

**BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

May 13, 2010

Kia Quick Start Training Center, West Point, GA

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Wayne Abernathy  
Mr. Daniel M. Bryant  
Mr. Louis M. Dekmar  
Mr. Patrick H. Head  
Mr. C. Murray Kight  
Mr. Brian Owens  
Mr. Lester L. Rampy, Jr.  
Sheriff H. Cullen Talton, Jr.  
Mr. Gerald T. Willis, Sr.,  
Mr. Ellison G. Wood

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III  
Sheriff Steve Cronic  
Mr. Bruce Harris  
Mr. Jack McElfish

**OTHERS:**

Mr. Joseph Drolet, Senior Assistant Attorney General  
Ms. Cheryl 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 Mark W. McDonough, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol  
Chief Mark McLeod, Department of Public Safety/Motor Carrier Compliance Division  
SFC Pete McCaleb, Department of Public Safety, Motor Carrier Compliance Division  
Comptroller Joseph W. Hood, Department of Public Safety  
Director Vernon M. Keenan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Ms. Lisa Urich, Fiscal Officer, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Director J. Dale Mann, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Division Director Forest B. (Butch) Beach, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Adam Baswell, Department of Corrections  
Colonel Rueben McGhee, Houston County SO  
Mrs. Louise Rampy  
Capt. W. H. Bryant, Department of Public Safety, Georgia State Patrol  
Capt. Russell Powell, Department of Public Safety, Georgia State Patrol  
Mr. Lee O'Brien, Department of Public Safety  
SFC Mark Mitchell, Department of Public Safety, Georgia State Patrol  
Capt. Eddie Grier, Department of Public Safety, Georgia State Patrol  
Sergeant Maurice Raines, Department of Public Safety, Georgia State Patrol  
TFC Doug Martin, Department of Public Safety, Georgia State Patrol  
Mrs. Brandy Cochran, Georgia State Patrol  
Mrs. Tami Hurst, Georgia State Patrol  
Mrs. Maureen Bryant

Mr. Alan Davis  
Retired GSP Major George Johnson  
Sergeant Karen Sanders, LaGrange Police Department

Vice-Chairman Ellis Wood called the May Board of Public Safety meeting to order. Mr. Wood called on Major McDonough to give the devotional, prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice-Chairman Wood introduced and welcomed the newest Board member, Mr. Lester L. Rampy, Jr., and his wife, Mrs. Louise and thanked Mr. Rampy for his willingness to serve on the Board.

Mr. Rampy stated he had always admired this Board while he was the Commanding Officer and Major for the Georgia State Patrol; it is now a great honor for me being a retired trooper to be associated with this Board. Mr. Rampy stated that if there is anything he can do for law enforcement in the state of Georgia or the nation, he would be proud to do so.

Vice-Chairman Wood asked each visitor to tell who they are and where they were from and thanked everyone for coming.

Vice-Chairman Wood called for approval of the April Board minutes. Mr. Danny Bryant made the motion, seconded by Mr. Wayne Abernathy and voted approval by the Board members.

### **DIRECT REPORTS**

Mr. Dale Mann, Director of the Georgia Public Safety Training Center told Vice-Chairman Wood it was good to see him and all were worried about him. Director Mann thanked Kia for allowing all the opportunity to come here today. Director Mann stated he would let the GPSTC direct report speak for itself, but called attention to certain things in the Board report. Director Mann stated on page 1 of his report it shows the total number of courses on campus and off campus. Director Mann relayed that more classes have been completed for the on campus courses than last year and that GPSTC continues to offer a volume of training with a directly diminished budget. Director Mann stated like everyone in the room, GPSTC has had a reduction in the amount of money that GPSTC has and are actually turning out more training now than we did a year ago. Director Mann called attention to the GPSTC website stating there are eight courses that can be signed onto right now through distance learning, and when taken and completed, one hour of post credit will be earned for one course. Director Mann stated that some of the classes on line are required by Georgia law; update on elder abuse, update on domestic violence and updates on some other things. Director Mann stated instead of having to go somewhere to take the training, one can actually go to the GPSTC website and take the training through the electronic on line training. This type of training is popular in the US and GPSTC developed the training ourselves, we rolled it out and are not using anyone else's material as we developed our own material. Director Mann stated 953 people had already signed up for the on line classes and thinks this will be very popular and will see people get their training without having to come to GPSTC. Director Mann stated GPSTC will continue to explore this type of training as this is probably the way of the future.

