

**BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY**  
December 11, 2025  
Georgia Department of Public Safety  
Atlanta, Georgia

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Willie Bolton  
Mr. Stacey Cotton  
Mr. Roy H. Fickling  
Mr. Richard Hyde  
Chief Leonard "Dee" Meadows  
Mr. Billy New  
Commissioner Michael Nail  
Mr. Charles D. Sikes  
Ms. Susan K. Treadaway  
Chief Craig Tully  
Mr. Ellison G. Wood

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Sheriff E. Neal Jump  
Sheriff Jimmy McDuffie  
Chief Janet L. Moon  
Commissioner Tyrone Oliver

**OTHERS:**

Ms. Tina Piper, Attorney General's Office  
Mrs. Jennifer Pendarvis, Board Liaison  
Commissioner Billy Hitchens, Department of Public Safety  
Lt. Colonel Kendrick Lowe, Department of Public Safety  
Lt. Colonel Robert Balkcom, Department of Public Safety  
Major Walter Christian, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
Major Chris Rodewolt, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
Major David Bryant, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
Major Gary Langford, Department of Public Safety/Capitol Police  
Major Andrew Montgomery, Department of Public Safety/CVE  
Captain J.K. Crews, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
Captain Chad Gray, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
Lt. Richard Sikes, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
SFC Billy Schwab, Georgia Department of Public Safety  
Mrs. Lorri Smith, Georgia Department of Public Safety  
Ms. Clare McGuire, Georgia Department of Public Safety  
Mr. Carl Hutchinson, Georgia Department of Public Safety  
Director Chris Hosey, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Ms. Rhonda Westbrook Georgia Bureau of Investigation/GCIC  
Ms. Melissa Casto Mefferd, Georgia Bureau of Investigation/GCIC  
Mr. Philip Curtis, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Ms. Laura MdDonald, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Director Chris Wigginton, Georgia Public Safety Training Center

Vice-Chairman Ellis Wood called the December 11, 2025 Board of Public Safety meeting to order.

Major David Bryant gave the Invocation and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice-Chairman Wood called for approval of the October 7, 2025 BPS minutes. Chief Tully made the motion to approve the October 7, 2025 minutes. This was seconded by Mr. Willie Bolton and voted approved by the Board members.

### **DIRECTOR REPORTS**

Commissioner Billy Hitchens, Georgia Department of Public Safety, reported the 120<sup>th</sup> Trooper School is in field training with 30 Cadets remaining and will graduate on March 6, 2026; and the 14<sup>th</sup> CVO School began with 9 Cadets and all 9 will graduate on December 12, 2025.

Commissioner Hitchens shared during November was the 102-hour Thanksgiving holiday travel period that began on Wednesday and ended on Sunday, noting AAA projected 2.3 million Georgia residents would travel at least 50 miles from home during the holiday period, which was a 1.4% increase over last year. Commissioner Hitchens stated traffic was extremely heavy and during the travel period, DPS stopped 22,497 vehicles; issued 11,275 citations; 17,305 warnings; investigated 501 crashes; and took 423 impaired drivers off the roadway. Commissioner Hitchens also noted there were 11 traffic fatalities across the state, which is 6 less than last year and 12 less than 2023. Commissioner Hitchens shared activity is up in every category while crashes, serious injuries, and fatalities are all down, adding if we continue on this path, we will see a 15% reduction in traffic fatalities for the year.

Commissioner Hitchens shared an update on an event that happened with a female Trooper out of Post 15-Perry, stating she was patrolling in Houston County and stopped a vehicle for no headlights and after the initial stop she had the driver exit since she thought he was DUI. During the investigation, the violator ran toward his vehicle and she reacted and started fighting with the violator and he went into his vehicle and took off, dragging her in the vehicle for approximately half a mile to three quarters a mile. Commissioner Hitchens reported in her mind, she thought she can jump out and get run over or I can stay here and fight, so she stayed to fight and eventually was able to grab the shifter and put the vehicle in park, which made the car crash into a pole. Commissioner Hitchens noted she was injured from the crash but what impressed him was the whole time she was fighting the guy, she was on the radio telling everyone where she was going, and they were able to locate her. The violator ran on foot and was picked up yesterday in Tennessee. The GBI will lead the investigation for aggravated assault on a Trooper.

Reporting on stats, Commissioner Hitchens shared Aviation has conducted 185 flights this period with 65 searches and 27 subjects being located; SWAT has had 82 calls for service so far this year and they have apprehended 5 murder suspects and have had 7 barricaded gunman calls; and the Dive team has had 20 calls for service. Commissioner Hitchens added there are 4 new SWAT team members awaiting training and 7 new Dive team members awaiting training.

Concerning Fleet and Facilities, Commissioner Hitchens reported all 9 Communications Centers have been upgraded to the Telex dispatch software with new computers and monitors, and over the next two months, the Radio Division will begin tying in the old VHF repeaters into that network, and once that is done the old network will be terminated and DPS should see a monthly saving of about \$20,000. Commissioner Hitchens added this must be completed by June due to AT&T terminating all copper line circuits.

Commissioner Hitchens shared the mobile spike system should be arriving next month, and installation/training will begin.

Commissioner Hitchens stated Straton has delivered over 400 straw “big hats”, and leather boots have been purchased for sworn personnel, and they will have a choice of the patrol shoe or boot.

Commissioner Hitchens reported the bid for Post 21-Sylvania was awarded and a groundbreaking ceremony will be planned soon; and Post 32-Athens has been awarded and a date of September 8, 2026 has been given for completion.

Director Chris Wigginton, Georgia Public Safety Training Center, reported 13 individuals were recently recognized at the Governor’s Public Safety Awards Ceremony who have contributed to the profession or went above and beyond the call of duty.

Director Wigginton shared over the past two weeks there have been multiple academies graduate and while it is not a ghost town at the Center, the population has been a little bit less than it has been. Director Wigginton stated two Fridays ago, over 600 recruits across the state graduated from the basic mandate program, adding that was pretty much the end of the first year of the expanded basic mandate program and there have been many successes as well as many hurdles and failures, but what has been found is the graduating class this past year is better equipped and more prepared to handle situations they are going to encounter in the state of Georgia.

Regarding the Fire Academy, Director Wigginton reported the field delivery continues to grow, and those requests are getting to the point where requests cannot be accommodated. Director Wigginton stated we are going to ask for additional staff and funding to continue to grow the program.

Chief Craig Tully thanked Director Wigginton on the field delivery for fire services.

Director Chris Hosey, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, reported the Drug Enforcement Office in Cleveland executed search warrants in the Woodstock, Sandy Springs, and Atlanta areas and seized more than 500 pounds of marijuana packed for distribution. This was seized from associates of the CJNG cartel, and there were several arrests.

Director Hosey shared on October 31<sup>st</sup> Agents were in Brantley County interviewing a subject on a child molestation investigation and during the interview, the subject turned to run and when he did, he fired rounds at the Agents, luckily none were hit. The subject was barricaded for a while, and he was

eventually located in a wooded area behind the residence with what is believed to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Director Hosey advised the HEAT Unit (Human Exploitation and Trafficking) in November held "Operation Raydiant Shadows" which resulted in 12 individuals ages 17 to 58 being arrested and charged with pandering. This took place with the assistance with the Dougherty County Special Investigations Unit, Albany Police Department, Homeland Security Investigations, and the Georgia State Patrol.

Director Hosey reported the Office of Special Investigations Cold Case Unit (CCU) are reviewing or reinvestigating 50 cold cases at this time, noting 16 are Coleman-Baker Act requests from designated family members and the remaining are GBI initiated throughout the state. Additionally, Director Hosey noted the CCU has opened 13 GBI cold cases involving unidentified remains in hopes of identifying the victims using Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy and 4 of the unidentified remains cases have been identified.

Director Hosey advised on November 20<sup>th</sup>, the West Metro Drug Enforcement Office, along with the Appalachian Regional Drug Enforcement Office received intelligence on a large quantity of illicit narcotics located at a house in Atlanta, Georgia. Director Hosey shared the result of the search warrant resulted in the seizure of 419 kilograms of methamphetamine, and 3 firearms, being housed in a refrigerated truck with blackberries in it. Also, in conjunction with this search warrant seizure, Director Hosey noted Hall County conducted a search just prior to that, same set up, packaged the same way, and they had about 300 kilos seized in that operation.

Director Hosey reported from January 1<sup>st</sup> to November 30<sup>th</sup>, GBI has investigated 74 officer involved shootings.

Regarding personnel, Director Hosey advised the Department of Forensic Sciences currently has 41 vacancies; 22 of those are Scientists and 4 are Medical Examiners. Of the 22 Scientists, Director Hosey stated they are in various fields of DOFS and they are in the process of being hired.

Director Hosey shared the Crime Lab altered their hiring process this past year which is very similar to how the Investigative Division does it: they send out requests for applications, fill the applications, set up a weekend to bring everyone in to be interviewed, then they create a hiring pool from that, and then they begin to locate qualified candidates. Director Hosey advised they will do that process again at the first of the year so we can keep a current pool of qualified applicants to fill vacancies.

In the Investigative Division, Director Hosey noted there are currently 26 open positions; 12 are Special Agent positions and 11 of those have conditional offers with a hire date of January 1<sup>st</sup>.

For the month of October, Director Hosey shared the Investigative Division had 675 investigations conducted; 23% of those were Crimes Against Person, which is down 30% from the previous report; Drug Investigations made up 15%; and Other Investigations consisted of 56%.

Director Hosey reported the Georgia Information Sharing and Analysis Center (GISAC) processed 1,324 requests for information in October.

Concerning the Crime Lab backlog, Director Hosey shared the month of October was down about 1%. Director Hosey provided an update on the preliminary reporting, noting the process started around April with the first phase of testing, and Headquarters has worked over 1,800 preliminary services to date and of those counties worked (Cherokee and Douglas) the backlogs were eliminated and they are now in the maintenance stage and anything new is worked in the preliminary status; the West Georgia Judicial Circuit consisting of Carroll and Burke Counties are in process; and Morgan and Greene Counties in the Ocmulgee Circuit will be the next counties brought in. The Augusta Lab (Northeast) has conducted 442 preliminary tests for Hall and Dawson Counties with about 200 left to go and they will have their backlog completed; the Central Lab in Macon is at around 324, with about 2% being sent back for full testing; the Coastal Lab started on November 17<sup>th</sup> and they are currently working the Atlanta Judicial Circuit; and the Columbus Lab (Western) started on December 1<sup>st</sup> with agreements with the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit and Southwestern Judicial Circuit; and Moultrie is the last one to get started and will start soon.

Director Hosey reported there are currently 20 Scientists in training in their respective disciplines, and in the MEs office, the autopsy numbers for October is down a little to 328. The ME's office received 14 applications for the 27-28 Fellowship Program which continues to be successful.

Director Hosey advised GCIC had 67,974,074 CJIS transactions for the month of October. Director Hosey applauded the GCIC staff, stating they continue to step up when there are issues with the systems, and they address it quickly to get everyone back online.

Regarding Facilities, Director Hosey shared the Headquarters Medical Examiner's office construction preparation has begun; the new Central Medical Examiner's Building in Macon is currently in the design phase; the new Region 11 Investigative Office in Oconee County is in the design and development phase; and next week there is a meeting with Heard County Commissioners to possibly accept 6 acres being donated to house regional offices in Heard County.

Ms. Susan Treadaway asked what the cause of the GCIC system outages is and what is the average length of the outages. Director Hosey responded the main reason for the outages is technology, one system trying to communicate with another when the systems are different and the length of outages varies.

### **DONATIONS**

Mrs. Lorri Smith, Georgia Department of Public Safety, requested approval of the following donations:

Nine (9) Surefire Stiletto Pro 2 Flashlights	\$2,088.00	City of Dawsonville
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Two (2) Evolution 3 Mobile Rapid ID FBI FAP-30 Fingerprint Scanners	\$6,000.00	City of Dahlonega
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Two (2) Wooden Picnic Tables	\$258.00	The Home Depot – Monroe
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The motion to accept these items was made by Mr. Willie Bolton, which was seconded by Mr. Roy Fickling and voted approved by the Board members.

Director Chris Wigginton, Georgia Public Safety Training Center, requested approval of the following donations:

One (1) 2009 Chevrolet Tahoe	\$981.00	Paulding County Sheriff's Office
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Nine (9) Used Police Interceptor Tires	\$100.00	Hanover County (VA) Sheriff's Office
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One (1) 2020 Ford Police Interceptor	\$12,679.00	Hanover County (VA) Sheriff's Office
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One (1) 2019 Ford Police Interceptor	\$11,507.00	Hanover County (VA) Sheriff's Office
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One (1) 2019 Ford Police Interceptor	\$11,507.00	Hanover County (VA) Sheriff's Office
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One (1) 2017 Ford Police Interceptor	\$8,198.00	Hanover County (VA) Sheriff's Office
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Furniture and Household Furnishings	\$1,000.00	Circle of Care
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Furniture and Furnishings	\$1,500.00	Circle of Care
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Furniture and Furnishings	\$1,500.00	Cash Liquidators
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The motion to accept these items was made by Mr. Roy Fickling, which was seconded by Mr. Stacey Cotton and approved by the Board members.

