

## **BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

October 7, 2025  
Georgia National  
Fairgrounds & Agricenter  
Perry, Georgia

### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Willie Bolton  
Mr. Stacey Cotton  
Mr. Roy H. Fickling  
Mr. Richard Hyde  
Sheriff E. Neal Jump  
Chief Janet L. Moon  
Ms. Susan K. Treadaway  
Chief Craig Tully  
Mr. Ellison G. Wood

### **BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Sheriff Jimmy McDuffie  
Chief Leonard "Dee" Meadows  
Commissioner Michael Nail  
Mr. Billy New  
Commissioner Tyrone Oliver  
Mr. Charles D. Sikes

### **OTHERS:**

Ms. Tina Piper, Attorney General's Office  
Ms. Sara Abernathy, Georgia Department of Public Safety/CVE  
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 Doug Wilson, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
Major Gary Langford, Department of Public Safety/Capitol Police  
Captain Jonathon Huff, Department of Public Safety/CVE  
Lt. Hamilton Halford, Department of Public Safety/Aviation  
SFC Billy Schwab, Georgia Department of Public Safety  
Mrs. Lorri Smith, Georgia Department of Public Safety  
Ms. Clare McGuire, Georgia Department of Public Safety  
Ms. Courtney Lund, Georgia Department of Public Safety  
Director Chris Wigginton, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Assistant Director Cheryl Greathouse, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Ms. Cindy Jones, Bureau Director, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Ike McConnell, Bureau Director, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Ara Baronian, Section Director, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Commissioner Tyler Harper, Georgia Department of Agriculture  
Director Stephen Shimp, Georgia National Fairgrounds  
Sheriff Matt Moulton, Houston County Sheriff's Office  
Sheriff Wayne Wiley, Pulaski County Sheriff's Office  
Sheriff Wiley Griffin, Decatur County Sheriff's Office  
Ms. Kay Ragan  
Mrs. Angie Hitchens

Vice-Chairman Ellis Wood called the October 7, 2025 Board of Public Safety meeting to order.

Chief Craig Tully gave the Invocation and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice-Chairman Wood introduced special guests in the room: Director Stephen Shimp, Georgia National Fairgrounds; Houston County Sheriff Matt Moulton; and Lt. Hamilton Halford, GSP Aviation. Lt. Halford introduced his guests: Decatur County Sheriff Wiley Griffin; Pulaski County Sheriff Wayne Wiley; Commissioner Tyler Harper, Department of Agriculture; and Ms. Courtney Lund, DPS PIO. Sheriff Griffin introduced his guest: Ms. Kay Ragan.

Vice-Chairman Wood called for approval of the September 11, 2025 BPS minutes. Mr. Roy Fickling made the motion to approve the September 11, 2025 minutes. This was seconded by Sheriff Neal Jump and voted approved by the Board members.

### **DIRECTOR REPORTS**

Commissioner Billy Hitchens, Georgia Department of Public Safety, expressed gratitude on behalf of the Georgia Department of Public Safety to the Georgia National Fairgrounds for hosting the meeting, and thanked Troop H Secretary Tonisha Shimp for the great work she does, and thanked Lt. Halford, SFC Schwab, and Ms. Abernathy for setting up the meeting.

Commissioner Hitchens reported the 120<sup>th</sup> Trooper School is in its 13<sup>th</sup> week with 31 Cadets remaining and will graduate on March 6, 2026; and the 14<sup>th</sup> CVO School began with 9 Cadets and all 9 are still in school and they will graduate on December 12, 2025.

Commissioner Hitchens announced on Thursday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, CVE Lieutenant Stephen Burnham was voted the Region 2 Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance Vice President, being selected as VP out of 8 states in the Alliance and this speaks very highly of the CVE Division of our Department.

Commissioner Hitchens advised he and GEMA Director Joshua Lamb recently met with the City of Atlanta about the FIFA World Cup matches. Commissioner Hitchens noted information is slow coming from FIFA and every time information is received, we meet to get numbers and discuss what we are going to do. Commissioner Hitchens added he feels like the Department is in a good spot.

Commissioner Hitchens shared on September 20<sup>th</sup>, Post 15-Perry hosted a Fall Festival that was free to the community with interactive games, simulators, and a dunk tank. Commissioner Hitchens stated it was a lot of fun with a family friendly atmosphere that brought in other agencies and helped strengthen relationships in the community.

Commissioner Hitchens reported on September 25<sup>th</sup>, Trooper Kendrick made a traffic stop on a vehicle in Cobb County for window tint and the driver pulled over then fled. Units were able to block in the violator, and when they went to arrest him, he shot himself in the head. Commissioner Hitchens advised the GBI is investigating.

Reporting on stats, Commissioner Hitchens shared Aviation has had 20 searches, of which 12 subjects were located; SWAT is at 70 calls for service so far this year and has apprehended 5 murder suspects and has had 6 barricaded gunman calls this year; CSU has captured 2 murder suspects this year, recovered 176 stolen vehicles worth about 5.8 million dollars, recovered 30 flipped or fraudulent VIN vehicles, has had 101 pursuits, 23 stolen firearms recovered, 106 wanted suspects apprehended, and has had 209 felony charges.

Concerning fleet services, Commissioner Hitchens advised they have requested 25 more Ford Mustangs, which is the only sedan available right now. Commissioner Hitchens shared the Charger is pushed back where we can order them at the end of this year if things hold and we are waiting on DOAS to approve the purchase. Commissioner Hitchens advised 3 Suburbans are being bought for the Executive Protection Unit, and they are currently being upfitted; and the Ford Explorers are being tested. Commissioner Hitchens noted the mobile spike strips are scheduled to be delivered at the end of December.

Commissioner Hitchens reported the Command Staff voted and approved a long-sleeve shirt with an open collar for sworn personnel who have tattoos that has been tested. Regarding the Straton hat delays, Commissioner Hitchens shared as of October 3<sup>rd</sup>, the hats are in production and will ship in 3 weeks. Commissioner Hitchens also shared the Department transitioned to an automated MCM Quartermaster software supply system that went live on October 6<sup>th</sup>, which will help better track inventory and backorders.

Regarding facilities, Commissioner Hitchens advised DPS is building a training facility at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center; the Oconee Post will be completed by September 1, 2026; the Sylvania and Swainsboro Posts are working with local leadership to get land cleared and bids are out for the Post in Sylvania; the last phase of the radio project deployment of the new dispatch solution began in August and as of October 3<sup>rd</sup>, Troops A, B, D, E, and G have new computers and software installed and all Troops will be completed by December. Commissioner Hitchens stated this will completely convert all dispatch centers to LTE and connect our existing towers to the LTE radio system.

Vice-Chairman Wood reported Director Chris Hosey, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, could not attend and noted the GBI report is in the binder for Board members to look over.

Director Chris Wigginton, Georgia Public Safety Training Center, thanked the Fairgrounds for hosting the meeting and for their hospitality.

Director Wigginton shared one of the problems faced at the Training Center is how to update the curriculum and make sure it stays relevant and how is that curriculum pushed out to hit every corner of the state. Director Wigginton stated the Center represents agencies from Atlanta with 2,000 sworn officers to police and sheriff departments with single digit officers, but they need to provide the same service to every citizen in the state of Georgia. Director Wigginton noted this week the Training Center is averaging 1,200 to 1,400 students a day on the main campus, not counting what is around the state in the regional academies or in field delivery, so we are getting back to pre-COVID numbers.

Director Wigginton stated there are constant demands on how we help individual entities and sometimes we have to tell people no because with the facilities and the staff at capacity we have to prioritize our delivery methods.

Regarding the basic mandate expansion, which has been going on for a year starting out with 20 weeks of delivery, Director Wigginton reported the Training Center, GA POST, the Council, and a committee of 5 chiefs and sheriffs are still working on what the final product will be. Director Wigginton stated hopefully the December Council meeting will be the final vote and in January 2026 we will be able to deliver a 16-week in-person training with some independent learning. Director Wigginton explained they will not diminish the hours of training, they will still get just shy of 800 hours of training throughout the session and they will get the critical training they need, but there are some things we can put online that is information they can read and understand.

Regarding firefighting, Director Wigginton noted a good deal of the fire service has been field delivery, and the student population continues to grow. Director Wigginton reported the numbers right now show 60% of classes have been delivered in the field so if you think about that, 60% of the population probably never would have received training if we had not taken it to the field. Director Wigginton stated the Training Center is also embracing that on the police academy side by taking field delivery around the state to hit some of the rural and small counties and make it available to sheriff and police departments that do not have the time or resources to send their personnel to the Training Center. Director Wigginton shared they are going to start pushing that field delivery on the law enforcement side for officers to get the critical training needed.

Regarding facilities, Director Wigginton reported there are two buildings about to be built, one for basic mandate and one as a partnership with GSP; and the expansion of the driver training facility, which is where we are seeing the scheduling conflicts is in progress.

Chief Janet Moon asked, in reference to the basic mandate going to 16 weeks, would the additional 4 weeks of online training be on their own during the 16 weeks, to which Director Wigginton stated yes, it would be.

### **DONATIONS**

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

Twelve (12) Laser Lab Inspector II Tint Meters	\$2,028.00	City of Dawsonville
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The motion to accept these items was made by Chief Janet Moon, which was seconded by Mr. Willie Bolton and voted approved by the Board members.

### **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

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

Columbia County, Georgia, as necessary to effect the transfer by reversionary warranty deed of Georgia State Patrol Post 25-Grovetown from Columbia County to the State of Georgia for the use of the Department of Public Safety.

The motion to accept this Resolution was made by Sheriff Neal Jump, which was seconded by Chief Craig Tully and voted approved by the Board members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Craig Tully  
Secretary