Director Mann stated the Georgia Peace Officer Memorial Service will be held before the end of May and had to seek an alternative speaker as the Governor was unable to be the keynote speaker. He stated he should know a date by the end of the day. Director Mann reminded everyone two police officers who were killed in the line of duty would be honored.

Mr. Wayne Abernathy asked Director Mann how much cost was associated with the on line training. Director Mann replied that as far as the students are concerned there is no cost. Mr. Jerry Willis asked Director Mann if GPSTC was monitoring those who sign up for the courses and actually complete the courses. Director Mann stated at this point GPSTC is monitoring the ones that sign up and will review in about thirty days to see who actually completed the course.

Chief Dekmar asked about the relationship between the technical schools and the GPSTC. Director Mann stated that the technical colleges continue to do well; there are a couple of glitches out there that can be resolved. Director Mann went on to relate that Ken Vance, Executive Director of POST has actually gone out and done some site visits and saw that there were a couple of knuckleheads who were not quite getting things right and I believe that Director Vance has put a little pressure on them by making them understand that POST can give and can take away, the certifications. Director Mann stated the technical colleges in Americus, Statesboro and DeKalb are filling up their classes, they are doing well. Chief Dekmar then asked if the universal testing had occurred. Director Mann replied that the testing has not occurred and does not believe that it will happen anytime soon. Chief Dekmar asked Director Mann when the students go through the academies and they test out, are they testing out after a week like the traditional academies or is there a comprehensive test sponsored by someone unrelated to the academy. Director Mann replied as far as he knew the academy does their own testing from a master question bank like GPSTC does, that there is no independent third party that comes in and tests.

Director Vernon Keenan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation stated he had two items to speak about and started with legislation that came out of this past General Assembly which affected the GBI. Director Keenan relayed that part of the Governor's legislative package was an authorization for the GBI to have authority to work mortgage fraud. After the Governor signs this legislation into law the GBI will have statute authority to work mortgage fraud and will have administrative subpoena power associated with that authority. This is a continuation of responsibilities that GBI has with identity theft.

Director Keenan stated a bill has been proposed which would amend the death investigations act; under the current law in the death investigations act if a law enforcement agency works a death case and the case is to be prosecuted, the evidence has to be sent to the GBI to be analyzed with the GBI maintaining the evidence. GBI asked for the law to be changed which would allow the GBI to return evidence in death cases back to the submitting agency. This would permit the submitting agency to go to a private laboratory if they wanted to or go to another government laboratory. Under current law the GBI is prohibited from doing this, it was in our interest to return the evidence back to the agency that is responsible for it. So this law has passed and when the Governor signs this legislation, it will update a law that was actually written in the earlier 50's.

Director Keenan stated that the Meredith Emerson Protection Act passed and this legislation relates to death scene photographs. Director Keenan reminded the Board members that GBI had received an open records request from Hustler Magazine for the death scene photographs and all related material in the Meredith Emerson murder rape case. Senior Assistant Attorney General Joe Drolet attended the court hearings to represent the state's interest from prohibiting the release of the photographs. The legislators stepped in and Speaker of the House David Ralston introduced legislation which would exempt death scene photographs from open records. This bill was passed and is now waiting on the Governor's signature. Autopsy photographs are already exempt from public release; this just extends over to death investigations.

