

MINUTES OF BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY

September 14, 2005

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Bud Black
Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III
Chief Lou Dekmar
Commissioner James Donald
Mr. Pat Head
Chief Dwayne Orrick
Chief J. D. Rice
Sheriff Jamil Saba
Sheriff Cullen Talton

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Governor Sonny Perdue
Mr. Wayne Abernathy
Mr. Hal Averitt
Mr. Dub Harper
Sheriff Bruce Harris

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mr. Chris Brasher, Georgia Department of Law
Ms. Laura Jones, Board Liaison
Lieutenant Colonel Arthur White, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Major Don Chastain, Georgia State Patrol
Major Keith Sorrells, Georgia State Patrol
Mr. Terry Landers, Department of Public Safety
Ms. Melissa Rodgers, Department of Public Safety
Major Wayne Beck, Department of Public Safety
Chief Mark McLeod, DPS Motor Carrier Compliance Division
Director Dale Mann, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Mr. Richard Guerreiro, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Director Vernon Keenan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Deputy Director Paul Heppner, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Mr. Ray Higgins, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Ms. Shirley Andrews, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Mr. Neil Gerstenberger, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Ms. Dawn Diedrich, Georgia Bureau of Investigation

Vice-Chairman Donald called the meeting to order, requesting the Board members to introduce their guests. Sheriff Cullen Talton introduced Mr. Reuben McGee from Sheriff Talton's office. Then, everyone in the room introduced himself/herself to the Board members.

Vice-Chairman Donald requested approval of the Minutes of the August Board meeting. Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III made the motion for approval, which was seconded by Sheriff Cullen Talton, and unanimously voted approval by the Board.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Lieutenant Colonel Arthur White, Georgia State Patrol/Department of Public Safety, began with explaining Colonel Bill Hitchens is out this week. Colonel White began with reporting the personnel count is 783 troopers out of an allotment of 953; 173 CEO's out of an allotment of 253; 20 Capitol police out of the 36 positions; 64 safety officers; and 313 MCCD officers out of the allotment of 378, giving a grand total of 1,353 personnel with a deficit of 331.

Colonel White continued with his report that the agency had been involved in assisting with relief effort as a result of Hurricane Katrina. A State Patrol detail left September 4th to assist officials in Louisiana. This team is doing basic law enforcement functions, escorts, security details; coordinating with GBI, Department of Corrections, and Department of Natural Resources. Locally, State Patrol has been providing escorts, providing shelter security, providing security at the Convention Center in College Park, also providing security for Life College in Marietta; and, providing security in other areas. In response to a question concerning housing being provided for the team, Colonel White responded he had the opportunity to visit the shelter in Louisiana, where the staff is housed. Staff members are being provided hot meals and showers. In response to a question of who is paying for this assistance, Colonel White responded that reimbursement will be through FEMA. The detail should be returning from Louisiana on Friday or Saturday; there are no plans to deploy another unit.

Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III made a statement, to reflect in the minutes, that the Board of Public Safety appreciates the law enforcement agencies that sent volunteers to assist in the aftermath of the hurricane; especially the State Patrol and the GBI, commending them for actually volunteering to participate in the detail. Mr. Bowen noted that it speaks highly of the dedication of the people in the agencies. Vice-Chairman Donald thanked Colonel White for his leadership through the crisis.

The third item to report by Colonel White is that State Patrol began its PIT training and the Board members are invited to participate. A schedule of the locations and times of training is available for the Board. Colonel White stated that Mr. Chris Brasher, Board Attorney, will be assisting with this training. Mr. Bowen also encouraged the Board members to observe one of the classes that is being held on PIT maneuver; that it would be good for the Board to hear what is being told to the troopers because the policy was adopted by the Board.

In response to a question about trooper school, Colonel White responded there are 26 cadets remaining in the school.

Director Vernon Keenan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, began with reporting that he, Commissioner Donald, and other state law enforcement agency heads were in a meeting when Governor Perdue stepped in and joined the meeting. Governor Perdue directed the agency heads to

reach out to their counterparts in the states of Louisiana and Mississippi to see what their needs were and to proceed fulfilling those needs.

