

BOARD OF CORRECTIONS

February 6, 2020

Forsyth, Georgia

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Duke Blackburn
Mr. Chris Clark
Mr. Mike Coggins
Mr. Wayne Dasher
Mr. Ester Fleming Jr.
Mr. Larry Haynie
Sheriff Stacy Jarrard
Mr. Donnie Pope
Ms. Neat Robinson
Mr. Tommy M. Rouse
Ms. Andrea Shelton
Mr. W. D. Strickland
Mr. Jerry Willis

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. John Mayes
Mr. Alton Russell-Chairman

CONFERENCE CALL:

Ms. Rose Williams
Mr. Luis "Lou" M. Solis Jr.
Ms. Tina Piper, Senior Assistant Attorney General

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:

Mr. Timothy C. Ward, Commissioner
Mr. Ricky Myrick, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Jay Sanders, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Randy Sauls, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Alan Watson, Assistant Commissioner
Ms. Jennifer Ammons, General Counsel
Mr. Dan Brown, Director of Office of Information Technology
Mr. Sharrod Campbell, Office of Professional Standards
Mr. Terry Edge, Director of OPD
Ms. Karl Fort, Deputy Warden of Security, Washington State Prison
Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Public Affairs
Ms. Gwendolyn Hogan, Executive Assistant
Mr. M. Allen Hughes, Chaplain
Ms. Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison
Mr. Clay Nix, Director of Office of Professional Standards
Ms. Amy Pataluna, Deputy Executive Director of GCI
Mr. Germaine Reese, Sergeant, Washington State Prison
Mr. Mike Riley, Office of Professional Standards
Mr. David Smith, Director of Engineering & Construction Services
Ms. Betsy Thomas, Director of Human Resources
Mr. Chris Tiller, Executive Director of GCI
Mr. Chris Walker, Director of Strategic, Planning & Management

VISITORS:

None

First, Vice Chairman Larry Haynie called to order the February meeting for the Board of Corrections ("the Board") at 10:00 a.m. and Board Liaison, Simone Juhmi, recorded the minutes.

Vice Chairman Larry Haynie then asked Chaplain M. Allen Hughes to deliver the invocation. Following such, Vice Chairman Haynie led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance and then recognized all guests and visitors, and the Board meeting, being duly convened, proceeded with business.

First, Vice Chairman Haynie ensured that Board members Lou Solis, Rose Williams and Board Attorney Tina Piper were connected via conference call.

Next, Vice Chairman Haynie welcomed Ms. Neat Robinson, Board Member, District 13, to the Board meeting.

Vice Chairman Haynie presented the February 2020 Agenda to the Board for approval. Mr. Wayne Dasher made a motion to approve the Agenda, which was seconded by Ms. Rose Williams. The Agenda was voted “approved” by the Board as presented.

Vice Chairman Haynie also presented the January Minutes to the Board for approval. Mr. Wayne Dasher made the motion to approve, which was seconded by Ms. Rose Williams and Mr. W. D. Strickland. 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. Alan Watson, Assistant Commissioner of Administration and Finance Division, to present a Budget Update.

Mr. Watson began by discussing the Annual Fiscal Year 2020 and the Fiscal Year 2021 Governor’s recommendations. Mr. Watson’s presentation included the Annual Fiscal Year 2020 statewide changes, and the Fiscal Year 2021 statewide changes in administration, health and state prisons. Added to that, Mr. Watson discussed the Annual Fiscal Year 2020 and the Fiscal Year 2021 Administration Program, Detention Centers Programs, Health Programs, Offender Management Program, Private Prisons, Programs, State Prisons Programs and Transitional Center Program. Last of all, Mr. Watson discussed the Fiscal Year 2021 bond recommendations. This concluded Mr. Watson’s report.

Thereafter, Commissioner Ward asked Ms. Jennifer Ammons, General Counsel, Office of Legal Services, to give a brief legislation update. Ms. Ammons began by stating that the legislative session has begun and that she would discuss any bills that carried over from 2019 that will have a direct impact on the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC).