Director Kennan stated a bill was passed that states the GBI is no longer required to use retread tires on emergency vehicles. The current law states that any state vehicle with a wheel over 16 inches has to use a retread tire. This is absolutely absurd; we attached an amendment to the Georgia State Patrol bill and it passed the General Assembly and states that the agency head can determine if the agency wants to use retread tires or not. Director Keenan stated there was a pretty vocal hearing on the issue as he understood that many legislators stood up and said that they were not going to support legislation that requires law enforcement to run retread tires on emergency vehicles.

Director Keenan stated that the Bingo bill did not pass again this year; as the Board will recall last year, the GBI with the Governor's concurrence, legislation was introduced which would transfer responsibility for bingo licensing enforcement from GBI over to the Department of Revenue. Director Keenan stated last year the bill went from a one paragraph bill to a 30 page bill and did not go anywhere last year or this year. Director Kennan told the Board members that he has decided that because Bart Graham is the only Department of Revenue Commissioner who has ever volunteered and consented to take over Bingo regulations that the legislators are not going to give it to anyone who actually wants it.

Director Kennan spoke to the Board members in regards to the budget and stated he had been with the GBI for 37 years and has seen some roller coaster rides in the General Assembly but this last session takes the cake. Director Keenan stated GBI went through the major budget cutting process and I believed, I was told, I was told there was no way there would be any funding for the crime laboratories, beyond that to the funding was going to be restored to the three crime labs that were slated for the budget cuts. After the general assembly cleared, we woke up to a wonderful atmosphere here; we had funding restored in the crime labs. Director Keenan refreshed everyone's memory stating during the budget cutting process there were two alternatives; one was to cut 30 agent jobs or look at the lab system where we had three crime laboratories that were inadequately staffed and were not operating efficiently. Director Keenan stated he elected to put the crime labs up for the budget cuts and as GBI went through the budget process the final outcome is this, the General Assembly restored funding to keep the Columbus lab open and restored funding to the Moultrie lab to keep that lab operational plus nearly \$500,000.00 in a bond package to do the necessary repair work at the Moultrie lab. Moultrie facility needs major renovations and we had inadequate staff at this location. Director Keenan stated he was very pleased that the General Assembly listened to what the GBI was saying about the lab

system. What we needed in the labs was not status quo, we needed additional funding for the labs so that we could hire additional staff which will make the business case more efficiently, so the outcome was that they provided the funding that we had asked for in Columbus to make a business case which was around \$450,000.00 and then they provided \$425,000.00 for Moultrie in order to provide additional staff and the money to do the repair work on the building. GBI came out very well and are making plans to proceed with this. Director Keenan stated the Summerville laboratory has already been closed down, equipment moved out and the staff has either relocated to another assignment or resigned. Plans for the Summerville lab are to rent that facility to Chattooga County for one dollar a year. They are interested in taking over the facility, moving in some of their administrative staff in the building; this will work well for us as we do not need a crime lab facility sitting vacant. In regards to the other two labs, Director Keenan recommended to the Governor that we keep Columbus operating and that we reopen Moultrie. Moultrie has been closed down, the staff has moved out, gone on to another assignment or resigned. In addition, GBI has moved the equipment out of the building so Moultrie is sitting vacant. Concerning the Columbus lab, at the last minute, the Columbus Muscogee County Authority stepped in and provided funding to keep the Columbus lab open from April 1 to June 30, 2010. Director Keenan stated he was recommending to the Governor that the funding that was appropriated by the General Assembly be used to keep the Columbus lab operating and proceed with repairing the Moultrie lab building and then reopen the lab. GBI has actually put together a plan that will work out and it will be much easier to do a major renovation in the Moultrie lab with it being vacant because there is no way we can do all this work and try to operate the lab at the same time. So GBI has recommended that we proceed in repairing that building and then we employ staff from the South Georgia area that would work in the laboratory, we will concentrate on hiring people from that area in order to negate the high turnover rate we have had in the rural areas. With the additional funding that has gone above the status quo funding that we have, we will add additional staff to the Columbus and Moultrie labs. Director Keenan stated he knows this Board understands that he has a boss and that he is waiting on the boss to give him the decision if this recommendation is going to go forward or not.