Director Chris Hosey, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, requested approval of the following donations:

Eight (8) Epic Specialist Ballistic Helmets with Communications Headset	\$17,420.00	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
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One (1) License for Lecia Software for Scene Reconstruction	\$9,429.00	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) Anker Portable Power Stations	\$4,678.00	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) Nomix Gripmaster Vehicle Desks	\$2,459.70	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) Critical Event Medic Kits	\$2,990.32	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) Rapid Aid Trauma Sleeve / Belt First Aid Kits	\$1,010.00	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) Lifeline Rescue Knives/Tools	\$2,250.00	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) 20' Halligan Rescue Tools	\$1,662.60	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) Streamlight Wedge XT EDC Flashlights	\$767.50	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Four (4) Streamlight Super Bright LED Scene Lights	\$3,089.60	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) Streamlight Vulcan 180 Flashlights	\$2,041.00	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) Hook and Rescue Knives	\$700.00	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Twenty (20) ASP Ultra Hinged Handcuffs	\$1,584.00	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) Fold-able Rescue Shears	\$1,000.00	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) Bolle Safety Shooting Glasses	\$1,000.00	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office

Ten (10) Axil Xcor Earpro Hearing Protection	\$1,500.00	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Eight (8) Bravo Protective Search Gloves	\$863.92	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office
Ten (10) Low Profile Digital Audio Recorders	\$1,125.90	Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office

The motion to accept these items was made by Mr. Stacey Cotton, which was seconded by Mr. Willie Bolton and approved by the Board members.

Director Chris Hosey, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, also requested approval of the following donation:

2006 Honda Accord EX	\$3,000.00	LaGrange Police Department
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The motion to accept this item was made by Mr. Charles Sikes, which was seconded by Chief Craig Tully and approved by the Board members.

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

Major Andrew Montgomery, Georgia Department of Public Safety Commercial Vehicle Enforcement, requested preliminary approval of DPS Household Goods Maximum Rate Tariff No. 7 for Intrastate Rates and Charges with the final adoption on January 8, 2026, after a public hearing on December 29, 2025.

Chief Dee Meadows made the motion to accept the preliminary approval of Household Goods Maximum Rate Tariff No. 7 increase with the final adoption of January 8, 2026, after a public hearing on December 29, 2025. This motion was seconded by Mr. Roy Fickling and voted approved by the Board members.

Major Andrew Montgomery, Georgia Department of Public Safety Commercial Vehicle Enforcement, requested approval of DPS Maximum Rate Tariff No. 1 for the non-consensual immobilization of vehicles on private property.

Mr. Roy Fickling made the motion to accept the approval of DPS Maximum Rate Tariff No. 1. This motion was seconded by Mr. Willie Bolton and voted approved by the Board members.

Ms. Clare McGuire, Georgia Department of Public Safety, requested approval of the issuance of an Administrative Order extending the temporary hours of service variance adopted by the Georgia Department of Public Safety through section 395.341 of Chapter 1 of the Georgia Department of Public Safety's Transportation Rulebook for a period expiring on December 31, 2026.

Chief Dee Meadows made the motion to approve the issuance of an Administrative Order extending the temporary hours of service variance. This motion was seconded by Mr. Roy Fickling and voted approved by the Board members.

Ms. Clare McGuire, Georgia Department of Public Safety, requested approval of a Resolution to authorize the Commissioner of Public Safety to enter into negotiations, contracts, and agreements with Upson County, Georgia, as necessary to effect the transfer by reversionary warranty deed of Georgia State Patrol Post 26-Thomaston from Upson County to the State of Georgia.

The motion to accept this Resolution was made by Chief Craig Tully, which was seconded by Mr. Willie Bolton and voted approved by the Board members.

Ms. Rhonda Westbrook, Georgia Bureau of Investigation GCIC, requested final adoption of the proposed GCIC Council Rules and Regulations changes. Ms. Westbrook reported following the public hearing on August 25, 2025 there were no changes made to the proposed rules.

Mr. Charles Sikes made the motion to accept the final adoption of the GCIC Council Rules and Regulations changes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Roy Fickling and voted approved by the Board members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Craig Tully  
Secretary