

## **BOARD OF CORRECTIONS**

**October 5, 2017**

**Macon, Georgia**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Jerry Willis, Chairman  
Mr. Duke Blackburn  
Mr. Christopher Clark  
Mr. Mike Coggins  
Mr. Mac Collins  
Mr. Wayne Dasher  
Mr. Carl Franklin  
Mr. Larry Haynie  
Mr. Bruce Hudson  
Mr. Alton Russell  
Ms. Andrea Shelton  
Mr. W. D. Strickland  
Ms. Rose Williams

### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Sheriff Roger Garrison  
Sheriff Stacy Jarrard  
Mr. John Mayes  
Mr. Tommy M. Rouse  
Ms. Rocio D. Woody

### **DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:**

Mr. Gregory C. Dozier, Commissioner  
Mr. Ricky Myrick, Assistant Commissioner  
Mr. Jay Sanders, Assistant Commissioner  
Mr. Randy Sauls, Assistant Commissioner  
Mr. Timothy C. Ward, Chief of Staff  
Ms. Jennifer Ammons, General Counsel  
Mr. Brian Dunlap, Lieutenant  
Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Public Affairs  
Ms. Gwendolyn Hogan, Office of Public Affairs  
Mr. Brad Hooks, Chief Operating Officer, Georgia Correctional Industries  
Mr. Walter Hudson, Office of Professional Standards  
Ms. Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison  
Mr. Clay Nix, Director of Office of Professional Standards  
Mr. Calvin Oliphant, Warden of Jefferson County Correctional Institution  
Ms. Jennifer Otto, Admin Support 2  
Ms. Amy Pataluna, Deputy Executive Director, Georgia Correctional Industries  
Ms. Sarah Peterson, Correctional Officer 2  
Mr. Mike Riley, Office of Professional Standards  
Ms. Angie Scott, Education Program Specialist 3  
Mr. Nakia Stephen, Sergeant  
Ms. Betsy Thomas, Director of Human Resources  
Mr. Chris Tiller, Executive Director, Georgia Correctional Industries  
Dr. Steven Turner, Chaplain  
Mr. Marshall Wheeler Jr., Correctional Officer 2

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:**

Ms. Tina Piper, Senior Assistant Attorney General

### **VISITORS:**

Mr. Vincent Alanda, Citizen  
Ms. Penny Coggins, Wife of Mike Coggins  
Mr. Joseph Drolet, Senior Assistant Attorney General (former)  
Ms. Jackie Franklin, Wife of Carl Franklin  
Mr. Ladjji Ruffin, Citizen

First, Chairman Jerry Willis called to order the October meeting for the Board of Corrections (“the Board”) at 10:00 a.m. Board Liaison, Simone Juhmi, recorded the minutes.

Chairman Willis then asked Chaplain Steven Turner to deliver the invocation. Chaplain Turner mentioned several individuals during his prayer to include Board members, their families, correctional officers and the Las Vegas victims and their families. Following such, Chairman Willis led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance before recognizing all guests and visitors, and the Board meeting, being duly convened, proceeded with business.

To begin, Chairman Willis presented Mr. Joseph Drolet, former Senior Assistant Attorney General, with an honorary resolution on behalf of the Board of Corrections for his many years of dedicated service in state government.

Chairman Willis presented the October Agenda to the Board for approval. Mr. Wayne Dasher made a motion to approve the Agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Bruce Hudson. The Agenda was voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Chairman Willis also presented the September Minutes to the Board for approval. Vice Chairman Alton Russell made the motion to approve, which was also seconded by Secretary Larry Haynie. The Minutes were then voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

### **COMMISSIONER’S REPORT**

Commissioner Gregory C. Dozier began his report by thanking Warden Clinton Perry and his staff at Central State Prison for hosting the Board meeting and the Central State Prison facility tour. Plus, Commissioner Dozier publicly thanked Chaplain Steven Turner for the invocation and for being an instrumental leader in Chaplaincy Services. In addition, Commissioner Dozier thanked Mr. Joseph Drolet for his many years of service and Ms. Betsy Thomas, Director of Human Resources, for hosting the Human Resources Conference last week. At the conference, employees who support the operations of our facilities were trained in vital matters such as recruitment and retention. Moreover, Commissioner Dozier thanked all Department of Corrections employees who responded quickly and were instrumental in aiding an employee that was injured at the gristmill.

Next, Commissioner Dozier continued with a brief summary of the Commissioner’s dashboard, which is a three-page overview highlighting key areas within the Agency.

Afterwards, Commissioner Dozier asked Mr. Jay Sanders, Assistant Commissioner of Inmate Services, to present the “Beyond the Call” employee recognition award to Ms. Jennifer Otto, Admin Support 2, Chaplaincy Services.

Assistant Commissioner Sanders stated that Jennifer Otto began her career with the Georgia Department of Corrections in 2014 as a “12 For Life” Intern. While attending Mary Persons High School, Ms. Otto worked in the afternoon, four days each week, with the Academic Education Unit within Inmate Services. Ms. Otto’s value to the team was quickly realized by the unit and she was given multiple projects. Upon graduation from High School, Ms. Otto left the Georgia Department of Corrections to pursue a degree in English. Ms. Otto returned a year later as a part-time employee with Academic Education while still pursuing her college degree. Within a year, she was offered a full-time position in Chaplaincy Services. In addition to the many duties she performs for Chaplaincy Services, Ms. Otto has been an instrumental participant for the Volunteer Rebranding project. Ms. Otto started on the project as support; however, she quickly took on the role as leader through sound project management. She has proven time and again that she is resilient, tenacious and a great asset to the Department.

Assistant Commissioner Sanders presented Ms. Otto with a plaque on behalf of the Board of Corrections and Commissioner Gregory C. Dozier. A photo was taken of the plaque presentation.

To follow, Commissioner Gregory C. Dozier asked Mr. Ricky Myrick, Assistant Commissioner of Facilities Division, to present the “Beyond the Call” employee recognition awards to Lee State Prison officers Mr. Brian Dunlap, Lieutenant; Ms. Sarah Peterson, Correctional Officer 2; Mr. Nakia Stephen, Sergeant and Mr. Marshall Wheeler Jr., Correctional Officer 2.

Assistant Commissioner Myrick stated that Correctional Officer Sara Peterson was performing her duties as a Perimeter Officer at Lee Evidence Based Prison, when she noticed a suspicious vehicle and reported the incident immediately to shift supervisors.

Officer Peterson maintained security in the area while Sergeant Nakia Stephen and Officer Marshall Wheeler searched for any items. During the search, an unknown person was noticed in the area; the person fired two shots. Officer Peterson responded without hesitation and shielded the two officers with the perimeter vehicle.

After receiving information of a suspicious vehicle in the area, Sergeant Stephen responded with Officer Wheeler to inspect the area near the old K9 unit. Upon arriving, Sergeant Stephen and Officer Wheeler noticed a bag. Upon further review, a body was observed as well. The person who the security staff assumed was dead jumped up and revealed a weapon. The person shot at the security staff and then ran from the area.

After receiving information of a suspicious vehicle, Lieutenant Brian Dunlap sent Sergeant Stephen and Officer Wheeler to the area to ensure there were no issues on the prison grounds. Lieutenant Dunlap responded in his personal vehicle to get a description of the suspect. Once the suspect's vehicle reached Highway 19, Lieutenant Dunlap immediately turned around and gave the information to Lee Co. Sheriff's Department. He also ensured that proper GDC notifications were made.

A detailed search was conducted of the area by various law enforcement agencies. On the night of Aug. 15, 2016, a suspicious person was observed in a neighboring area close to the facility. It was with the positive identification of both Sergeant Stephen and Officer Wheeler that the suspect was taken and remains in custody of Lee Co. Sheriff's Department.

Thereafter, Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Public Affairs, asked Board Member Andrea Shelton to introduce Mr. Ladji Ruffin, who is featured on the October "Beyond the Walls" article. Mr. Ruffin gave the Board a brief personal story of how he was able to enroll in the Braille program and how he learned to transcribe textbooks into braille for the visually impaired. The books he produced were then distributed throughout the state of Georgia and across the United States. Not only was Mr. Ruffin helping others, he was also afforded the opportunity to perfect his public speaking skills. Annually, during open house, he had the opportunity to speak to the local news stations and tell them his story. After receiving his advanced certification in Braille, Mr. Ruffin was accepted into the Governor's Mansion detail which impacted his life. When he was released in 2016, he started his own company, Authentic Braille Masters, LLC. This is a global company and he is currently conducting business with Canada. In addition, he is also an Independent Contractor selling energy for a company called Stream Energy. Currently, Mr. Ruffin speaks at prisons, schools and to other business owners, sharing with them his experiences and the drive to succeed.

Next, Mr. Jay Sanders, Assistant Commissioner of Inmate Services Division, asked Ms. Angie Scott, Education Program Specialist 3, to present an Inmate Services Update on the Braille Program. To begin, Ms. Scott briefly discussed the mission of the Braille program which provides a focus on education in order to prepare its participants to transcribe Braille textbooks for students in grades K-12, while preparing them to become productive returning citizens. Ms. Scott continued to discuss the training process for the braille program, the screening process, the minimum qualifications, preferred skills and the reentry impact. Plus, Ms. Scott discussed several individuals that have been through the braille program and have had successful reentry back into society. To end, Ms. Scott discussed several products such as paper, clothing, jewelry, toys, soda cans and hand rails that are done in braille through the program.

This concluded the Commissioner's Report.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Jerry Willis began the 'Chairman's Report' by moving into Regular Session to approve the appointment of Mr. Calvin Oliphant - Warden of Jefferson County.

Chairman Willis called upon Mr. Duke Blackburn, Chairman of the Facilities Committee, to give the Board the Committee's recommendation of the appointment.

Mr. Blackburn stated that the Facilities Committee received the board packet for Mr. Oliphant and after reviewing his report, the committee unanimously recommends approval for Mr. Oliphant to assume the Warden position at Jefferson County.

Mr. Duke Blackburn made the motion to approve, which was seconded by Vice Chairman Alton Russell, and Mr. Wayne Dasher, and the motion was voted approved by the Board as presented. Chairman Willis congratulated Mr. Oliphant and Mr. Oliphant thanked the Board for the opportunity.

Next, Chairman Willis discussed the November Board meeting stating that it would be held in Valdosta and that more details would follow.

Chairman Willis discussed the 2018 Committee Assignments asking each Board member to fill out their requests and submit them to Board Liaison Simone Juhmi so that she can turn them into the Nominations Committee for review.

There were no Old or New Business items, so Chairman Willis reminded the members that the next Board meeting will be held on November 2nd, in Valdosta, at Wiregrass Technical College.

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Jerry Willis, Chairman

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Larry Haynie, Secretary

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Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison