

## **BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

December 09, 2010

Department of Corrections Board Room – Atlanta, GA

### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Wayne Abernathy  
Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III  
Chief Louis M. Dekmar  
Mr. C. Murray Kight  
Chief Jack McElfish  
Commissioner Brian Owens  
Mr. Lester L. Rampy, Jr.  
Sheriff H. Cullen Talton  
Mr. Gerald T. Willis, Sr.  
Mr. Ellison G. Wood

### **BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Mr. Daniel M. Bryant  
Sheriff Steve Cronic  
Retired Sheriff Bruce Harris  
Mr. Patrick H. Head

### **OTHERS:**

Mr. Joe Drolet, Senior Assistant Attorney General  
Ms. Cheryl L. Buie, Board Liaison  
Colonel W. W. Hitchens, Jr., Commissioner, Department of Public Safety  
Lt. Colonel F. D. Snellings, Jr., Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Safety  
Major Stewart F. Hicks, Department of Public Safety, Georgia State Patrol  
Major H. Wayne Beck, Department of Public Safety, MCCD  
Major Billy Boulware, Department of Public Safety, MCCD  
Captain Russell D. Powell, Department of Public Safety, Georgia State Patrol  
Sergeant Anthony Hughes, Department of Public Safety  
Mr. Joe Hood, Comptroller, Department of Public Safety  
Mr. Dan Brown, CIO, Department of Public Safety  
Mrs. Allison Hodge, Department of Public Safety  
Mr. Vernon Keenan, Director, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Mr. Dan Kirk, Assistant Director, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Ms. Terry Gibbons, Deputy Director, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Mr. J. Dale Mann, Director, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Ms. Patrice Kerner, Deputy Director, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Ms. Vonnie Stewart, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Ms. Laura J. Jones, Department of Corrections  
Mr. Kenneth Mantle, Department of Corrections  
Colonel Rueben McGhee, Houston County SO  
Mrs. Louise Rampy

Vice-Chairman Ellis Wood called the December Board of Public Safety meeting to order. Vice-Chairman Wood called on Mr. Dan Kirk, Assistant Director of the GBI to give the devotional and prayer. After the prayer, Mr. Kirk led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice-Chairman Wood asked each visitor to tell who they are and where they are from.

Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III on behalf of the Board members presented a Resolution to Miss Laura J. Jones retiring from the Department of Corrections after 30 years of faithful service. Miss Jones thanked the Board members with sincerity from her heart and thanked the members for their patience and time throughout the years. Commissioner Owens added that the DOC would have a going away celebration after the holidays on January 6, 2011 for Miss Jones and the invitation would be forthcoming to the Board members.

Vice-Chairman Wood called for approval of the November minutes. Chief Jack McElfish made the motion to accept; it was seconded by Mr. Wayne Abernathy and voted approved by the Board members.

### **DIRECT REPORTS**

Commissioner Bill Hitchens, Department of Public Safety began by stating he had heard from Chief McLeod who retired last month and he appeared to be enjoying retirement. Commissioner Hitchens had told Chief McLeod earlier that he did not think Chief McLeod would have any psychological problems transitioning to the retirement mode as he had been practicing for a while. With that, Commissioner Hitchens introduced Major Wayne Beck who has been designated the interim MCCD Division Director. Commissioner Hitchens added that Major Beck has a long history in law enforcement starting in the 70s with Atlanta PD then with the Public Service Commission, DMVS and then with the transition to DPS in 2005. Major Beck previously served as the Operations Chief of MCCD.