Director Keenan stated he recommended to the Governor that we reopen these two labs and is a very much positive aspect that we receive funding to hire additional staff which will make a business case to keep the labs operating. Director Keenan stated that if the GBI recommendation is accepted GBI would immediately move to open up an evidence receiving station at Moultrie so that local law enforcement agencies would not have to mail in their evidence via Fedex or drive their evidence to a further crime laboratory; the GBI would be responsible for transferring evidence to the appropriate laboratory.

Chief Dekmar asked Director Keenan had any money been set aside for replacement of outdated equipment. Director Keenan replied that the legislature put money in the bond package to purchase an additional four million dollars worth of equipment to replace outdated equipment. Director Keenan stated at some point the GBI crime labs were close to having a meltdown with the equipment.

Director Keenan stated Chief Stacey Cotton of Covington PD who is President of the Chiefs Association, has asked Dr. Robert Friedman to reconstitute the crime lab study commission which had

previously called together all the customers in the criminal justice system that uses the GBI Crime Labs to include Chiefs, Sheriffs, Prosecutors, Court and Defense attorneys and look at the current status of the state crime lab and then make a recommendation for the needs of the future. Dr. Friedman is in the process of reconstituting that study and it will be very advantageous to all of us as this will be an independent body made up of customers who can step out and define the future needs of the state crime lab. Director Keenan stated instead of the GBI director trying to carry the message, we will have a unified front that can speak to the facts.

Mr. Wayne Abernathy asked Director Keenan if there was any information he could share on the missing Kristi Cornwell case. At this time, Director Keenan reported the GBI is looking very closely at James Carringer, a guy from Fannin County who is a sociopath that has been involved in attempted abductions of a 10 year old girl, the rape of a 19 year old lady and do not know what else he has been up to at this point. Director Keenan stated Mr. Carringer was cornered in Atlanta at Buckhead after the rape of the 19 year old lady and committed suicide. During the investigation of that case it came to light that he was driving a vehicle that was identical in model and color of the prime suspect in the Kristi Cornwell case (the lady kidnapped walking on a road in Union County). The GBI is piecing together Mr. Carringer's past travel records and trying to determine if there is a connection. Director Keenan stated Mr. Carringer is of great interest to the GBI.

Chief Dekmar stated he attended and spoke to a group of criminal investigation agencies in Missouri last week and stated it was clear that the GBI and Vernon Keenan are very well regarded around the country and Chief Dekmar was proud to say that he knew those at the GBI.

Colonel Hitchens, Department of Public Safety began by stating he was glad to see that Vice-Chairman Wood had made a significant recovery from his illness and grateful he was here today. Colonel Hitchens told the Board members that Mr. Lester Rampy was his boss for a long time; he and retired Major George Johnson who was present at the meeting had been role models for him, was glad to see Mr. Rampy on the Board and looks forward to working with him again.

Colonel Hitchens related to those present that in September 2008, Kia donated a vehicle to the Department of Public Safety which was then given to the Governor's office. At that time Kia promised the Department of Public Safety another vehicle that came off the assembly line when the plant was up and running. Colonel Hitchens stated that DPS is very happy with Kia, it has been an economic boom for this part of the state and the state as a whole. Colonel Hitchens stated he and Vice-Chairman Wood attended the opening ceremony and went through the assembly line at that time and was a very interesting experience.

Colonel Hitchens stated in regards to the legislature and the budget, he was very concerned with what might transpire. Colonel Hitchens stated there had been a lot of planning and soul searching and had plans in place to deal with the significant cutting. Colonel Hitchens stated he had not talked in public in regards to the budget cutting and there was no need now to speak about it. Colonel Hitchens stated the only cut to DPS was \$219,000.00 in administration and that was primarily personnel services in headquarters. Colonel Hitchens went on to relate with attrition, a lot of vacancies and also a Captain in

Safety Education that would be retiring June 1<sup>st</sup> was a big help in regards to our budget process. Colonel Hitchens further related that eight Safety Education personnel would be transferred to work under the Troop Commands where they reside. Colonel Hitchens stated that DPS had gone from an appropriated budget of 118 million dollars to an 85 million dollar budget; however 82% of the DPS budget is for personnel services. Colonel Hitchens stated one of the things that happened for our good fortune was the installation of the Communication Centers and the Records Management System. This has helped reduce the Communication Centers authorized positions to 73. Colonel Hitchens told the members that the Department went ahead with the Americus transition for the Communication Center at the old post as the new facility has not been completed but will be in the near future. The only Communication Center that is not operational is the one in Cartersville as the Department is waiting for that post to be completed.

Colonel Hitchens stated that all the bills that DPS had before the legislature passed this year, beginning with HB990 which was a complete rewrite of the motor carrier laws to be in compliance with federal laws.

HB1165 removes the sunset clause for the motorcycle unit, all the fines derived from the motor unit come back to the unit to maintain it, which was attached to HB981 that authorizes the Commissioner of DPS to require that patrol vehicles be painted a solid color and the reasoning behind this was due to the economical situation in order to cut spending in any way that DPS could.

In regards to HB1074, Colonel Hitchens relayed that DPS has been running the Capitol Police Division since 2001 and found out a couple of years ago that the law actually gives that authority to the Georgia Building Authority. Former Governor Barnes gave the Division to DPS and to the best of Colonel Hitchens knowledge there was no executive order written or any legislation requesting that Capitol Police be assigned to DPS. Colonel Hitchens told members that many years ago DPS took over Jekyll Island and related there was a murder on the island, DPS did the investigation, prosecuted the individual for murder who was convicted. The sentence was appealed and at that time DPS did not have the authority by law and the murderer was turned loose. Now DPS has the authority statewide. Colonel Hitchens stated he wanted Capitol Police to be legally assigned to DPS so that we will have no further problems in this area in the future.

Colonel Hitchens stated operationally this year; GSP worked over 41,000 crashes this year, the most ever worked. GSP worked over half of the fatalities for the state and arrests were up 54% and DUIs were up 22% and believes part of that reason is with the shortage of fuel requires troopers to do more in the way of road checks which seems to mean more DUIs, safety belts and child restraint arrests.

Colonel Hitchens stated on April 15<sup>th</sup>, there was a Tea Party at the Capitol with 10,000 in attendance and no issues. Capitol Police and forty troopers were dedicated to the detail.

Colonel Hitchens advised that last Saturday, Rockdale County Sheriff asked for assistance in regards to a KKK rally.

Colonel Hitchens stated this coming weekend, 40 troopers would be assigned to assist with the Southern Grand National.

Colonel Hitchens stated that five troopers traveled to Washington DC on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010 for the Washington DC National Police Memorial.

Colonel Hitchens advised that the Motorcycle Unit Building located on Memorial Drive was dedicated on April 28, 2010. Colonel Hitchens stated that Governor Perdue was the keynote speaker; Lt. Governor Cagle, DOC Commissioner Owens and newest Board member Lester Rampy were in attendance. Colonel Hitchens thanked DOC Commissioner Owens for the help and support from the DOC Construction Team in remodeling the building.

Colonel Hitchens stated GSP Post 6 Gainesville will be dedicated on June 24, 2010. Colonel Hitchens thanked Board member Wayne Abernathy, Board member and Hall County Sheriff Steve Cronin and former Board member Mr. Bud Black for their assistance and help in making Post 6 a reality.

Colonel Hitchens presented the 2009 Pursuit Summary Report and stated the delivery was a little late due to moving to the computerization with the Record Management System. Colonel Hitchens stated the unique thing to him while doing this report for 6 years, 2004-2009, when you look at all the categories and statistics, the numbers are almost the same in every category, very little change.

### **FISCAL REPORTS**

Comptroller Joe Hood, Department of Public Safety stated that DPS had 27.82 % remaining ending March 2010 and would typically be at 25%; however we have some equipment items DPS has yet to purchase during the last quarter of the fiscal year. DPS should be able to order about 70 cars with the extra percentage and are on target to spend the funds that DPS has.

Fiscal officer Ms. Lisa Urich, Georgia Bureau of Investigation stated for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter GBI should be at 25% but are actually sitting at 30% to spend. Ms. Urich stated GBI is in the process of restocking their supply cabinets, spending the money in order to be on target for June 30, 2010.

Mr. Butch Beach, Georgia Public Safety Training Center stated GPSTC is in the same position as DPS and GBI and GPSTC has about 33% of our budget remaining. GPSTC is restocking ammunition, supplies, training supplies and plan to be on target for June 30, 2010.

### **DONATIONS**

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

Two Genesis II Radar Units	\$2,600.00	Camden County Sheriff's Office
Meals for Drag Race-Tprs/MCCD/CEOs	\$3,690.00	GM ATL Drag way-Ray Wilkins



The motion for these donations was made by Mr. Wayne Abernathy, seconded by Chief Louis Dekmar and voted approved by the Board members.

Ms. Lisa Urich, Georgia Bureau of Investigation requested approval of the following donations:

Panasonic Model Cf-52 laptop computer	\$1876.78	Sheriff Quinton Rush
Two 3.5 ton BARD HVAC Units and installation	\$12,450.00	Sheriff Cullen Talton

Chief Louis Dekmar made this donation approval motion; it was seconded by Mr. Danny M. Bryant and voted approved by the Board members.

### **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Lee O'Brien, Department of Public Safety proposed a Resolution to declare as surplus, certain real property located at 19051 US Highway 301N, Statesboro, Bulloch County, Georgia formerly used as Georgia State Patrol (GSP) Post 45 Headquarters and Barracks including certain space formerly used as a drivers licensing facility and also including a radio transmission tower, and further authorize the Commissioner of Public Safety to take all appropriate action and prepare the appropriate documents including signing such documents on behalf of the Board of Public Safety as may be necessary for the express purpose of declaring said property surplus to the Department and available for any use as may be designated by the State Properties Commission.

The motion was made to approve the resolution by Mr. C. Murray Kight, seconded by Mr. Wayne Abernathy and voted approved by the Board members.

Vice-Chairman Wood stated he and Colonel Hitchens had this thought process a number of months ago since this Board had been the recipient of a Kia vehicle that was presented to the State of Georgia, wondered how could we as a Board publicly thank Kia and Colonel and I talked a lot about different ways and one thought was that we could come to the plant and have a meeting and publicly thank Kia in some manner, then the Colonel and I were honored to go to the Grand Opening which was one of the most impressive things in my life. Vice-Chairman Wood told Kia representatives that the Board was very grateful that Kia agreed to host the Board meeting and thanked the Kia representatives for the vehicle publicly and for their time today.

Ms. Corrine Hodges, Assistant Manager of Public Relations with Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia, Inc. presented an overview of the magnitude of the construction project and production process and Mr. Steve G. Daniel, Director for Kia Project Operations and Training Center presented an overview of the partnership of the Training Center with Kia.

Vice-Chairman Wood stated the Board does not plan to meet in June, July and August and advised that Mr. Rooney Bowen, III will be hosting the September meeting somewhere in his area and we will begin to focus on that.

Mr. Jerry Willis made the motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Wayne Abernathy and voted approved by the Board members.

Following the meeting, lunch was served in the Kia employees' canteen, with a tour taking place after the lunch.

---

Rooney L. Bowen, III  
Secretary