Some of the bills mentioned were:

House Bill 202: Which would require the GDC to publish quarterly reports showing aggregate data on offenders who are subject to immigration detainers.

House Bill 403: Would prohibit corporations from operating private prisons in Georgia.

House Bill 440: Would change the jurisdiction of juvenile court from age 16 and under to age 17 and under. Offenders who are 17 years old would go into DJJ’s custody, not the GDC’s custody, unless convicted of a designated felony.

House Bill 702: Would repeal the death penalty and commute all existing death sentences to life without parole.

House Bill 714: Would substantially limit the GDC’s authority to define the consequences for disciplinary infractions, including restrictive housing.

New Bills:

Senate Bill 301: Seeks to change the verbiage about detainers for offenders who have pending charges.

Senate Bill 341: Seeks to allow retired correctional officers and other law enforcement officers to be “re-activated” when needed in times of emergency.

(GDC'S VIDEO COURT BILL)/ Senate Bill 341: Seeks to codify the provisions of the Uniform Rules of Superior Court relating to offenders appearing for court electronically. Ms. Ammons expressed that she would continue to monitor all the bills. This concluded Ms. Ammons's report.

Next, Commissioner Ward asked Mr. Ahmed Holt, Assistant Commissioner of the Facilities Division, to present the "Beyond the Call" employee recognition award. Mr. Holt stated that he would be presenting the award to Ms. Germaine Reese, Sergeant, Washington State Prison.

Mr. Holt stated that it is an honor to extend this recognition to Sgt. Reese as she illustrates her dedication each day by putting service before self. She is available when needed and volunteers her time to ensure security measures are implemented throughout the facility. Sgt. Reese utilizes consistency with all staff and visitors and ensures everyone is adhering to the policies and procedures slated for entrance into a correctional facility within the Georgia Department of Corrections.

Mr. Holt went on to say that recently, Sgt. Reese observed a visitor acting suspiciously and immediately took action. Thanks to Sgt. Reese's quick action and attention to detail, the following contraband was prevented from entering Washington State Prison: 722 grams of marijuana, 1016 grams of tobacco, 30 grams of crushed pills, loose rolling papers and two packs of cigarillos.

Mr. Holt stated that Sgt. Reese is an individual that exhibits enthusiasm and perseverance to help ensure that employees and offenders feel safe by controlling contraband introduction.

A photo was taken of the plaque presentation.

Afterwards, Commissioner Ward asked Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Public Affairs, to introduce and present a short video on the Judicial Center Furniture.

This concluded the Commissioner's Report.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Vice Chairman Larry Haynie began the "Chairman's Report" by asking for an approval of the Revised 2020 Board Calendar.

Mr. Wayne Dasher made a motion to approve the Agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Ester Fleming Jr. The Revised 2020 Board Calendar was voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

Next, Vice Chairman Haynie asked the Board members to contribute to the 2020 Georgia Prison Wardens Association Scholarship Fund. In addition, he advised the Board that Chairman Russell updated the Committee Assignments and Mr. Wayne Dasher gave an update about the April board meeting in Glennville.

Vice Chairman Haynie continued by moving into Old or New Business by asking Ms. Jennifer Ammons, General Counsel, to present a property resolution. The resolution was for a Montgomery State Prison Altamaha EMC Utility Easement Request.

Ms. Ammons briefly stated that Altamaha Electric Membership Corporation, an electric utility, needs a 20 foot wide temporary construction easement, with a 10 foot wide permanent utility easement, in order to provide electric service to the new egg laying facility under construction at Montgomery State Prison and the Georgia Department of Corrections has determined that it can accommodate the easement without causing harm to the operations of the Montgomery State Prison.

Vice Chairman Haynie asked for a motion to approve the property resolution. Mr. Wayne Dasher made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Jerry Willis. The resolution was voted "approved" by the Board as presented.

To close the Vice Chairman Haynie reminded the members the next Board of Corrections meeting is on March 5th in Forsyth, Georgia.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Alton Russell, Chairman

Duke Blackburn, Secretary

Simone Juhmi, Board Liaison