Commissioner Hitchens advised through CJCC that DPS would be receiving DOJ Byrne Grant money and intends to run the 88<sup>th</sup> trooper school beginning April 10<sup>th</sup> and scheduled to graduate November 11, 2011 and may graduate a day earlier to avoid Veteran's Day. Commissioner Hitchens added at this time, DPS does not know how much money will be received, but hope to have between 50-70 people in the 88<sup>th</sup> trooper school as everyone is aware of DPS manpower issues. Commissioner Hitchens stated DPS will do some things different in this trooper school; DPS will give post certified law enforcement officers credit for their POST certification, they will be in trooper school the same amount of time, but those that have already had previous curriculum will be out in the field working in a patrol post instead of having to sit in school and take the same class. DPS is going to require that all cadets go through the driving, accident investigation and firearms training. DPS has identified certain areas of the state that GSP is unable to recruit very successfully and have guaranteed people in these areas that if they come to work with us, they will be assigned in their area upon completion of trooper school. Commissioner Hitchens stated in the two weeks that applications were taken, there were over 300 applications with required background material included that is required to apply. DPS is actively engaged in polygraphing the applicants before starting the background investigations to narrow down the qualified applicants for 88th trooper school.

Commissioner Hitchens commended Commissioner Brian Owens as every time DPS has asked for any assistance with anything, Commissioner Owens has the most willing Department that Commissioner Hitchens has been associated with in his years in state government. Commissioner Hitchens reminded the Board members that last month he mentioned that Post 44 – Forsyth would be building a new post and were at a loss as to what DPS would do with their people during the construction, we needed some office space for the post commander and the secretary and storage of documents and as always Commissioner Owens offered a facility on the DOC property free of charge for about a year. Commissioner Hitchens stated DPS had previously utilized DOC personnel to build the motorcycle unit building adjacent to the Capitol Police Department and DOC built the Communications Center in HQ with DOC construction and has built several patrol posts around the state. Commissioner Hitchens commended Commissioner Owens as Commissioner Owens and DOC has been a great partner and it is always a pleasure to deal with Commissioner Owens who does not take very long to make a decision.

Commissioner Hitchens told of a female trooper in Milledgeville whose father was in the Marine Corps who got involved in the Toys for Tots Campaign last year. The trooper did such a great job and DPS adopted this campaign statewide last year and continued it this year. Commissioner Hitchens stated he is amazed at the contributions; continues to receive photos from the news media involving the MCCD officers, Capitol Police, troopers and patrol posts. Commissioner Hitchens stated this has been a great endeavor for DPS and when the toys are loaded on the trucks he often thinks of the children at no fault of their own would not have much of a Christmas. Commissioner Hitchens commended his personnel for actively getting involved. Commissioner Hitchens stated he had even seen photos with Toys for Tots signs on the side of the patrol car which he was not too thrilled about, but guess it is better than State Farm.

Commissioner Hitchens advised the Board members that last week the last training class was held except for the make-up class for the CAD/RMS. Troop A is now on board and actively up and running which was the last troop in the state to go live. Commissioner Hitchens stated Major Hicks and Mr. Dan Brown have done a great job with the 13 million dollar project which has moved us from the Stone Age to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Commissioner Hitchens stated that two posts which will support the communication centers in their troop remains under construction; Post 3 Cartersville and Post 10 Americus and understands that Post 10 Americus is almost complete and construction has really picked up at Post 3 Cartersville. Commissioner Hitchens stated that 3-4 years ago he could not have ever imagined this project would have occurred and is very thankful for everyone that has helped with it. Commissioner Hitchens stated most of the young people have embraced the new technology; some of the older people have had a little more difficulty with the training.

Commissioner Hitchens completed his direct reports with the inauguration plans for Governor-elect Nathan Deal. Commissioner Hitchens shared a few basics stating that Major McDonough had been working with the Inauguration Committee for several weeks. Commissioner Hitchens stated there would be three venues:

- 1) Mt. Paran Church – 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. (Lt. Mark Hambert)
- 2) State Capitol – 1:30 p.m. to approximately 3:45 p.m. (Capt. Ronnie Rhodes)

Seating at 1:30 p.m.

Swearing-in at 2:00 p.m. until 3:15 p.m.

Review of Troops at 3:30 p.m.

