

BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY

July 23, 2020

Virtual and Call-in Meeting

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chief Bruce Carlisle
Mr. Kacy K. Cronan
Mr. Nicholas D. Ellis
Mr. George Hartwig
Mr. Richard Hyde
Commissioner Michael Nail
Mr. Rossie Ross
Mr. Charles D. Sikes
Sheriff Joey Terrell
Chief Craig Tully
Commissioner Timothy C. Ward
Mr. Ellison G. Wood

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Chief Stacey Cotton
Sheriff Dane Kirby

OTHERS:

Ms. Tina Piper, Attorney General's Office
Ms. Cheryl Buie, Board Liaison
Commissioner Gary Vowell, Department of Public Safety
Lt. Colonel Christopher C. Wright, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Safety
Major Kevin Rexroat, Department of Public Safety/GSP
Major Mark Perry, Department of Public Safety/GSP
Major Billy Hitchens, Department of Public Safety/GSP
Major Mark Hambert, Department of Public Safety/GSP
Major Jeremy Vickery, Department of Public Safety/MCCD
Major Billy Boulware, Department of Public Safety/MCCD
Captain Wayne Mobley, Department of Public Safety/MCCD
Captain Chad Riner, Department of Public Safety/GSP
Captain Josh Lamb, Department of Public Safety/GSP
Captain Al Whitworth, Department of Public Safety/GSP
Miss Kaycee Larson, Department of Public Safety
Mr. John Melvin, Assistant Director, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Director Chris Wigginton, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Mrs. Cindy Jones, Georgia Public Safety Training Center

Vice-Chairman Ellis Wood called the July 23rd, 2020 Board of Public Safety meeting to order.

Mr. John Melvin gave the Invocation and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice-Chairman Wood called for approval of the June 23, 2020 BPS minutes. Mr. Charles Sikes made the motion to approve the June 23, 2020 BPS minutes. This was seconded by Sheriff Joey Terrell and voted approved by the Board members.

DIRECTOR REPORTS

Commissioner Gary Vowell, Department of Public Safety shared DPS has had 19 employees to test positive for Covid-19 and eight have returned to work, but now there are 13 employees who are still in self quarantine. Commissioner Vowell advised the governor's Executive Order has been extended and DPS continues to answer calls from the public regarding violations of the Executive Order.

Commissioner Vowell noted the Communications Centers across the state receive calls from the public notifying them of those violating the Executive Order and then a trooper or officer is dispatched to the scene to determine if they are in violation or not and to date, DPS has answered a little over 2,700 calls regarding violations of the governor's Executive Order. Commissioner Vowell stated the protests seemed to have calm down in the last couple of weeks and since the last meeting, on July 5th, there was a group of 60-80 violent criminals who showed up at DPS HQ with bags of rocks, fireworks, Molotov cocktails and completely destroyed all of the glass across the front of DPS HQ, destroyed one patrol car, graffitied the building, threw fireworks into the building and threw a Molotov cocktail into one of the offices in the Communications Center. Commissioner Vowell advised communications officers were working that night and had two cadets at the gate working security. Commissioner Vowell commended the Communication Officers and the Cadets for the job they did in securing themselves and getting themselves out of the building and for the cadets contacting the troopers that were called to DPS HQ to lend assistance. Commissioner Vowell noted all of this took place in about 10-12 minutes and by the time law enforcement arrived they had done their damage and were gone.

Commissioner Vowell stated Director Reynolds and the GISAC people advised there was no knowledge of the protest of these people and no intel they were headed to DPS HQ on July 5th.

Commissioner Vowell stated the maintenance crews have boarded up the front of the building and have removed all of the graffiti and are waiting on the insurance company adjuster for a total amount of damage, but thinks the damage may be in the neighborhood of \$200,000-\$250,000.00, just for the glass. Commissioner Vowell added a fence has been installed in front of the building, a 10 ft. chain link fence with three stands of barbwire on top and if this should happen again, it will not keep them out, but will slow them up enough to get manpower to HQ to take care of the situation.

Commissioner Vowell shared Troop C Communications has been moved out the HQ building to Building 5, a more secure area for the communications officers and was in the plans down the road to remodel that building and put Troop C Communications at this location and just went ahead and moved them. Commissioner Vowell declared this event forced DPS HQ to bring in more troopers from across the state and MCCD officers and a small contingent of National Guard to help protect DPS HQ, the Capitol and the Governor's Mansion. Commissioner Vowell declared it seems the protests and the destructive criminals have calmed down to a degree, but never know when it will start back up. Commissioner Vowell stated GSP has run several concentrated patrols in Atlanta as Atlanta PD had asked for assistance a couple of weeks ago, helping with the street racers and motorcycles that run rampant in the streets and four-wheelers and dirt bikes on the interstates. Commissioner Vowell

shared the first weekend, there were many arrests made, recovered stolen weapons and vehicles. Regarding the staffing level, Commissioner Vowell advised the Department is currently at 816 troopers and 247 MCCD officers and since June, eight troopers and one MCCD has retired and one MCCD officer resigned. Commissioner Vowell stated there are 13 troopers in the 109th trooper school who will start the FTO program on August 9th and thanks to the budget adjustment, the 110th Trooper School will start on January 3rd, 2021 and hopeful to start the class with 80-100 cadets if all goes well.

After a lot of discussion and a lot of work at the Capitol with the legislators, Commissioner Vowell advised DPS is looking at a 4.6 budget cut for DPS and can be managed with a plan in place to make up the 4.6 and believes will meet this goal or exceed it. Commissioner Vowell thanked the Board members for their work on the budget.

Commissioner Vowell stated the GSP trooper car won first place this year which is sponsored by American Association of State Troopers and the patrol car will be on the first page in the calendar.

Mr. John Melvin, Assistant Director, Georgia Bureau of Investigation shared the GBI budget came in at about a 5% cut and are very thankful for the governor and the legislators for this.

Mr. Melvin advised Covid-19 is affecting the GBI and are thankful to the National Guard as they have been out to GBI Headquarters, having over 400 employees doing mobile testing. Mr. Melvin shared the Medical Examiner's office has been affected dramatically and those across the state may be hearing from their coroners as the medical examiners are not moving the bodies out as fast as they are coming in and are having to ask coroners to hold bodies before bringing to the GBI, as well as use of mobile units to store bodies. Mr. Melvin stated the medical examiners' office had potential Covid-19 exposure, and the ability to work the cases has been reduced.

Regarding the DPS HQ investigation, Mr. Melvin stated there have been two arrests and the investigation is ongoing and a couple of the people stayed behind and hid out in the woods after the crowd attacked and left, to see what the response would be and were able to apprehend them and tie them to the scene and still actively working the case.

Mr. Melvin advised there have been a couple of big hits statewide by the Regional Drug Enforcement Offices, in the Pickens County area, along with the Cherokee County Sheriff's Department, Pickens County Sheriff Department, Jasper law enforcement officers, made a bust about three weeks ago that took 170 kilos of methamphetamine off the street and thankful for the inter-agency cooperation.

Mr. Melvin stated last week, the Appalachian RDEO was able to shut down one of the pipe lines from Mexico that went into the Hall-Habersham County area and were able to take several kilos off the street and over 61 defendants in this case. Mr. Melvin declared this was major and amazing inter agency cooperation.

During all the Covid-19 numbers and the number of employees at the GBI that have been on the decline, Mr. Melvin shared when looking at the crime lab numbers they are still making a dent into the

backlog and are heading in the right direction. Mr. Melvin noted one of Director Reynolds' highest priorities is to significantly impact the backlog of the crime labs in order to get the numbers and the tests out to law enforcement as quickly as possible and hope to step up the pace when more employees are hired.

Mr. Melvin shared with the Metro Atlanta area school systems going to on line learning, this has created some child care issues for the parents of primary school children and are taking steps to work around this to the best that can be done, while at the same time fulfilling the mission of the GBI and not let any of the services drop off at all.

Director Chris Wigginton, Georgia Public Safety Training Center advised there is still a Covid-19 containment area in the back of the facility with eighteen residences, three of those contain families with small children. Director Wigginton shared when the families came in, very minimal supplies were sent with them and staff members went out on their own and purchased diapers, toys, movies and items for the small children to make the families as comfortable as possible during the isolation time. Director Wigginton advised GPSTC is still working with DPH and the National Guard to keep the families and individuals contained and safe.

Since opening the training center back up, Director Wigginton advised there have been ten complaints of Covid-19 and four staff members have tested positive and four are currently in isolation and will return to work sometime next week. Director Wigginton added three are symptomatic and one was asymptomatic, who was in direct contact with others but did test positive.

Director Wigginton advised the numbers in training continue to stay consistent and some of the groups are asking for police reform and training reform in law enforcement across the nation, as we look at some of the requests and demands, Director Wigginton stated Georgia exceeds a lot of the requests that are being made throughout the nation. Director Wigginton added when talking about de-escalation training, unbiased policing, community policing, the use of force training, there are all kind of topics that they are demanding, have been done in Georgia and is mandatory training or offering this training throughout the state and continue to look at the course curriculum and catalog and expand these training topics for officers throughout the state.

Vice-Chairman Wood advised Mr. Richard Hyde has asked to recuse himself from any votes relating to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

DONATIONS

Major Mark Perry, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Public Safety requested approval of the following donations:

One DragonEye Speed LIDAR	\$	2,050.00	Wilkes Co. Bd. of Commissioners
Three Months of Pest Control Services	\$	135.00	Crisp Exterminating

The motion to accept these donations was made by Sheriff Joey Terrell, which was seconded by Mr. Kacy Kronan, and voted approved by the Board members.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Major Mark Perry, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Public Safety requested issuance of \$15,305,000.00 in aggregate principal amount of State of Georgia General Obligation Bonds.

Sheriff Joey Terrell made the motion to adopt the Bond Resolution for the Department of Public Safety, which was seconded by Mr. Charles Sikes, and voted approved by the BPS members.

Mr. John Melvin, Assistant Director, Georgia Bureau of Investigation requested issuance of \$9,900,000.00 in aggregate principal amount of State of Georgia General Obligation Bonds.

Chief Bruce Carlisle made the motion to adopt the Bond Resolution for the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, which was seconded by Sheriff Joey Terrell, and voted approved by the BPS members.

Mrs. Cindy Jones, Comptroller, Georgia Public Safety Training Center requested issuance of \$1,805,000.00 in aggregate principal amount of State of Georgia General Obligation Bonds.

Sheriff Joey Terrell made the motion to adopt the Bond Resolution for the Georgia Public Safety Training Center, which was seconded by Chief Craig Tully, and voted approved by the BPS members.

Chief Craig Tully made a motion to adjourn the Board of Public Safety meeting and go into the Georgia Crime Information Center Council, which was seconded by Mr. Charles Sikes and voted approved by the Board members.

GEORGIA CRIME INFORMATION CENTER COUNCIL

GBI Assistant Director John Melvin presented the FY2020 CJIS Security Policy Violations report for the Georgia Crime Information Center which involves unauthorized access and dissemination of criminal justice information. Mr. Melvin noted there were 22 violations for 21 agencies reported during FY2020. Mr. Melvin presented the request for approval of actions taken to resolve security policy violations for FY2020 to the BPS members for their approval.

Chief Craig Tully made the motion to accept the GCIC's recommendations for the FY2020 CJIS Security Policy Violations, which was seconded by Sheriff Joey Terrell and voted approved by the Board members.

Chief Craig Tully made a motion to adjourn the GCIC Council and return to the Board of Public Safety meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Charles Sikes and voted approved by the Board members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Craig Tully
Secretary