Director Keenan, Lieutenant Colonel White, Commissioner Donald and other agency heads worked together to put together a response team of 200 state-level law enforcement officers. While putting together a team, contact was difficult with the two states. Because legal authority was necessary for Georgia law enforcement officers to have full law enforcement authority in other states, a GBI Inspector was sent to the command post in Mississippi, and a team of a GBI SAC, State Patrol Captain, and a Corrections Director were sent to Louisiana State Police, wherein paperwork was completed with proper signatures before the Georgia's task force could be assigned. The State of Louisiana did not need the 200 officers, but accepted 100 law enforcement officers; consisting of 40 State Troopers, 40 DNR law enforcement officers, 10 GBI agents, and 10 Department of Corrections officers. A 60-officer body recovery team was sent in to Mississippi, which broke the team into two 30-men teams. Director Keenan went down with the team and met with local officials and state officials. The state and local officials asked to have an immediate response capability set up. The task force worked hand-in-hand with the Urban Search and Rescue teams; setting it up so that the team would make a recovery and transport it to the disaster mortuary team. Director Keenan went

The search became extensive; local representatives and officials requested the team expand its operation into another county. Hancock County is extremely rural with very limited resources; this area has never been searched by anyone on a federal, state, or local level. It is a lengthy and taxing process, searching for bodies that are buried underneath debris.

The deployment for the Task Force has been 14 days and there is talk with the state and local officials for the force to extend out. In response to a question of how the team is holding up, Director Keenan responded they are doing well. On coastal Mississippi, there is no power, no water, and no sleeping arrangements; law enforcement officials have been sleeping in their vehicles. The advanced Inspector worked a deal with the commanding officer of Keesler Air Force Base, who made beds, meals, fuel available to all the Georgia officers.

One concern that came into play was there was no communication between officers. Georgia carried its own Southern Link system and cell phone system, which helped in the operation. Cell phones were spasmodic and satellite phones did not work.

A lesson learned came from talking to people from Florida. When they knew the hurricane was going into Mississippi and Louisiana coast, the people in Florida mobilized 700 state people; had their interstate compact documents executed; had their trucks loaded; and when they came in, they came in self-contained with lodging and portable toilets. Because there were groups of officers who came to the disaster scene without self-contained arrangements, hence becoming part of the problem. Director Keenan saw Mr. Rick Jacobs and Special Operations, of the Department of Corrections, come together with a mechanism to provide tents, cots, and food for officers.

Director Keenan stated that in the future, state and federal governments need to do something to expedite the authorization process; it is necessary to be partners in these situations.

Director Dale Mann, Georgia Public Safety Training Center, started with reporting that GPSTC sent one of its search and rescue trainers, through GMAG agreement, to Mississippi.

The Training Center has opened the Athens Training Academy and was operational the first Monday of this month. There is a punch list and still doing renovations, but the classrooms are finished, and, the offices are operational with telephones and internet service. The Training Center will end up between \$30,000 to \$50,000 in renovations. All in all, Director Mann stated the Training Center will come out well with this building.

Director Mann reported on an incident that occurred at North Central Regional Academy, wherein a female cadet was killed in an accidental shooting. The weapon belonged to an instructor out of Cobb County Sheriff's office, but was assigned to the regional academy. This academy is a contract academy under the Training Center; under the guidelines of the Training Center, funds are given to the regional academy. The regional academy has to operate within the guidelines of the POST rules.

In response to a question concerning re-certification POST rule, Director Mann explained that POST is proposing a two-hour training class, which will be in three areas: update on use of force, update on use of deadly force, and a firearms re-qualification annually. If an officer does not re-qualify within twelve months, the officer loses his power of arrest. To assist retirees, the Training Center will open up training opportunities to allow retirees obtain that two-hour training, which will include the re-certification. Vice-Chairman Donald noted that the Department of Corrections will adhere to the standard and the correctional officers will re-certify on an annual basis.

FISCAL REPORTS:

Mr. Terry Landers, Georgia Department of Public Safety/State Patrol, reported the agency is down on State Funds. The agency spent State Funds down to \$6,000 out of the \$71 million State Fund budget. The Federal Funds are funds that are carried forward; there are some to be carried to next fiscal year. The agency is within line of all Objects. Mr. Landers pointed out that for next year, the budget will look different because of picking up an additional \$16 million and that it will look more complex. Mr. Bowen stated that, concerning the gas shortage, the Board should be prudent to stay on top of this to assist State Patrol or GBI to make sure the fuel shortage does not affect the core mission. In response to a question if State Patrol changed its policy on patrolling, Major Chastain responded that troopers have been asked to reduce their patrol time by 25% and use that time for enforcement action opportunities.

Vice-Chairman Donald reported that all state agencies were asked to implement a bit of a moratorium on non-essential state travel. Governor Perdue signed Senate Bill 1-X, which increases the mileage reimbursement rate to 48.5 cents per mile. This increase will benefit state employees who use their personal vehicles for state business.

Mr. Ray Higgins, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, reported that the agency spent approximately 99.9% of the State budget. The balance consists primarily of federal funds that did not expire on June 30th. All in all, the agency finished up strong. Contrary to previous years, the agency did not contend with austerity and other reductions or expenses, such as those with G-8. The agency is now off to a very good budget start in FY 06.

Mr. Richard Guerreiro, Georgia Public Safety Training Center, reported that the Training Center spent 99.9% of its State budget. The Georgia Police Academy spent 99.8% of its budget and the Georgia Fire Academy spent 99.9% of its State budget. It was a good year.

GEORGIA CRIME INFORMATION CENTER COUNCIL:

Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III made a motion for the Board to go under the Georgia Crime Information Center Council, which was seconded by Chief Lou Dekmar and unanimously approved by the Board.

Deputy Director Paul Heppner brought before the Board for approval the actions that were taken by GCIC this previous fiscal year. Mr. Heppner also commented that the FBI audit, which happens every two years, was just completed; that it was the best audit that GCIC has ever had with the procedures network. Mr. Heppner pointed out that with each instance, the local law enforcement agency conducted the investigation, took action, and reported the same to the GBI. Mr. Heppner requested approval of the actions taken. Chief Lou Dekmar motioned approval, which was seconded by Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III, and the Board members voted approval.

In response to a question as to whether this information was public record and if Mr. Heppner was familiar with the state registry temporary protective order, Mr. Heppner responded that GCIC has the protection orders registry. Those records are all accessed; any state protection order that qualifies and has the information needed to be housed under national crime information center is there. When an operator does any check, a response pops up, similar to a wanted person being identified.

Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, III made a motion to return to the Board of Public Safety, which was seconded by Chief Dwayne Orrick and unanimously approved by the Board.

DONATIONS/RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Terry Landers, Department of Public Safety/State Patrol, requested approval of the following donations:

Two Genesis Select Radars	\$ 3,100	Sheriff Tyson Stephens Emanuel County
Three Canon A510 Digital Cameras	\$10,634	Sheriff Joel Robinson Barrow County
One Canon PIXMA Photo Printer		
Sylvania 27" TV/DVD/VCR Combo		
Panasonic Toughbook 28		
Car Mount for Toughbook 28		
Car Printer/Mount and Accessories		
Two MPH BEE III Radars		
Four Window Tint Meters		
One Year Internet Access Via Cellular Modem	\$ 1,500	Chief Terry Esco City of Braseton
Cash	\$15,000	Evans County Board of Commissioners
Alco-Sensor FST	\$ 450	Doraville Police Department
Cash	\$ 1,800	Atlanta Motor Speedway
Lodging and meals at NOPI Car Show		
Cash	\$18,000	Atlanta Motor Speedway
October, 2005 Race		

Mr. Landers addressed the question of the donation of the access to internet, in that State Patrol is putting a laptop computer in a State Patrol car.

Chief J. D. Rice made the motion to approve the donations, which was seconded by Chief Lou Dekmar, and approved by the Board members.

Mr. Ray Higgins, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, requested approval of the following donation:

Orion Tracking System	\$18,449	Major Bill Berry Albany Dougherty Drug Unit
Binoculars	\$ 7,522.47	Diane Thornton

Mr. Bud Black motioned approval of the two donations, which was seconded by Chief Dwayne Orrick and unanimously approved by the Board.

There being no Administrative/Emergency Issues, Vice Chairman called for new or old business.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Rooney L. Bowen brought an issue of concern for state employees. A trooper, with less than two years with State Patrol, was hit in an eye with a brick during an altercation. Even after numerous surgeries, his eyesight will not come back. According to POST rules, this officer will probably be de-certified. This officer is not eligible for medical disability, because of length of service. Mr. Bowen requested the agency heads to review this situation and see what the Board of Public Safety can do to help in these types of situations. Mr. Bowen expressed interest to see what the agency heads would come up and if the Board could follow-up with assistance for employees in these situations. Director Keenan added that with someone who has been erroneously injured during the line of duty, that it merits discussion; he would also be glad to look at it and report it back to the Board.

Board members were encouraged to contribute to the Board flower fund. It was announced that Sheriff Harris' daughter passed away after a long battle with pancreas problems.

Sheriff Jamil Saba made a motion to hold its October meeting at the Training Center, which was seconded by Mr. Rooney L. Bowen, and unanimously approved by the Board members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Rooney L. Bowen, III