- 3) Philips Arena-Inauguration Ball-7:00 p.m. until (Capt. Bill Bryant)

Commissioner Hitchens added that the Inauguration will actually take place on the Washington Street side of the Capitol on the Capitol steps with seating in Washington Street. Washington Street will be closed all day Sunday and Monday in order for the crews to prepare the areas and then to take it down. During the swearing-in ceremony, MLK and Mitchell Streets will also be closed. After the inauguration, MLK will reopen but Mitchell Street will remain closed as the Review of the Troops will occur between the Capitol and the Coverdale Legislative Office Building. The GBI will be providing two supervisors, 4 bomb technicians and 5 two man undercover ID teams at each venue, with SAC Wayne Smith from GISAC/GBI serving as the supervisor at all three venues. Commissioner Hitchens stated in case of inclement weather, the swearing-in ceremony will be conducted in the House Chambers and the Review of the Troops will be moved to the foot of the north or south steps on the second floor and the participating personnel will be reduced. If the event experiences bad weather and has to move inside, instead of the scheduled three platoons of personnel, which will include one each from the GSP, the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard, there will be a combined platoon with a squad from each of those organizations combined into a single platoon. DPS is working to utilize personnel within a two hour drive of Atlanta as the troopers will work an eight hour shift at the different venues in order not to house anyone participating in the church services, the actual inauguration or the inauguration ball. Commissioner Hitchens added that Sergeant David Herring referred to as Dawg who was the UGA coach's driver will now be head of Executive Security for Governor-elect Deal.

Mr. Rooney Bowen, III asked Commissioner Hitchens if the new communication system was going good and if DPS was getting adequate coverage in the rural areas. Commissioner Hitchens stated the only real problem that he had heard was that in some areas there is limited connectivity with our air cards. Commissioner Hitchens related there was a little episode where a trooper damaged some of his equipment that was not working very effectively one day and we thought about the action that we would take and Major McDonough received his equipment and went into a area similar in the mountains and his did not work very effectively either and thought he might have been a little harsh on the trooper. Commissioner Hitchens stated Florida Highway Patrol pushed their system out with the 800 MHz system which is very efficient and we wished we could do this but the reason that DPS went with the system we have is that DPS could not afford the 800 MHz system as it would cost 300 million dollars statewide. This is the biggest concern that Commissioner Hitchens hears is when the computer goes down it takes a pretty good while to boot it back up but other than that and for those of the newer generation that are computer oriented and have the skills and are not scared to play with it and fix it on their own, they are doing very well; but the older generation is catching on but they come from a different culture and were not really thrilled about the computers to begin with, but it is coming along. Commissioner Hitchens reminded the Board members that Troop F has been using the computers for two years now, they are real happy with system and expressed they do not know how they could do their jobs without it; it will come around but we still have some things to tweak to make it better.

Commissioner Hitchens stated DPS continues to keep in touch with Florida and Montana and talk with them about some connectivity and being able to search each other's database for information and think this is one of the most positive things we have done in the last 30 years.

Mr. Bowen mentioned that in his area, things started off a little bumpy with the CAD/RMS in his area, but now it just seems it is like clockwork, going from one extreme basically to the other; it just takes time to get to this point. From the other perspective, Commissioner Hitchens stated he does not know what the Department would have done financially because this save the department about 70 radio operator positions and with the economic downturn and our budget situation, if we had not been able to reduce positions like this we would have probably been furloughing one day a month this year. Most of the reduced positions have been attained through attrition and with a few people resigning and going to the 911 centers; this could not be helped. Geographically Colonel Hitchens stated he did not play a role in the communications center placement, but ask the people doing it to do it based on the connectivity in the area and where the patrol post could best accommodate the communications center with space to grow.

Chief Lou Dekmar asked Commissioner Hitchens if some of the patrol units had 800 MHz capabilities as some of the units in his area have been on the LaGrange PD frequency for about four years. Commissioner Hitchens advised that DPS has radios on systems all over the state and in Atlanta the 800Mhz is primarily what GSP works off of. Colonel Hitchens stated DPS piggybacks off the other agencies.

Chief Dekmar asked Commissioner Hitchens if the issue of immediate playback has been addressed in the communications centers from an officer's safety standpoint, if someone calls in and the dispatcher did not quite get it and the officer was injured or under duress are there some areas where they could not play the radio traffic back to determine the nature of the call and location. Mr. Dan Brown replied with the motor bridge, GSP can take the last 6 minutes and play that back and then it writes over it, you will need to hear it quickly because it rewrites itself. Mr. Brown stated in Troop C, all communications are recorded on every line much like a 911 center. Mr. Brown stated it would cost around \$235,000.00 to have the playback or recording system in the field troops; but DPS is one step better than where we were in the fact that we can hear repeated radio traffic for six minutes to see what was said and then it moves on to the next 6 minutes. Chief Dekmar asked confirmation that radio traffic is only retained for 6 minutes statewide and Mr. Brown replied yes. Chief Dekmar stated from a 1983 aspect 96.2% of the time, recordings corroborate or substantiate what the officers say and this is a real missed opportunity for the officers when complaints are filed. Commissioner Hitchens replied that we still have the video cameras and have a minute on either end of the tape before the switch is activated and told of a case that occurred a few days ago where a trooper was accused of a felony but when we checked the tape from the time the blue lights came on to when the individual was deposited at the jail, it was all on tape and as soon as this occurred, the violator recanted what she had said but Colonel Hitchens stated he wanted to press charges anyway. Commissioner Hitchens stated the Department has never been through the accreditation process and has kept the person in place and have kept up with everything that former Commissioner Hightower did; the basic problem was DPS had to have recordings from all of our communications centers and when were dispatching out of 45 centers

not only was the cost prohibitive but the storage of the tapes was a problem. Commissioner Hitchens stated now that GSP is down to nine communications centers, DPS continues to maintain the former level of accreditation that we had at that point and as soon as DPS can get enough money, that may be the next step and then DPS would have the recordings and added that this has been done at the HQ complex for the last 20 years.

Mr. Abernathy commended Major Hicks and Mr. Dan Brown on the CAD/RMS and their dedication in completing the task within the time constraints. Commissioner Hitchens added that all had to be completed by March 2011 or the money would expire. Commissioner Hitchens stated he appreciated the efforts of Major Hicks and Mr. Brown and all the others that participated in this project. The department came in under budget and everything was completed on time, a great job was done.

Vice-Chairman Wood reminded Board members that their donation to the Governor was to be presented to the Governor today and thanked Commissioner Hitchens for being the lead in making the donation to the Governor possible.

Director Vernon M. Keenan, GBI began his report by stating that Governor Perdue had directed all agency heads to prepare transition documents for the new Governor; all the information was prepared in order to have a seamless transition of one administration to another. Governor Perdue was very unhappy with the information he had received when he came into office and had to do a lot of catch-up. Director Keenan went over the key issues that are facing the GBI as were presented to Governor-elect Nathan Deal. Director Keenan reemphasized some of the key issues facing the GBI in this upcoming administration to which he had spoken about before and wanted to officially go over the issues with the Board members.

First issue that Director Keenan addressed is the need to have adequate and stable funding to maintain key GBI operations and an example of this is that we have over 50 crime lab scientists that are on grant positions and 21 of those scientist positions are federal grant positions that will expire in 2012 so what this means is that when these federal grants expire if there is not state funding to move the scientists over on to, then GBI will lose 21 scientists. Director Keenan added that the GBI has done quite well in the last three years in the face of all the severe budget cuts of being able to reach out and apply for federal grants to hire scientists to keep the workload under control and we have done quite well with this and have seen a reduction in the backlog in the crime lab based on this. Now as the scientists' have completed their training and went to work, GBI has seen some great successes; the DNA backlog has virtually been eliminated through scientists on the federal grants. Director Keenan stated the key issues facing the GBI in the future, GBI will need state funding to move scientists over to replace those on federal grants. During Director Keenan's interview with the transition team, he told the transition team that the most absolute top priority of the GBI is the retention of the scientists and the agents GBI has in its workforce and that the scientists and agents are inadequately paid and it is an absolute necessity that their salaries be increased in order to retain the work force which is the key to the professionalism of the GBI. Director Keenan added that the GBI is the training ground for federal agencies and now some local agencies in the special agent investigative arena and the crime lab area also. By way of example, GBI lost three GBI agents last month to federal jobs and 6 scientists in the

last 90 days who have gone to federal agencies. GBI is unlucky that the DOD has consolidated all of their forensic sciences into one facility which is located in Atlanta and they hire GBI scientists routinely, who make substantially more money and work less. Director Keenan stated he realized that when speaking about increasing salaries that this is a bad time to do this as we are going through another series of budget cuts, but it does not change the fact that if we do not increase the salaries of agents and scientists when funding is available, the state will continue to be the training ground for federal and local agencies. Director Keenan stated that the money that GBI could save by retaining our experienced people will pay for the salary increases and stated he would lay the ground work along with his staff and will speak consistently to this issue; we need to increase salaries for agents and scientists more than we need new personnel and GBI needs additional staffing. Director Keenan stated the GBI is down to the lowest staffing in the investigative division in the last 15 years, down to 232 agents that are doing criminal investigations and the GBI has tremendous demands on us more than we have ever had as local agencies have gone through their own budget cuts and lost personnel and now call the GBI to assist in cases where they have never called the GBI before. Director Keenan added that the GBI gets requests for investigations on major violent crimes from agencies that have never needed the services of the GBI investigative division before. Mr. Abernathy asked Director Keenan what the pay grade difference was between the state and federal level and Director Keenan replied about 25% pay difference and it is not just the pay difference; the federal investigator works less than GBI; the same for the crime lab. Director Keenan stated that during the exit interviews with the scientists and agents as they leave the GBI, they speak about how proud they are to work at the GBI and how much they work at the GBI but are not making adequate salaries to support their family. It has just been the GBI's bad luck as we had the momentum for salary increases and the budget tanked out and hurt all of us. Director Keenan stated while speaking for the GBI, he realizes that DOC has the same issue with salaries; the only way GBI has been able to continue on without losing substantially more of our workforce than we have, is because the economy has been so bad that the agents and scientists want some stability. Director Keenan added that the scientists that have left the GBI, left after 12-18 months of training that was invested in them by the GBI.

Director Keenan stated the third issue that the GBI laid out in the transition document was the need for motor vehicle replacement. The GBI currently has 407 vehicles with 119 vehicles in excess of 135,000; this sounds low but most of the vehicles are around 200,000 miles. This last budget cycle, GBI received bond funding to replace 50 vehicles which will help out tremendously.

Director Keenan stated the final issue that he pointed out was the need to replace the Sex Offender Registration System and Director Keenan reminded the Board members of his previous presentation before the Board members of the SOR and outlined the Department of Audits performance report of the Sex Offender Registry which greatly irritated the GBI and they were saying the system needed to be replaced and GBI said it needed to be replaced five years ago; it takes money to do this and at some point when the budget situation improves the SOR needs to be replaced.

Other issues that Director Keenan highlighted on was yesterday evening the final report is being released on the status of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation Crime Laboratory Research and Analysis Project and to remind this Board that several months ago at the initiation of the GA Chiefs Association

there was a commission that was impaneled which was made up of members from the GA Sheriff's Association, the DAs, the Judiciary, the Defense Bar, the Innocence Project, and anyone who has a vested interest in the state crime laboratory; those that are customers of the crime laboratory came together and studied the issues about what the future needs of the crime labs are, what is reasonable expectation from the lab and what needs to be done to ensure that the needs of the criminal justice system are met. This report was finalized at 6:00 p.m. last evening and a copy will be forwarded to Board members in the next few days. Director Keenan stated this report will speak for itself as it is not what the GBI is saying the needs of the crime lab are but what the GA Sheriffs and GA Chiefs of Police and all the other players in the system are saying. Hopefully this report will be used the way the previous report was ten years ago, as a roadmap to meet the needs in the State of Georgia.

Director Keenan went on to relay to the Board members that the Department of Audits has completed a performance audit on the GBI State Medical Examiner's Office and he has seen a copy of this report and the report will only be released when the State Auditor releases the report. Director Keenan stated he had read the draft report and the report was not unreasonably negative and wrote back to the state auditor telling him that GBI had no issues with the report. The Audit report points out some needed improvements in the state medical examiner's system in GA and the coroner's system and GBI has no control over these issues. Director Keenan stated he would provide the report to the Board members as soon as the report is finalized.

The final issue that Director Keenan briefed the Board members on was that GEMA sent out grant notifications to 50 law enforcement agencies and the communication that they sent out was confusing in that the notification said to the effect the GBI has been awarded grant funding on your behalf and will be spending those grant funds. The GBI went back to GEMA and asked them to explain what was going on here and very simply, Director Keenan reminded the Board members that GBI made a presentation before the Board on the Rapid ID wireless fingerprint system. Director Keenan advised this system is up and running and the agencies are using the technology every day, while the next grant cycle awarded \$21,000.00 to 50 law enforcement agencies to buy the devices. There is a follow-up letter going out that explains that this is the agencies money and you will spend the money and the GBI will reimburse the agency when they buy the devices. This is not money that will come to the GBI to keep.

DOC Commissioner Brian Owens spoke in regards to the Rapid ID issue stating DOC received a request from Atlanta PD in regards to a rash of violent crimes and at this time DOC has activated 100 CERT tactical officers to support APD and Atlanta has seen some major arrests being announced which is a direct result of Rapid ID. Commissioner Owens stated the tactical officers are out in the field working 24/7 with the warrant teams and the Red Dogs in the City of Atlanta and DOC borrowed 10-12 of the devices for use in the City of Atlanta. Commissioner Owens told of an arrest just yesterday that resulted from the Rapid ID technology, a subject who was apprehended that had been wanted since January of 2010 for a violent carjacking where two people were shot; this is just an example of this technology being used to enhance public safety and thanked Director Keenan for letting DOC borrow the technology.



Chief Lou Dekmar told the members that he had the opportunity to represent the Chiefs of Police on the GBI Crime Laboratory Research and Analysis Project and stated that Assistant Director Dan Kirk, Director Keenan and the lab personnel were very prompt and a real pleasure to work with when requesting data or information while working on the assessment of the State of the Crime Lab. Chief Dekmar also recognized GPSTC Director Dale Mann who served on the Commission and stated coroners were involved as well as people not traditionally involved in the crime lab or law enforcement and thinks this document will lay the foundation for when the money comes for the crime lab needs.

Vice-Chairman Wood stated there was a very tragic murder in Effingham County and GBI dedicated a lot of resources to this case for over two years and the court testimony and documentation on part of the GBI certainly has been impressive.

Director Dale Mann, Georgia Public Safety Training Center began by introducing his assistant, Ms. Vonnie Stewart to the Board members and then stated the GPSTC Board report would speak for itself.

Director Mann advised that he had followed up with Mr. Ken Vance of POST Council after conversation at last month's Board meeting expressing his concern about POST not doing the final exam as the final exam becomes the thing that ties together what the Tech schools are doing in Basic Training and what GPSTC is doing in Basic Training. Director Mann stated the final exam would be like taking the bar exam or nursing exam; would be a way to grade who is turning out the good candidates, who can pass the state exam and who cannot. Director Mann relayed that Mr. Drolet and Commissioner Hitchens were at POST Council last month and he made that point and can expect Mr. Vance to be at the Board meeting next month and be prepared for us to put together another working committee. Director Mann stated that we probably needed to have tech schools, GPSTC, and a committee from the BPS sit down and look at this again and make sure that we are headed in the right direction. Director Mann stated he has been tentatively told by the Armstrong Atlanta State University in Savannah, GA, who has had an arrangement for the past ten years where someone who wants to go to an academy anywhere in the state, can go through AASU and get HOPE grant money, will close the Armstrong Basic Law Enforcement Certification Program December 31, 2011. Director Mann relayed that we need to work on keeping this relationship going, if you will remember 10 years ago there was almost nothing that HOPE wouldn't entertain as a certificate program that they would approve. Director Mann stated Mr. Bill Megathlin (now retired) at AASU got this program approved and AASU was the only college that took that approach and said that basic training for law enforcement is something AASU wanted to be involved in. When reading the letter AASU stated there is a lot of administrative overhead and right now GPSTC pays AASU 15% as an administrative charge that we send back to AASU for their participation. Director Mann stated he is hoping we can get them to rethink this as if AASU quits with this no one will be able to get a HOPE grant to go through our academy the way we have been doing this for the past 10 years. Nothing will keep the technical schools from doing this as the technical schools are approved for HOPE. For 10 years, long before the idea of using the technical schools, GPSTC has gone through AASU to do this. Director Mann stated he hoped to have an update next month, but feels we need to get this plan by AASU undone.

Director Mann stated that he thinks POST is struggling with the idea as to whether they need a law changed to do the final exam or if they can do this under POST rules. To update the Board, Mr. Drolet stated, he and Mr. Vance had discussed this after the POST Council meeting. Mr. Drolet stated there is general authority which appears to give POST Council the authority to do that but then there is a specific code section that states what the qualifications are for one to be a police officer and it limits it and says it only requires an entrance exam before one can pursue a law enforcement career. It may be that some tweaking of one of the code sections under POST may be necessary to clearly allow a final exam to be used in basic training. Right now one can test coming in but it says this is all that is required and does not say anything about having a final exam when the course is completed. This does need some clarification. Chief Dekmar asked if individual academies could require an exit exam. Mr. Drolet responded that the academies can do this, but thinks the issue is if there can be one standardized exam with basic qualifications for a person to be a police officer; can POST set the standard for the final exam. Chief Dekmar asked if Director Mann had oversight of the academies, and Director Mann replied GPSTC has oversight of seven academies. Chief Dekmar questioned for the ones that GPSTC is over and the ones that are providing the training if they agree to do the testing on the academy side, is there anything to prevent this? Mr. Drolet responded no and stated that anybody who is doing the training for police officers could certainly all get together and say this is what we are going to do as far as the examination standards that we are using, but right now the statute does not appear to give POST the authority to dictate this. Chief Dekmar stated POST can partner with the academies but cannot mandate the final exam and Mr. Drolet agreed. Director Mann stated what concerned him was that the State would wind up with 14 different standards and feels this is a reason BPS should have a subcommittee.

Vice-Chairman Wood stated he and Director Mann had been speaking about this testing during the month and is convinced that BPS needs to revisit this first of the year and get all players involved.

### **DONATIONS**

Mr. Joe Hood, Department of Public Safety requested approval of the following donations:

One X26 Taser	\$ 853.65	Early County Sheriff's Department
(3) E-Seek 250 Card Readers	\$ 2,025.00	Ocmulgee Drug Task Force

The motion for these donations was made by Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III; seconded by Mr. Wayne Abernathy and voted approved by the Board members.

Mr. Patrice Kerner, Georgia Public Safety Training Center, requested approval of the following donations:

Simunition Training Gear	\$ 9,252.40	Harris County Sheriff's Office
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The motion was made by Chief Lou Dekmar; seconded by Mr. Rooney Bowen and voted approved by the Board members.

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

Vice-Chairman Wood stated the BPS has been requested to change the April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011 BPS meeting to join the DOC Board meeting in the Glennville, GA area for a joint meeting which will also coincide with the Law Enforcement Supper at Mr. Wayne Dasher's residence.

The motion to change the location to Glennville, GA for the April 14<sup>th</sup> Board meeting was made by Mr. Rooney L. Bowen; seconded by Mr. Wayne Abernathy and voted approved by the Board members.

Vice-Chairman Wood stated the January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Board meeting would be held here in the DOC Board room and reminded the members that two officers will need to be elected and reminded members that at some point after January there will be a minor Board make-up change. Vice-Chairman Wood stated they would plan some outside meetings and if a member had a particular location in mind to get that information in.

Vice-Chairman Wood asked all to remember the reason for the season and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Rooney L. Bowen, III  
Secretary