

# **BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

Minutes of Meeting Held May 7, 2003  
Forsyth, Georgia

## **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Wayne Abernathy  
Sheriff Jackie Barrett  
Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III  
Sheriff Greg Coursey  
Chief Rebecca Denlinger  
Sheriff Donnie Haralson  
Mr. W. H. "Dub" Harper  
Sheriff Bruce Harris  
Sheriff Jamil Saba  
Chief Hubert Smith

## **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Governor Sonny Perdue  
Mr. Charles D. "Bud" Black  
Mr. Robert Keller  
Ms. Lydia Sartain

## **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Chris Brasher, Georgia Department of Law  
Miss Laura Jones, Board Liaison  
Colonel George Ellis, Georgia State Patrol  
Mr. Terry Landers, Georgia State Patrol  
Mr. Scott Cown, Georgia State Patrol  
Major Tommy Tomlinson, Georgia State Patrol  
Major Kenny Hancock, Georgia State Patrol  
Major Corky Jewell, Georgia State Patrol  
Captain Larry Smith, Georgia State Patrol  
Director Vernon Keenan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Ms. Chris Ash, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Mr. Ray Higgins, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Dr. Kris Sperry, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Mr. George Emfinger, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Mr. David Saye, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Jimmy Dean, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Kevin Rexroat, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Richard Guerreiro, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Warden Randy Tillman, Georgia Department of Corrections  
Mr. Arleigh Greenblat, Northstar  
Sheriff Neal Walden, Sheriff of White County

The regular meeting of the Board of Public Safety was called to order at 9:00 a.m. with Chief Hubert Smith presiding.

Chief Hubert Smith asked if any guests were in attendance. Director David Saye introduced Warden Randy Tillman, of the Burruss Correctional Training Center, Department of Corrections. Warden Tillman has been instrumental in assisting GPSTC with projects and other requests.

Chief Smith's first order of business was to request approval of the two previous Board meetings. Sheriff Jackie Barrett made a motion to approve the Minutes, Sheriff Greg Coursey made the second, and the Board members unanimously approved the Minutes of March, 2003 and April, 2003.

### **DIRECTORS' REPORTS**

#### *Department of Public Safety/State Patrol*

Colonel George Ellis announced that there were trooper details on the Hip Hop Festival and the Dogwood Festival in Atlanta. During the course of that weekend, there were over a thousand arrests for traffic violations, including 16 DUI's, couple of felony arrests, and misdemeanor drug arrests. Twenty-five troopers were assigned to the Masters protest, assisting Richmond County Sheriff's office with that detail. Troopers assisted with the Tour de Georgia event, and, also with the Players Ball in Statesboro.

Colonel Ellis was pleased to report that State Patrol won a national award on a video; the video is being shown in the schools concerning teen driving. Colonel Ellis reported that the department continues to work with GTA on updating the web page. Another item, the lieutenant colonel positions are vacant at this time, until further decision is made on the positions.

Colonel Ellis reported the incentive pay for the SWAT team and the training staff was eliminated due to budgetary reasons, however, leaving intact the incentive pay for Aviation and CERT team. Questions were posed concerning the budget under the General Assembly. In response, the legislature cut the department 5% in the current year. The department has made cuts in several areas, including putting a freeze on hiring operators, unless there is an absolute need to hire. As to the question of purchasing vehicles for troopers, the department may be able to squeeze in maybe 15 or 20 this year. In follow-up to a previous issue, Mr. Ray Crawford, Acting Director for the Georgia Building Authority, will be mailing the funds to the department.

Georgia Bureau of Investigation

Director Vernon Keenan reported on the growing methamphetamine problem in Georgia. Based on input from local law enforcement, there is a very pressing need for a training video on how to recognize a methamphetamine lab and the safety precautions that must be taken by the officer when coming across a meth lab. The GBI has entered into a partnership with the Sheriffs Association, Chiefs Association, Georgia State Patrol, and Public Safety Training Center in producing a training video directed to local law enforcement. Labs are being found by officers while serving warrants, while officers are making traffic stops; there is a lack of education on part of officers on exactly what is a meth lab and the dangers associated with handling the chemicals. Governor Sonny Perdue has agreed to do the opening remarks for the training video and the GBI is working on getting this done within the next six weeks.

Director Keenan provided each board member with copies of two documents, one being a letter, which will be mailed to the coroners, and the other being an Operations Bulletin from the crime lab.

The letter to the coroners lays out the fact that the last General Assembly eliminated funding for mortuary transport service. The GBI had been transporting bodies for local counties, for coroners, for local law enforcement, to the regional medical examiner facility or to the headquarters lab. Director Keenan regrets that the GBI is not able to provide this service, however, it is strictly due to lack of funding. The letter to each county coroner will give immediate notice of this change.

The Operations Bulletin 2003-01 is the beginning of a series of information that will be sent out to local law enforcement and prosecutors addressing services that are being cut back in the state crime laboratory. At a prior Board meeting, Director Keenan addressed the issue of a severe staff shortage in the crime lab and the tremendous backlog of cases. The GBI will go through a series of prioritizing what is done in the lab. Director Keenan indicated that in the future the crime laboratory will no longer process misdemeanor marijuana cases. Director Keenan addressed questions regarding these issues.

Director Keenan announced the GBI will be holding an open house for the new branch laboratory in Augusta. The open house will be held on May 22, 2003 and all the Board members are invited.

Georgia Public Safety Training Center

Director David Saye's report started with addressing the budget; out of the amended budget, the Training Center lost 5.3%; out of FY 04 budget, the Center lost 7%. Also cut from the budget was funding of \$450,000 in General Obligation Bonds for capital outlay. Director Saye expressed his thoughts on the budget cuts.

Second item, the Office of Planning and Budget called last week and requested the Training Center to undertake security and maintenance of Tift College campus. Director Saye reported that Kevin Rexroat, Jimmy Dean and Richard Guerreiro immediately took the project by having the water turned back on, having the grass cut, and requesting assistance from Burruss Correctional Training Institute to assist with the maintenance of the campus. Director Saye noted his appreciation of Captain Mayfield, from Burruss CTC, who went out of his way to come in on a day off and assisted with the maintenance detail. Director Saye indicates the Board of Regents may possibly entertain the idea of the campus being an extension of Georgia Public Safety Training Center.

Another item, Director Saye reported on the HOPE grant; the college at Armstrong State University has developed a way to use the HOPE grant money for basic training for law enforcement personnel. That's the only institution in the University System that had been able to get approval for gaining access to those HOPE monies for that purpose. The arrangement is that a pre-service student can be sent to any academy. A pre-service student can be sent to any academy and that student, if not employed by a law enforcement agency, can be reimbursed for their basic training expense through HOPE.

Director Saye announced the Peace Officer Memorial Service will be held today at 11:00 a.m. Acting Director Wayne Melton will recognize officers who were killed in the line of duty over the last twelve months.

Director Saye informed the Board members that he received a call from Governor Perdue who requested Director Saye to stay with the Training Center one more month. Director Saye expressed that it has been an honor and privilege to work with the Board members.

## DONATIONS

### Georgia Bureau of Investigation

Mr. Ray Higgins presented the following donation to the Board members:

|   |           |                                  |
|---|-----------|----------------------------------|
| Dell CPU; Dell 17" Monitor; Dell Keyboard;<br>CPU-XPS 200N, #6XVRT<br>Monitor-D1728D-LS #04036A3JGM66<br>Keyboard-SK1000REW #12741-660-5146<br>W/M/S NT 4.0, M/S Office 97, DEPCON, & TNuts | \$ 500.00 | Mr. John Secor<br>(retired, GBI) |
|---|-----------|----------------------------------|

Sheriff Jackie Barrett made a motion to approve the donation, Mr. Rooney Bowen seconded, and the Board members unanimously voted approval.

### Department of Public Safety

Mr. Terry Landers presented the following four donations to the Board members:

|   |             |   |
|---|-------------|---|
| Funds for Lodging and Per Diem<br>For troopers assigned to traffic<br>control detail, MBNA/Bass Pro Shop 500<br>March 7-9, 2003 | \$15,559.00 | Mr. John Meyers,<br>Atlanta Motor Speedway  |
| 2003 Chevrolet Tahoe<br>1GNEC13ZX3J121458   | \$35,175.00 | Sheriff Charles W. Jones<br>McIntosh County |
| Funds for renovations<br>At Post 5  | \$ 4,600.00 | Sheriff Phil Sumners<br>Catoosa County      |
| Funds for repairs<br>At Post 39   | \$ 5,000.00 | Chairman Edward Johnson<br>Randolph County  |

Colonel George Ellis addressed questions regarding the donations. Mr. Wayne Abernathy made the motion to approve the donations, Mr. Dub Harper made the second, and the Board members unanimously voted approval.

Georgia Public Safety Training Center

Mr. Richard Guerreiro presented the following four donations to the Board members:

|   |              |  |
|---|--------------|--|
| Hazardous Material Equipment  | \$487,465.00 | Georgia Emergency<br>Management Agency |
| Funds to purchase copies of textbook<br>Guide for Fire and Explosive Investigations | \$ 1,312.00  | Georgia Farm Bureau Agency             |
| Fire Hydrant Internal Security Device   | \$ 500.00    | Georgia Rural Water Association        |
| Sections of Steel Piping  | \$ -0-       | Georgia Pacific                        |

Chief Rebecca Denlinger made a motion to approve the donations, Sheriff Jackie Barrett made the second, and the Board members unanimously voted approval.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III reported that he and Mr. Chris Brasher, Board Attorney, are working on the By-Laws and will bring the issue at the next Board meeting for discussion.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Chief Hubert Smith asked for any new business. Chief Smith announced the new committee assignments.

Department of Public Safety/State Patrol Committee

Rooney Bowen - Chair

Becky Denlinger

Dub Harper

Jamil Saba

Lydia Sartain

Georgia Bureau of Investigation Committee

Hubert Smith - Chair

Wayne Abernathy

Jacquelyn Barrett

Bud Black

Georgia Public Safety Training Center Committee

Bruce Harris - Chair

Greg Coursey

Donnie Haralson

Bob Keller

It was pointed out that if Chief Hubert Smith is appointed as Vice Chairman of the Board of Public Safety, then he would vacate the position as Chair of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation Committee.

Sheriff Greg Coursey made a motion for the Board to go into Executive Session. Said motion was seconded by Sheriff Bruce Harris. All members present affirmatively voted to go into Executive Session.

After Executive Session, the regular session of the Board meeting reconvened and there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

BChief Hubert Smith  
Secretary/Interim Vice-Chairman