

BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY

October 9, 2008

Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol Headquarters

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Governor Sonny Perdue
Vice-Chairman James E. Donald
Mr. Wayne Abernathy
Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III
Sheriff Steve Cronic
Chief Lou Dekmar
Chief Dwayne Orrick
Mr. Pat Head
Chief Jack McElfish
Sheriff Cullen Talton
Mr. Jerry Willis
Mr. Ellis Wood

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Dub Harper
Mr. Bud Black
Sheriff Bruce Harris

OTHERS:

Ms. Laura Jones, Board Liaison
Mr. Joe Drolet, Senior Assistant Attorney General
Colonel Bill Hitchens, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Lieutenant Colonel Fred Snellings, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Mr. Joe Hood, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Major Stewart Hicks, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Mr. Dan Brown, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Mr. Lee O'Brien, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Russell Powell, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Chief Mark McLeod, MCCD, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Major Billy Boulware, MCCD, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Captain Mike Fagler, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Major Wayne Beck, MCCD, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Mr. Grady Sanford, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Ms. Jacqueline Bunn, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Mr. Gordy Wright, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Ms. Angie Holt, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Ms. Melissa Rodgers, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Ms. Allison Hodge, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Director Vernon Keenan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Mr. Dan Kirk, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Mr. Paul Heppner, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Director Dale Mann, Georgia Public Safety Training Center

Ms. Patrice Kerner, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Chief Deputy Jeff Strickland, Hall County Sheriff's Office
Colonel Reuben McGee, Houston County Sheriff's Office
Mr. Geronaldo Bell, Office of Planning and Budget
Mr. Leroy Yancey, Construction Services, Department of Corrections

Governor Sonny Perdue attended the meeting today, with touring the Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol Communications Center. After welcoming Governor Perdue, Vice Chairman Donald called on Mr. Rooney Bowen to open with prayer.

The Board of Public Safety then presented a Board Resolution to Governor Perdue. Governor Perdue thanked the Board members for their service. Governor Perdue stated that Board dynamics are a very important part in the way we function in state government. He stated that each Board member knows what a tough job public safety is. Governor thanked the members for being a Board that gives counsel to executive leadership. He thinks the state has good leaders in the areas that the Board oversees; they are better leaders because of counsel and direction by the Board. Governor Perdue thanked the Board for the way they have supported the leadership of the agencies. Governor Perdue stated he wanted to share about the event that happened yesterday in holding statewide Customer Service Awards for all agencies. There were 676 nominations of people who had given outstanding customer service performances. Governor Perdue stated that one individual who received a customer service award was the Warden of Augusta State Medical Prison. Governor stated this gentleman had engaged the community and the families and was running a prison, while reaching out and being nominated; some things said about him were remarkable. Governor Perdue stated that another agency nominated was GBI; a team recognized for their customer service. Governor Perdue stated everyone should take great pride in that, when having a warden from a prison get a customer service award, that is going beyond the call of duty. Governor Perdue stated that the point he made yesterday was even the state is in tough jobs, customer service can be done in the way we treat people, respond to people, and the way we do our jobs. Governor Perdue thanked Colonel Hitchens and Georgia State Patrol, as well as people from Training, GBI, Corrections and others that the Board oversees. Governor stated that one of the basic functions of government is to keep people safe; we can talk about education, talk about economic development, talk about health care, but when getting down to it, if citizens don't feel safe nothing else matters. That is how core it is to the quality of life. Governor Perdue thanked the Board members for their service and for supporting the leaders in these departments. Governor Perdue stated the state looks forward to continuing to make Georgia safer. His four pillars are for the state to be more educated, healthier, growing and safer Georgia.

After Governor Perdue left the meeting, Vice-Chairman Donald asked everyone to give the Pledge of Allegiance. He then called the meeting to order, stating it was a delight to have Governor Perdue to come by and spend time with the Board. Vice-Chairman Donald thanked Mr. Ellis Wood for his efforts in getting the Governor here. Vice-Chairman Donald stated this is some tough budget times, and, this a time when these meetings are more important than ever.

Vice Chairman Donald requested if Board members wanted to introduce any visitors. Sheriff Steve Cronic introduced Chief Deputy Jeff Strickland. Sheriff Cullen Talton introduced Colonel Reuben McGee. Then each visitor stood and stated his/her name.

Chief Jack McElfish announced that Sandy Springs has a new Police Chief, who will start October 27. Mr. Gary Sulte comes to Sandy Springs by way of Charlotte-Mecklinburg Police Department, where he was commander; and he has been a police chief of Gastonia, North Carolina for past four years. Chief McElfish will bring the new Police Chief to one of the Board meetings.

Vice-Chairman Donald announced Mr. Wayne Abernathy has been reappointed to the Board and called for a motion to confirm. Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III stated it is with great honor and privilege for him to make the motion that the senior member of the Board and mentor of this Board, Mr. Wayne Abernathy, be reappointed to the Board of Public Safety for another term. Chief Lou Dekmar seconded said motion and the Board members wholeheartedly voted approval.

Vice-Chairman Donald called for approval of the September Board Minutes. Chief Jack McElfish made the motion, seconded by Mr. Wayne Abernathy, and voted approval by the Board members.

DIRECT REPORTS

Colonel Bill Hitchens, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol, began with welcoming everyone to Department of Public Safety. He stated this facility has been in place since 1957, and, Colonel tells people he came here when it was new. Colonel Hitchens stated that about six months ago, Commissioner Donald said if anybody needed help with activities for the public good, that Corrections had inmates who needed work. Colonel Hitchens stated he sought out Commissioner Donald to help with this project. For those who have not yet visited, there will be an opportunity today to look at the new communications center. This was completed with Corrections construction personnel, and, Department of Public Safety is in debt to the construction supervisor and all the people in the project.

Colonel Hitchens pointed to a pictorial that shows what it looked like when it began. This building used to be the Driver's License Facility where ladies sat in rows and would keypunch in data processing. When that office moved out, they pulled a lot of things out of the wall. The pictures show it was pretty barren when construction got started. Now, the room looks very modernized, looks great. When looking over the pictures, it shows what has come to past. It has been an amazing transformation. It moves the Department into the 21st century with regard to interoperable communications. It will get the Department to come forward with statewide traffic statistics with regard to accident enforcements and other things. The proudest of anything that has happened since he has been here is this communications. Colonel Hitchens stated that Governor Perdue assured of going forward with this statewide and to have nine more facilities around the state. This will save about 40,000 to 50,000 man hours; last year the Department had over 5,000 shifts of radio duty that were filled by troopers, who should have been out on the highway.

Colonel Hitchens stated he wanted to thank Chief Orrick who brought this to the attention of Governor Perdue. Colonel and Governor had discussed this project four years ago about implementing this and there had been a misunderstanding about the project.

Colonel Hitchens stated that last month Mr. Jerry Willis had questions about slow moving vehicles. Colonel Hitchens introduced Ms. Jacqueline Bunn, who is the Deputy Director of Legal Services Division, and who will be giving a powerpoint on the subject. Colonel stated Ms. Bunn has been doing a great job the last two years in putting this together. One thing Colonel would like to see is that this issue be codified in Chapter 40 so that the laws are all in one place. In looking at this issue, as things became problematic through the years, they have been instituted in different places in O.C.G.A. 40. A person has to jump all around to find where all these laws are, whether they are electric vehicles, golf carts, agriculture equipment, or four wheelers.

Colonel Hitchens thanked everyone for coming and stated if anyone wanted to see the communications room and the rest of the building, they are more than welcome. Chief Dwayne Orrick thanked Colonel for his kind words; stating it was the foresight of many others. He asked if the Department of Public Safety could work closely with Department of Transportation to make what the Chiefs Association has talked about in doing; an approach statewide with local and county and state officials on traffic enforcements. This will save money and save lives and make all work better together. Colonel Hitchens stated the Department has not signed a contract yet but that is forthcoming. There has been difficulty in the bidding process, but is at the point of moving forward. Chief Orrick stated he wanted to talk about the issue of actual police reporting and accidents and how to collate that data into a workable fashion with delegating staff to put officers on locations where accidents are occurring. Colonel Hitchens stated that in the early 70's, there was a system with DOT and State Patrol used to get printouts. The reports identified all the accidents by time of day, day of week, weather, all the attributes that were involved. Another agency, Department of Drivers Services, will have a contract to allow swipe of drivers' licenses, so troopers will be able to do citations just by swiping. Colonel Hitchens stated he

thinks everything is coming together and will make all agencies more efficient. Vice-Chairman Donald stated that this Board could at some point decide to look at other ways to enhance collaboration and communications. Chief Orrick stated the Board might want to look having Chief Mike Jones, who along with Chief Lou Dekmar and Ms. Melissa Rodgers, worked on traffic safety report. Chief suggested maybe the Board could develop a standing committee to help on issues of public safety and traffic safety around the state. Chief Orrick stated the Board might want to invite Chief Jones to do a presentation of the problems of how traffic enforcement is seen across the state historically and today and the problems having with public safety enforcement. Colonel Hitchens added that another part of that would be getting Sheriffs involved in that study, this would have everybody from all facets working together on traffic safety. Vice-Chairman Donald asked Chief Orrick to take the lead on that.

Vice-Chairman Donald requested Mr. Leroy Yancey to come forward, along with Colonel Hitchens. Vice-Chairman Donald stated he has had nothing but praise given to Department of Corrections about the efforts they have done. There are 33 construction crews, and, the supervisors are supervising felons out there. Vice-Chairman Donald presented Mr. Yancey with a Commissioner's Coin for the hard work he did with this State Patrol project. Colonel Hitchens stated there never were any problems; he walked through once or twice a day while the crew worked and saw they stayed at it.

Ms. Jacqueline Bunn, one of the Deputy Directors of Legal Services, began her briefing with a powerpoint. She stated that her office routinely gets several calls each week about low speed vehicles. Because of the current prices of gas, people are looking for alternatives, and, one of the things they are using are golf carts. A lot of communities are now having issues with people driving them on the roadway and they are not always clear about what the rules of the road are.

Ms. Bunn explained that basically a low speed vehicle is defined under O.C.G.A. § 40-1-1(25.1), a four wheel electric vehicle that travels at speeds greater than twenty miles per hour but less than twenty-five miles per hour. This complies with the Federal regulation Section 571.500, which provides the standards for defining what low speed vehicles are. If a vehicle travels greater than 25-miles-per hour, then it is considered passenger vehicle and all the other standards for passenger vehicles would apply to it. There are also golf carts, and their definition is found under §§ 40-1-1(33) and 40-1-1(75), and that is every motor vehicle that is self propelled, every device that may transport persons or property. O.C.G.A. § 40-1-1(32) is the definition of motorized carts and those are motor vehicles having no less than three wheels and unleaden weight of 1300 pounds or less and that will operate at 20 miles per hour or less.

Ms. Bunn explained the Differences. First of all, registration is not required for golf carts or motorized carts, but it is required for low speed vehicles. Insurance is not required for golf carts and motorized carts but it is required for low speed vehicles. The Basis for the Differences is that golf carts have a top speed of about 15 miles per hour and is designed to carry golfers on golf courses; hence, the regulation regarding the rules of the road are unnecessary because they are on the golf course. Motorized carts can exceed 25 miles per hour. The similarities are: rules

of the road apply when operating on the highway; they can be charged with traffic offenses; they need a license on the highway; and they have to have the proper equipment. Some of the limitations are that under O.C.G.A. § 40-6-30, it restricts the hours of operations for motorized carts to daylight hours, unless they comply with the proper equipment requirements such as lights and turn signals. O.C.G.A. § 40-6-31 allows local governing bodies to create ordinances for licenses and use on road under their regulation and control, such as Peachtree City. Ms. Bunn stated that Peachtree City has a 90-mile network of multi-use paths for pedestrians, cyclists, and golf carts. They require registration for residential and business use of golf carts and have published Rules. Peachtree City is a planned community that was established unchartered back in 1959; and, then in 1974, the Legislature passed laws allowing the use of electric golf carts on streets mainly due to what was developing and evolving in Peachtree City. Now, in Peachtree City, almost every household owns a golf cart. Other communities desire to develop something similar. Peachtree City actually has golf paths, that in some instances run under the highway and created bridges specifically for the golf carts. Ms. Bunn stated there are only two reported decisions in the State of Georgia that relate specifically to use of these types of vehicles, and, both have been generated out of Peachtree City. The first case, *Simmons v. State*, which was decided back in 2006. The facts of that case are that a defendant drove up to an officer who was investigating a fight and asked him what was going on and the officer noticed alcohol on defendant's breath. The officer investigated event further and eventually defendant was arrested for driving under the influence and with a suspended license. Defendant's contention was that golf carts are driven on a municipal trail system and are not under purview of the statute governing driving under the influence. The lower court disagreed and defendant appealed. On appeal, the conviction was upheld and the court ultimately decided the DUI provisions do apply on a street, a highway, or on private property. The second case, *Coker v. State*, and that case was decided in 2003. In that case, the Defendant was stopped on a golf cart by police in Peachtree City, and, the police determined that Defendant was driving under the influence. Defendant was convicted of DUI and driving with suspended license. Defendant appealed, and, in that case the court upheld the conviction and made the law clear that a golf cart is a vehicle requiring a license. Defendant attempted to argue that he did not need a license because kids can drive golf carts. The Court disagreed and said that under these circumstances, the Defendant could be convicted because he did need a license. Ms. Bunn continued with explaining that because of the number of questions that Public Safety has received, the Department has actually developed a handout that is being provided to law enforcement. The handout/tri-fold was given to the Board members. Ms. Bunn addressed several questions and completed her report.

After discussion of this issue with Board Members, Vice-Chairman Donald recommended the Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol Committee review this issue. Colonel Hitchens added this would be a great thing for the State Patrol Committee and requested that the Sheriffs Association and Chiefs Association be included. There is no idea of the complexity of the issue until looking at the information on the tri-fold. Every trooper was given one of the tri-folds because a trooper has to know what class the low speed vehicle is in; how much it weighs; whether or not it has to be registered; whether insurance is required; whether a person wears a

helmet. Colonel Hitchens stated it would be great if it could be reorganized so that it is all under one Code. Mr. Rooney Bowen, III made the motion for the sub-committee, which was seconded by Chief Dwayne Orrick and voted approval by the Board.

Director Vernon Keenan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, began with reporting with what Governor Perdue talked about, relative to the Customer Service Award that the GBI won yesterday. The Award was in the category of Most Improved Process in State Government given to GCIC. As background, the Georgia Applicant Print Services, or fingerprint processing, is a very important issue for the State of Georgia. Director Keenan stated that when he became GBI Director in 2003, the complaints that he received from customers across the state were in two areas. One was backlogs in the Crime Lab, and, the other was in the amount of time it was required to complete fingerprint processing for licensing purposes. Currently, in Georgia there are 28 separate statutes that require a fingerprint based criminal history check at the national level for certain licenses. Of the 28 separate professions, those relate to not only police officers but educators, real estate, firearm licenses without completion of the criminal history records check, the licensing process cannot go forward. The GBI on an average handles over 200,000 fingerprint applications for licensing purposes each year. That number has been growing by 12% each year. Director Keenan stated that in today's environment, it is critically important that there be criminal history checks completed; more importantly, that it be based on fingerprints, which are the biometric identifiers. Director Keenan stated the GBI was doing over 200,000 fingerprint checks each year for applicant purposes. The problem was the majority of those fingerprints were being submitted to the GBI to be forwarded up to the FBI, and, they were being submitted on fingerprint cards. It required an average of three to five weeks to complete the process of having the GBI receive the cards, doing the checks in Georgia, and then forwarding them up to the FBI. If there was a situation where the prints were illegible for any reason, it would kick the prints back and the process would start all over again. It was not uncommon for GBI to be in a situation of having school teachers who were waiting to be certified, or, foster parents who were waiting to be cleared to go forward and that it be hung up in a system for five to six months.

Director Keenan stated GCIC staff looked at the problem and came up with a solution. The solution was to go forward with a system which sets up receiving all these applicant fingerprints electronically, so there is no more handling of paper. The Governor's Award was based on their completion of a process that took the delay of three to five weeks to complete the fingerprint checks down to a period of time of 24 to 48 hours. Fingerprints are captured electronically, submitted electronically, and results come back electronically. The Governor's Award was based on the Most Improved Process with the taking 200,000 fingerprints each year and reducing the time, which is a major accomplishment and a great benefit to Georgia citizens. It did not cost state government anything because the GBI set up a statewide contract with a private vendor and the applicant pays for the service; with the benefit of rapid response. That was the basis for Governor's Award, and, GBI was proud to be there and see GCIC staff recognized for their hard work. Director Keenan responded to questions and completed his report.

Director Dale Mann, Georgia Public Safety Training Center, began with stating invitations were sent to Board Members of the Governor's Public Safety Awards ceremony. The ceremony will be held on October 23 at 1:30 p.m. at the Training Center. Director Mann stated there were 89 nominees; the committee met two weeks ago and nominations were whittled down to 15 true Heroes and four Contributions to Profession. Every one is a well deserved award. Director Mann stated the Board Members are welcome to visit that day and Governor Perdue will be there for the awards.

Director Mann stated the budget cuts continue to have impact on what Training Center does. The Training Center has actually started pulling down classes to save money on meals and lodging. This will create some level of frustration with the public safety officers that the Training Center services, because there are a lot of popular classes they will have to wait to get into because there are fewer offerings.

Director Mann completed his report, stating he will later bring Resolutions to the Board.

DONATIONS

Mr. Joe Hood, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol, requested approval of the following donations:

GE Range and GE Microwave	\$ 512.20	Vidalia Sweet Onion Committee
Exmark Lazer ZHP Lawnmower	\$ 6,800.00	Colquitt County Sheriff and Decatur County Sheriff
Check for Expenses Relating to Traffic Event for October 24-26 Race at Atlanta Motor Speedway	\$11,475.00	Atlanta Motor Speedway
Four Laser Lab Tint Meters	\$ 300.00	Effingham County Sheriff
2009 Kia Borrego EX	\$37,545.00	Kia Motors, America Inc.

Mr. Rooney Bowen, III made the motion to approve these donations, which was seconded by Sheriff Steve Cronic, and voted approval by the Board members.

RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Lee O'Brien, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol, began with explaining that in 2001, Georgia State Patrol Post 42 in Savannah vacated the Dean Forest property. Since that time, State Patrol has not operated any state trooper operations out of that location. Sometime after that, clean up was done and State purchased several additional parcels of property adjacent to the State Patrol property because of gas leakage from the gas tanks located on the property. EPA came in and required the state to purchase those properties; those properties were residences. Among those properties were two properties purchased by State Patrol, known as 1416 and 1422 Dean Forest Road. Mr. O'Brien is seeking to move those properties from the custody of Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol over to the Georgia Public Safety Training Center. The Training Center has an agreement with Garden City, which now owns adjacent property and has incorporated that property into their city. This Resolution, being presented this morning, is to move those properties from Department of Public Safety to the custody of the Georgia Public Safety Training Center. If the Board approves, this Resolution will authorize Commissioner of Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol to take whatever steps necessary to indicate to Director Mann that the property is transferred to Georgia Public Safety Training Center based on Board's Resolution. The State Properties Commission will be notified to take whatever action they need to show that the property is now in the custody of the state training center.

Director Mann added that he and Mr. O'Brien have been working with State Properties Commission for the last two weeks. Director Mann's three Resolutions and Mr. O'Brien's Resolution need to be done.

Chief Jack McElfish requested to make a motion to adopt all Resolutions, one by Georgia Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol and three by Georgia Public Safety Training Center. Chief Lou Dekmar seconded the motion, and Board members voted approval.

Director Mann further explained that the Resolutions describe a total of twenty acres that the State already owns; State Patrol owns some and Drivers Services owns some; this puts it all under one arm now. One Resolution that Director Mann had deals with giving Georgia Public Safety Training Center to go to State Properties Commission and get a demolition order for Garden City to have the ingress and egress to do the final clean up of the underground storage tank leaks. Director Mann thanked the Board Members for the motion and vote.

Chief Jack McElfish stated that his Department lost eleven firefighters to Johns Creek city, and, Sandy Springs is in a bind to get new recruits trained. Chief McElfish complimented Mr. David Wall, who works for Director Mann, in putting together a special training program for Sandy Springs. This will take a lot of extra effort; the Training Center has great people working down there. Chief McElfish stated the training goes from 12:00 in the afternoon until 9:00 at night; sort of a night time boot camp. Chief McElfish thanked Director Mann for how well they are working with Sandy Springs.

OLD BUSINESS

Vice-Chairman Donald called on Chief Lou Dekmar to report on the By Laws Committee.

Chief Dekmar stated the committee reviewed the ByLaws as it relates to meetings and participation by members. He directed the Board Members to look at the ByLaws under the last tab in the notebook. The sub-committee met yesterday; and, Chief Dekmar, Mr. Rooney Bowen, III, Mr. Wayne Abernathy, and Board Attorney Joe Drolet were present. Chief Dekmar stated in reviewing the section relating to special meetings, Article III Section 1, it was the consensus of the committee that the Board follow the lead some other state boards had adopted; one in particular the Board of Regents. The sub-committee modified the language requiring Board of Public Safety to meet eight times per year, unless press of business demands more on dates determined by the Chair and approved by the Board. Chief Dekmar stated the reason for this is the nature of the business is such that this Board will be able to function according to its intent if the Board met eight times a year. If there are matters that need to be brought before this Board for a required meeting, the change in the ByLaws will provide for that. Chief Dekmar stated this is the recommendation of the Committee, and, he makes that recommendation to follow the proper publication for vote at a later meeting. Vice-Chairman Donald inquired if there is any statutory issue regarding this; because some state boards are required to meet every month. Board Attorney Joe Drolet stated the statute regarding this Board is silent in that regard; these By Laws were adopted several years ago and now can be changed.

Vice-Chairman Donald requested for any discussion from other Board members. He stated this is a little bit of deviation of what the Board has done in the past. As a part of that is also the issue of asking Board members to attend at least three of those meetings.

Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III stated the one thing he wanted to say that the eight times per year is basically what the Board of Regents does. It does not mean that the Board of Public Safety cannot meet more times than eight times. But, the Board meetings can be made available to any member, who cannot attend, with the opportunity to teleconference at any time. This will make it as easy as possible for anybody who cannot actually show up in person, to still be in attendance. Mr. Bowen also stated that it will be up to the Board members to decide when the eight times will be; to look at the summer months; to look at the months when the Legislature is in session. Mr. Bowen stated there will be a lot of flexibility that the Board will have on those eight times. Mr. Bowen stated that when the Board sets the dates for meetings, when giving a date six months from now, the Board needs to stick to that date because people go ahead and mark it on their calendar.

Chief Dwayne Orrick questioned if discussion was held of whether the Board could substitute a teleconference meeting for coming to Atlanta. Vice-Chairman Donald stated that the

Corrections Board Room has the web base system, GoToMeeting; this gives the ability to present slide presentations to those who can sit in front of a computer. Chief Orrick stated that it is costly to put Board members in a hotel; also, looking at all the state employees who have to participate in the meeting, that is using a lot of resources. Vice-Chairman Donald inquired if Board is obligated to meet in Atlanta by By Laws. One of the issues that the Board should look at, when looking at those times when to meet, is to do a rotational community type situation. The Board of Public also responds to community safety issues and this would be a great way to meet in communities. Chief Dekmar commented that there are times that the farther the Board gets away from Forsyth and Atlanta, the more difficult the Board has in having a quorum. Chief stated when setting the Board meetings far enough in advance, that might be the way to address the attendance issue. Sheriff Steve Cronic commented that when meeting in Forsyth, then that is the easiest on everybody. Those folks having to come from south, it becomes a two-day event for some members. With things becoming more difficult with economic times, Sheriff Cronic requested if it could be limited to one day and be held in one central location. Chief Cronic said if the Board could look at doing the meetings at Training Center, it would help.

Chief Dekmar continued with his report of stating that in Article II Section 3, it talks about vacancies. Language was added of “(b) [i]f any member fails to attend three (3) meetings of the Board in a twelve-month period, without good and valid cause or excuse or without leave of absence from the Chair, the absent member’s Appointing Authority shall be notified by the Board of the unexcused absence.” Chief Dekmar stated the purpose of this is just to emphasize in the By Laws that attendance is important; particularly with the ability now to call in, the Board member does not have come to the meeting. Chief Dekmar stated that all the Board member has to do is call or send an e-mail within a reasonable time that a member cannot attend. Mr. Pat Head requested a sentence be amended: “leave of absence from the Chair,” to include the words Vice Chair. Discussion was held of the capability for call-ins to meetings and of the dates of meetings, possibly held in conjunction with Chiefs Association conferences and Sheriffs Association conference. Board Attorney Drolet explained that in order to change By-Laws, notice has to be given prior to the meeting; this will be put on the Agenda for the next meeting for a vote and can be effective thereafter. Chief Dekmar stated the effective date will be the first of the year. Vice-Chairman Donald stated the By-Laws will be voted at the next meeting and discussion of meeting dates for 2009.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice-Chairman Donald requested that he be allowed to postulate on something that has been on his mind, while wearing the hat of the Commissioner of Department of Corrections. Every year, Corrections is putting out about 18,000 ex-offenders on the streets of Georgia; 350 ex-offenders per week. Vice-Chairman Donald stated they have a recidivism rate of 65% over a lifetime. When they are prosecuted, most of the time the people being prosecuted have been in the system before. One of the things that Corrections is trying to do is look across communities and look at a particular question. He stated he asked Police Chief Pennington if he knew there were 25,000

probationers in his community and Chief Pennington asked, "where are they." Vice-Chairman Donald stated that is a legitimate question if the ex-offenders continue to re-offend at the rate of 65% over a lifetime. One of the biggest research based things discovered is that an ex-offender leaves the facility and re-enters the community; if the ex-offender has not experienced much success, there is no supervision and the communities might think about how to come up with a process to monitor them. Vice-Chairman Donald stated that one thing that Savannah is doing is a program called Savannah Impact. Corrections gives them a list of the offenders coming back to the community; the gentleman or lady is met in the prison, and, within three days after the ex-offender is back home, somebody will visit the ex-offender at home and see if the ex-offender needs help. This is called Savannah Impact program, and, it is funded by county and is run by the police chief in Savannah. This is a very effective program for Savannah; but for smaller community there may not be a need for a standing organization. Mayor Jim Wetherington of Columbus has gotten resources from a SPLOST the city did, and, Columbus will be establishing something similar. Vice-Chairman Donald stated that the notion there is the process that allows Corrections to track what is going on when the ex-offender re-enters communities. Vice-Chairman Donald asked the Board members how big is the impact of ex-offenders in their communities when coming back home. Chief Dekmar stated that when his office starts getting string of robbers and burglars, the first thing they do is check to see if they have been paroled. Chief Dekmar that since the mid-80's, when Parole was suffering in terms of having to make a bunch of bad choices. There was a repeat offender program, with collaboration between Corrections, Parole, Probation, and Law Enforcement; and, that it was a combination of crime analysis and intensive parole and probation, where you would look at your crimes and then look at those individuals that are on parole and probation and see who fit that 'MO' and because they are on parole and probation, a condition of that is the ability to have them submit to tests, to searches. Chief Dekmar stated he thought that would be a challenge to economy; we know that more prisons will not be built even though Georgia's population continues to increase; we know that parole now is also being used as a safety valve for Corrections; this is a time that is ripe for that kind of collaboration whether it is done at a municipal level or a county wide task force that has the discipline involved; communities would be well served with seriously looking at that. Vice-Chairman Donald stated that he would like to bring his staff bring a presentation on how Corrections thinks how the future might look in terms of collaboration with offenders coming out. Corrections is trying to stand up a couple of different entities; day reporting centers for those who have one foot in the prison system; and community impact programs, like Savannah, for those coming out of the program. The goal is to understand it is important that police community know where 20,000 probationers are. Even with no authority over them, it is okay for them to knock on the door and ask if they need any help to find a job and tell the offenders they are being watched. That is what the program does.

Chief Jack McElfish stated there has been a tremendous increase in arson fires, especially California has had 43% increase in arson fires in the first six months of this year. There has also been an increase in metro Atlanta area. Chief McElfish requested that each Chief and Sheriff please make sure when officers see something, don't be crazy and get hurt in vacant building that someone has set on fire.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Rooney L. Bowen, III
Secretary