

BOARD OF CORRECTIONS

September 4, 2025

Forsyth, Georgia

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sheriff Barry H. Babb
Mr. Duke Blackburn
Mr. J.C. “Spud” Bowen
Ms. Kellie Brownlow
Mr. Rodney Bryant
Mr. Thomas Culpepper
Mr. John B. Edwards
Mr. Ester Fleming Jr. – Chairman
Sheriff Gary Gulledge
Sheriff Stacy Jarrard
Sheriff Donnie Pope
Mr. Rossie Ross
Mr. Alton Russell
Mr. Luis “Lou” M. Solis Jr.
Mr. W. D. Strickland
Ms. Rose Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Bruce Carlisle
Mr. Chris Clark

ATTORNEY GENERAL’S OFFICE:

Ms. Elizabeth Crowder, Attorney General’s Office

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:

Mr. Tyrone Oliver, Commissioner
Mr. Alan Watson, Chief of Staff
Mr. Jackson Defore, Assistant Commissioner of Finance and Admin
Mr. Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner, Facilities Division
Mr. Jay Sanders, Assistant Commissioner of Inmate Services
Mr. Randy Sauls, Assistant Commissioner of Health Services Division
Mr. Louis DeBroux, Assistant Commissioner, Research, Strategic Planning, Government Affairs
Ms. Jennifer Ammons, General Counsel
Mr. Adam Baswell, Director of Office of Professional Development
Mr. Jamie Clark, Director of Engineering & Construction Services
Ms. Komola Edwards, Director of Human Resources
Dr. Kenneth Ellis, Statewide Chaplain
Mr. Benjamin Ford, Facilities Director
Mr. Zachary Harbuck, Deputy Warden, Harris County Correctional Institution
Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Office of Communications
Mr. Cliff Hogan, Director of Data Management and Research
Ms. Gwendolyn Hogan, Executive Assistant
Ms. Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison
Ms. Dawn Mock, Office of Information Technology
Mr. Mark Pilgrim, Deputy Warden, Hall County Correctional Institution
Mr. Henry Rutherford, Director of Office of Information Technology
Mr. Joel Tolliver, Office of Information Technology
Mr. Matthew Wolfe, Director of Office of Professional Standards

VISITORS:

Ms. Zoey Laird, Rough Draft Atlanta
Dr. Christy Perez, Nonprofit (JP/Snapco.)
Ms. Princess Richard, Citizen
Ms. Sophia Tedesco, Southern Center Human Rights
Mr. Ross Williams – Georgia Recorder

First, Chairman Ester Fleming Jr. called to order the September 4, 2025 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 and recognized all guests and visitors and the Board meeting, being duly convened, proceeded with business.

Chairman Fleming presented the Agenda to the Board for approval. Mr. Rossie Ross made a motion to approve the Agenda, which was seconded by Ms. Rose Williams. The Agenda was voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Chairman Fleming presented the June 5, 2025 Minutes to the Board for approval. Mr. Alton Russell made a motion to approve the Minutes, which was seconded by Mr. W. D. Stickland and 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 discussed briefly the Commissioner’s Dashboard, which is a four-page overview highlighting key areas and significant events within the Agency.

Commissioner Oliver then briefly discussed the following items: Mr. Jay Sanders, Assistant Commissioner of Inmate Services Division retirement celebration on September 24th, Mr. Jamie Clark, Director of Engineering & Construction Services retirement celebration on September 17th, Mr. David Jones assuming the role as the new Director of Engineering & Construction Services, Mr. Louis DeBroux, assuming the role as the Assistant Commissioner of Research, Strategic Planning, and Government Affairs. Commissioner Oliver continued by discussing the Overwatch & Logistic (OWL) Unit Command Center, which is under construction, CGL partnership, the American Correctional Association (ACA) Conference held in Denver, Colorado and the 16 state facilities attaining accreditation, the Georgia Department of Corrections Family Day on September 5th at State Offices South at Tift College, and recent warden moves that occurred over the summer.

Commissioner Oliver asked Mr. Cliff Hogan, Director of Data Management and Research, to present a Population Projections Update. Mr. Hogan began by discussing Corrections in 2025 and Beyond. Some of the highlights discussed were the 3 Geographic Regions comprised of 36 State Prisons, 13 Transitional Centers, 21 County Institute partners, 4 Private Facility partners, 7 Probation Detention Centers, and 7 Residential Substance Abuse Treatment(RSAT) /Integrated Treatment Facilities (ITF). The population overview consisted of discussing the 50,000 plus inmate offenders housed in state facilities consisting of 92% male and 8% female. Mr. Hogan stated that this does not include an additional 3,000 plus probation/parole offenders housed in Probation Detention Centers and RSATs/ITFs and the 75% convicted of crimes of violent/sexual nature (3 in 4), 31% validated participation in Security Threat Groups (1 in 3) and the Classification Levels: 14% Minimum Security; 62% Medium Security; and 24% Close Security which limits housing possibilities.

To continue, Mr. Hogan discussed the Mental Health Population, Mental Health Services/Treatment ranging from medication/therapeutic services up through intensive crisis stabilization, aging population, sentence length, sentencing trends; (Sentence vs. Served (Numerical Sentences Only), Life and Life without Parole (LWOP), and Life Sentences and Years Served.

Mr. Hogan concluded with discussing population history, staffing changes, and population projections.

This concluded the report of Mr. Hogan.

Next, Commissioner Oliver asked Mr. Alan Watson, Chief of Staff, to present a Project Update. Some of the highlights of the Major Project Overview presentation were discussing Project Management, Technology Projects (Officer Tablets, Aerodefense/Air Warden – Drone Detection, Managed Access, Electronic Health Records (EHR), Taser 10, OWL Unit, and Mail Screening. Mr. Watson continued by discussing Construction Projects at Smith Transitional Center, Washington State Prison; (New State Prison - estimated construction start Summer 2026), ModCorr Units, and the Medically Intensive Infirmary (MII Unit).

This concluded the report of Mr. Watson the Commissioner’s Report.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Under the Chairman's Report, Chairman Fleming advised the Board that the 2025 GPWA scholarship recipient was Jonathan Simpson. Mr. Simpson has followed a rigorous path, beginning with accelerated AP courses in the 8th grade and continuing with dual enrollment at Central Georgia Technical College starting in the 10th grade. He recently graduated from Central Georgia Technical College with honors, earning an associate's degree in general studies.

In addition to his dual-enrolled college achievements, he earned a Certificate of Completion from the Georgia College Early College Program and received his high school diploma from Baldwin High School. Mr. Simpson plans to attend Kennesaw State University, where he will major in Cybersecurity with the long-term goal of becoming a Cyber Information Analyst.

Next Chairman Fleming asked Mr. Duke Blackburn, Chairman of the Facilities Committee to give the Board their Committee recommendations of two County Deputy Warden's appointment.

Mr. Duke Blackburn stated that the Committee received the reports on Mr. Zachary Harbuck, Deputy Warden, Harris County Correctional Institution and Mr. Mark Pilgrim, Deputy Warden, Hall County Correctional Institution, and both candidates' appointments were approved by the Committee. Mr. Blackburn stated that he would like to approve both candidates in one motion.

Mr. Duke Blackburn made the motion to approve both appointments, which was seconded by Mr. J. C. "Spud" Bowen. The motion was voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

Chairman Fleming congratulated Mr. Zachary Harbuck and Mr. Mark Pilgrim on their appointments, and both candidates thanked the Board for the opportunity.

Last on the agenda, Chairman Fleming asked Ms. Jennifer Ammons, General Counsel of the Office of Legal Services, to present two property resolutions.

Ms. Ammons stated that she would like to present both resolutions together under one vote.

The first resolution was for the Georgia Bureau of Investigation Land Transfer. Ms. Ammons stated the State of Georgia owns and holds title to, and the Georgia Department of Corrections has custody of, approximately 5.203 acres in the City of Decatur, DeKalb County, Georgia, known as the Georgia Correctional Industries Administration Office and Warehouse ("the Property"), located at 2984 Clifton Springs Road, Decatur, Georgia 30034.

The Georgia Department of Corrections, as the custodial agency for the benefit of the Georgia Correctional Industries Administration, requests an additional portion of the Property totaling approximately 1.35 acres be declared surplus and transferred to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation for their expansion. The Georgia Department of Corrections, in December 2023, transferred approximately 1.017 acres of land to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to support the Bureau's expansion efforts. The proposed property boundary is more particularly described in the site design and parcel description submitted by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

The second resolution is for the Georgia Diagnostic & Classification Prison Barn Demo. The State of Georgia owns and holds title to, and the Georgia Department of Corrections has custody of, property in Butts County, Georgia, known as Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Prison ("the Property") located at 2978 Georgia 36, Jackson, Georgia 30233.

The property has a structure referred to as the "Compost Barn" (BLLIP ID# 5375, consisting of approximately 2,400 square feet) which is located on the campus of Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Prison and reflected on the document attached as "Attachment A." The Compost Barn has been evaluated and deemed to be in a state of severe disrepair. The Department has determined that the Compost Barn can be demolished without causing harm to the operation of other structures on the Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Prison campus.

Chairman Fleming asked for a motion to approve the property resolutions. Mr. Alton Russell made a motion to approve both property resolutions, which was seconded by Mr. John B. Edwards and Mr. Rosie Ross. The resolutions were voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

Chairman Fleming asked Ms. Jennifer Ammons, GDC General Counsel, to present the Administrative Rule for Final Approval. Ms. Jennifer Ammons briefly spoke about Senate Bill 185 and O.C.G.A. § 42-5-2(e)(1) which prohibits the expenditure of state funds for:

- (A) Sex reassignment surgeries or any other surgical procedures that are performed for the purpose of altering primary or secondary sexual characteristics.
- (B) Hormone replacement therapies; and
- (C) Cosmetic procedures or prosthetics intended to alter the appearance of primary or secondary sexual characteristics.

Ms. Ammons stated that the required regulatory action of O.C.G.A. § 42-5-2(e)(2) directs the Board of Corrections to adopt rules and regulations regarding limited instances in which the otherwise prohibited procedures and therapies are authorized. Additionally, Ms. Ammons discussed Limited Permissible Uses:

The only permissible uses are:

- (A) Treatments for medical conditions other than gender dysphoria and not for sex reassignment;
- (B) Treatments for intersex offenders;
- (C) Treatments for partial androgen insensitivity syndrome; and
- (D) Transitioning offenders with gender dysphoria off hormone replacement therapy

Ms. Ammons closed with discussing that the New Regulation:

- Defines “Intersex” and “Gender Dysphoria.”
- Requires assessments and treatment plans for offenders who are Intersex or who have Gender Dysphoria.
- Prohibits treatments not allowed by O.C.G.A. § 42-5-2(e)(1).
- Articulates the exceptions allowed in O.C.G.A. § 42-5-2(e)(2).

Ms. Ammons also stated there were two public responses to the comments period on the pending proposed rule change opposing enactments of the SB-185 regulation: one from the Southern Center of Human Rights and the other from Southern Poverty Law Center. The documentation were included in the Board packet.

Chairman Fleming then asked the Board for a motion of approval of the Administrative Rule for Final Approval. Mr. Thomas Culpepper made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Ms. Rose Williams. The Administrative Rule for Final Approval was voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Chairman Fleming reminded the Board that the next Board of Corrections meeting is on Thursday, October 2, 2025, at State Offices South at Tift College, in Forsyth, Georgia.

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

Ester Fleming Jr., Chairman

Chris Clark, Secretary

Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison