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Duke Blackburn, Chairman

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Andrea Shelton, Secretary

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Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison