

BOARD OF CORRECTIONS

September 3, 2020

Forsyth, Georgia

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Duke Blackburn
Mr. J.C. "Spud" Bowen
Mr. Chris Clark
Mr. Wayne Dasher
Mr. Ester Fleming Jr.
Ms. Janelle King
Mr. John Mayes
Sheriff Donnie Pope
Mr. Tommy M. Rouse
Mr. Luis "Lou" M. Solis Jr.
Mr. W. D. Strickland
Mr. Bill White

CONFERENCE CALL:

Mr. Alton Russell-Chairman
Ms. Andrea Shelton
Ms. Rose Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Mike Coggins
Mr. Larry Haynie
Sheriff Barry H. Babb
Sheriff Stacy Jarrard

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE CONFERENCE CALL:

Ms. Tina Piper, Senior Assistant Attorney General

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:

Mr. Timothy C. Ward, Commissioner
Mr. Ricky Myrick, Chief of Staff
Mr. Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Jay Sanders, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Randy Sauls, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Alan Watson, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Dan Brown, Director of Office of Information Technology
Mr. Sharrod Campbell, Office of Professional Standards
Ms. Jessica Eanes, Office of Public Affairs
Mr. Terry Edge, Director of OPD
Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Public Affairs
Dr. Allen Hughes, Chaplain
Ms. Angela Ivester, OIT
Ms. Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison
Ms. Alicia Mandin, Paralegal
Ms. Dawn Mock, OIT
Mr. Mike Riley, Office of Professional Standards
Mr. Savario Spencer, AV Specialist
Mr. Chris Tiller, Executive Director of GCI
Ms. Betsy Thomas, Director of Human Resources
Mr. Dexter Walker, OIT
Mr. Bryan Wilson, Deputy General Counsel

VISITORS:

Ms. Lynn Blackburn, Wife of Duke Blackburn

First, Secretary Duke Blackburn called to order the September meeting for the Board of Corrections ("the Board") at 10:00 a.m. and Board Liaison, Simone Juhmi, recorded the minutes.

Secretary Blackburn then asked Chaplain Allen Hughes to deliver the invocation. Following such, Secretary Blackburn led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. Secretary Blackburn welcomed

and swore in new Members Mr. J. C. “Spud” Bowen, District 8; Ms. Janelle King, District 6; and Bill White, District 1, to the Board. Then, Secretary Blackburn recognized all guests and visitors, and the Board meeting, being duly convened, proceeded with business.

Secretary Blackburn presented the September 2020 Agenda to the Board for approval. Mr. Wayne Dasher made a motion to approve the Agenda, which was seconded by Mr. John Mayes. The Agenda was voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Secretary Blackburn also presented the August Minutes to the Board for approval. Mr. W. D. Strickland made the motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. John Mayes. The Minutes were then voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

COMMISSIONER’S REPORT

To begin the Commissioner’s Report, Commissioner Timothy C. Ward discussed the dashboard, which is a three-page overview highlighting key areas within the Agency.

To follow, Commissioner Ward asked Mr. Randy Sauls, Assistant Commissioner of Health Services Division, to present a Division Update. Mr. Sauls began his presentation on the Georgia Department of Corrections response to COVID-19. Some of the highlights mentioned were the CDC’s guidance on COVID-19’s universal precautions such as wearing a mask, washing hands, social distancing, and observing the published guidelines. In addition, employees return to work procedures, the new intake and pre-transfers, GDC’s guidance, GDC’s adoption and distribution, COVID-19 testing, COVID-19 social distancing. and proper bed position for residential and congregate settings were also addressed.

To conclude, Mr. Sauls discussed COVID-19 positive hospitalizations versus the total hospitalizations, COVID-19 impact on hospital days, COVID-19 impact on average length of stay, and COVID-19 comorbid condition/diagnosis length of stay/distribution by days.

This concluded Mr. Sauls’ report.

Next, Commissioner Ward asked Mr. Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner of the Facilities Division, to give a Division Update.

Mr. Holt began his report by discussing the mission statement, vision statement, and the Commissioner’s strategic priorities for the Georgia Department of Corrections. Mr. Holt continued by discussing the number of state prisons, private prisons, county prisons, transition centers, probation detention centers, residential substance abuse treatment centers (PRSAT), and integrated treatment facilities (ITF) the Department of Corrections has.

To conclude, Mr. Holt discussed the inmate population by month and GDC’s COVID- 19 response update. Some of the items discussed were the enhanced intake and release procedures, the enhanced sanitation, other key metrics, and the after-action planning/data management.

In closing, Mr. Holt asked Ms. Joan Heath, Director of the Office of Public Affairs, to assist him in introducing the new COVID-19 Dashboard.

This concluded Mr. Holt’s report.

Following such, Commissioner Ward asked Mr. Jay Sanders, Assistant Commissioner of Inmate Services, to give a Division Update.

Mr. Sanders began by discussing Inmate Services various areas of responsibility such as reentry services, education, cognitive programming numbers, reentry documents and repository, programming COVID measures, academic education / charter schools, career, technical and higher education (CTHE), and educational COVID measures,

To close, Mr. Sanders discussed the mobile classrooms, the electrician’s assistant welding, and the culinary arts.

This concluded Mr. Sanders’ report and the Commissioner’s Report.

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

Secretary Blackburn began the Chairman’s Report by asking the board members to make a motion to draft an honorary resolution for former Board Member, Jerry Willis, for his years of service on the Board of Corrections.

Mr. Wayne Dasher made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Mr. W.D. Strickland. The resolution for Mr. Willis was voted approved by the Board.

Last of all, Secretary Blackburn continued with Old or New Business by asking his wife, Ms. Lynn Blackburn, to address the Board and present the oil painting that she sketched for the lobby of the Department of Corrections. Ms. Blackburn explained the painting’s meaning to the Board and a photo was taken of the painting presentation.

To close, Secretary Blackburn reminded the Board that the next Board of Corrections meeting is on October 1st, in Forsyth.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Alton Russell, Chairman

Duke Blackburn, Secretary

Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison