

BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY

January 12, 2017

Department of Natural Resources Board Room
Atlanta, Georgia

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Wayne Abernathy
Chief Danny Bowman
Mr. Kacy Cronan
Commissioner Greg Dozier
Sheriff Dane Kirby
Chief Mark Revenew
Mr. Peter J. Skandalakis
Mr. Charles D. Sikes
Sheriff Joey Terrell
Chief Craig Tully
Mr. Ellis Wood

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Danny Bryant
Mr. Steve Cronic
Mr. Lester Rampy

OTHERS:

Mr. Joe Drolet, Senior Assistant Attorney General
Ms. Cheryl L. Buie, Board Liaison
Commissioner Mark W. McDonough, Department of Public Safety
Lt. Colonel Russell D. Powell, Department of Public Safety
Major Hank Fielding, Department of Public Safety/GSP
Major Jason Johnson, Department of Public Safety/GSP
Major William Boulware, Department of Public Safety/MCCD
Captain Jeremy Vickery, Department of Public Safety/MCCD
Captain Lewis Young, Department of Public Safety/Capitol Police
Sergeant Anthony Hughes, Department of Public Safety
Mrs. Melissa Rodgers, Department of Public Safety
Mr. Zachary Howard, Department of Public Safety
Director Vernon Kennan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Mr. Dan Kirk, Assistant Director, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Director Chris Wigginton, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Mr. Tony Hightower, Deputy Director, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Ms. Cindy Franklin, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Mr. David Wall, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Mr. Mike Byrd, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Mr. Bruce Stanford, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Mr. Tim Melton, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Mr. Adam Ham, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Mr. Donald Kirkland, Office of Planning and Budget
Mr. Joe Talaber, Office of Planning and Budget
Mrs. Olivia Duke, Office of Planning and Budget

Mr. Timothy Ward, Department of Corrections
Mr. Robert Thrower, Department of Corrections
Mr. Lewis Massey

Vice-Chairman Ellis Wood called the January 12th, 2017, Board of Public Safety meeting to order.

Sergeant Anthony Hughes gave the invocation and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice-Chairman Wood asked for a motion from the BPS members to modify the agenda as published, adding item #8 reference to the salary of the GPSTC Director. Chief Craig Tully made a motion to add item #8 to the published agenda. This was seconded by Mr. Charles Sikes and voted approved by the BPS members.

Vice-Chairman Wood asked everyone to stand and introduce their self.

Vice-Chairman Wood called for approval of the November and December 2016 minutes. Chief Mark Renew made the motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Greg Dozier and voted approved by the BPS members.

DIRECTOR REPORTS

Commissioner Mark W. McDonough, Department of Public Safety shared Sergeant Hughes, after working hard for ten years, received his undergraduate degree and has just graduated with his Master's Degree from Dr. Falwell School at Liberty University. Commissioner McDonough congratulated Sgt. Hughes on his degree.

Commissioner McDonough gave an update on SFC Tony Henry stating SFC Henry came home prior to the holidays, going to Emory St. Joseph's and then soon after was moved to Shepherd's Spinal Clinic. Commissioner McDonough noted there is a lot of positive progress, getting him from Tampa to home and has started his rehabilitation and very quickly had him standing up and sitting up.

Commissioner McDonough told Mr. Tony Hightower, GPSTC it was good to see him at the BPS meeting following his surgery and recovery.

Commissioner McDonough advised after working with the DOT for two years, DPS has finally entered into a 20 year agreement to take over the responsibility of the maintenance of the 19 weigh stations. Commissioner McDonough noted the process started because the DOT does a fantastic job building roadways, but when it comes to changing light bulbs, making sure the toilets flush and the septic tanks work properly, it is better if you are the one dirtying it, you are the one that cleans up your own mess. Commissioner McDonough stated the DPS is excited about this and have all the infrastructure personnel in place with a facilities manager and two additional people to pick up the work and where the lights have been out, the lights will be back on, where security is needed for copper theft, that security will be there, for the grass cutting, doors closing properly, air-conditioning and the roof not leaking, DPS intends to jump on this quickly.

In the Governor's recommendation, particularly for the amended 2017 budget, Commissioner McDonough stated the governor has given DPS funds to do all of the repairs on the 19 weigh stations, and in addition to the pay raises, there are funds to purchase 351 automobiles, with particular emphasis on M CCD. Commissioner McDonough shared M CCD automobile needs are different than for troopers, normally using a SUV, as they do mobile weight scale usage and funds were provided specifically for 105 vehicles for M CCD. Commissioner McDonough expressed there are some very positive things in the amended budget for DPS as a whole.

Commissioner McDonough stated troopers have been very busy the last couple of weeks, not only with the winter storm issue in Atlanta, but also with the storm that hit in the Albany area, still under a declared emergency in Albany. Commissioner McDonough stated the emergency is predominately debris removal and getting the power back on and noted what is unique with Albany is that it is a privately owned electric company in that area and had a sub-station that was completely wiped out. Commissioner McDonough stated about 95% of the power is back on and the troopers that have responded, as well as Department of Community Supervision and the DNR will start to filter out of there come Friday, as the crime rate has gone down in Albany.

Commissioner McDonough advised the 100th trooper school started this past Sunday, and noted a huge positive with the foresight of the governor in the leadership that he showed with the pay increase for law enforcement. Commissioner McDonough stated before the governor's announcement occurred, there were about 800 applications for 99th trooper school and then for the 101st trooper school, there were 1685 applications and added what a little leadership will do to point to the direction where the problem is. Commissioner McDonough expressed this is very positive and will see what the future holds.

Mr. Wayne Abernathy asked Commissioner McDonough how many troopers were in the 100th trooper school and Commissioner McDonough responded that 35 cadets started the trooper school and are down to 22 today. Commissioner McDonough shared on the first day of trooper school they were asked to stretch and one dropped out after stretching and are headlong into the snowflake generation.

Concerning the presidential inauguration, Commissioner McDonough stated there are fifty troopers that will leave on Wednesday, which is a common practice that provides security along the inauguration parade route. Commissioner McDonough stated that traditionally inauguration day is the coldest day, but the forecast is for low 30s and low 50s for the high, looks like it will be a beautiful day.

Mr. Wayne Abernathy asked Commissioner McDonough who actually owns the weigh stations and Commissioner McDonough advised when this process initially started, DPS had introduced legislation to take ownership of the weigh stations and when ensuing the back and forth, it was deemed best because of funds that are available to DOT specific to capital improvements for the weigh stations, other word there are federal dollars that can come to them in their budget to maintain, if DPS puts a new scale system in, a new building in, or expands the building, there are federal dollars there to do it.

With that mindset, Commissioner McDonough stated having DOT keep the actual title of the property and for DPS to carve out the chunk of maintenance to be able to keep up with the daily maintenance is how the agreement fell.

Vice-Chairman Ellis Wood presented Commissioner McDonough with his 20 year Faithful Service Award.

Director Vernon Keenan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation advised the GBI received their budget, with the governor's recommendation and are very pleased with the budget and pleased the governor listened to us and met our needs and our priorities, and OPB will ensure the governor's direction and follow through. Director Keenan reminded the BPS members the GBI starts out each year with a flat budget meaning you cannot ask for more than you received the previous year, but the governor allows the GBI to prepare white papers which outlines specific needs in certain critical areas and provide justification of those needs and then ask for additional funds. Director Keenan acknowledged the GBI did this in three separate areas and had already addressed issues regarding salaries and has now moved forward with a 20% pay raise for all state level law enforcement and, which had made remarkable change in the moral among the men and women working the streets and has had helped with recruitment. Director Keenan advised the GBI prepared white papers in regards to the forensic pathologists. Director Keenan reminded the BPS members that there are less than 500 forensic pathologists in the US and the GBI is in competition with all the other states when it comes to recruiting forensic pathologists. Director Keenan advised the GBI has had two positions open for the past two years and every time the GBI would recruit a Dr. to come to the GBI, another state would step in and offer them a higher salary. In the white paper, Director Keenan stated they asked for a \$30,000.00 increase in salary for the medical examiners so the positions can be filled, and Director Keenan advised two doctors will be coming in July 1, and then will be up to full staff for medical examiners. Director Keenan stated the GBI wrote a white paper on the needs of the crime lab as the state grows and law enforcement becomes more engaged and using forensic science in their investigation prosecutions, more demand is put on the crime lab. In regards to the budget, Director Keenan advised Governor Deal put in additional funding to hire scientists to address some of the backlog and also put in a bond package, a little over 36 million dollars to build a state crime lab in Pooler. Director Keenan stated the GBI received all the funding that was asked for to meet the motor vehicle needs and to meet the needs in the crime lab for new instruments and noted when replacing instruments in the crime lab, it is extremely expensive, getting into the one million plus range to replace equipment that is outdated. Director Keenan stated the governor has met these needs for the GBI and it is very gratifying to those in public safety to have a governor who is a former prosecutor and former judge and understands the needs of the criminal justice system and the GBI is very pleased with its budget and the tremendous support in the Georgia General Assembly as this is pushed through.

Director Keenan asked Assistant Director Dan Kirk to speak about the current status of the crime lab. Mr. Kirk stated when looking at the number of requested reports and the % increase from FY14 to FY16 for biology, it has gone up 67%, chemistry 13%, firearms requests are up 31%, latent prints are up 38%, toxicology up 11% and trace evidence is up 52%. Mr. Kirk stated when there is an increase of requests, most of the function is dependent of people, so when there is a huge increase and no

increase in personnel, cases will not be worked and a backlog grows. Mr. Kirk noted from the backlog standpoint as of December 1st, 2016, the backlog was 23,075, with 6059 cases in biology to include older sexual assault kits that have been turned in across the state and are working on a plan to try and increase the output on these cases, some will be outsourced and then some worked internally. Mr. Kirk advised the chemistry section saw a backlog of 9,237 and lot of the backlog is due to loss of 5 scientists, firearms backlog is sitting at 2,249 cases, latent prints at 3,550 cases, toxicology with 1,523 backlogged cases, mostly DUI cases, and trace evidence is sitting backlogged at 457 cases. Mr. Kirk stated when the crime lab sees an increase in requests, the backlog increases, and the way to combat this is to add scientists, and over the next several years, the GBI is asking for some 40 scientists to try to combat this increase in cases. Mr. Kirk stated he does not have an explanation for the increase in the cases, except that Georgia has grown and thinks law enforcement are making more cases. Over the last year, Mr. Kirk stated the crime lab employed 6 chemists, 7 toxicologists, 4 firearms examiners, and one latent print examiner currently training and one of the things that hurts the crime lab and being able to put them to work, they have to go through a training period anywhere from 6 months to 18 months. Mr. Kirk advised there is an in hiring process where the crime lab has one additional latent examiner and two firearms examiners.

Director Keenan added the crime lab is constantly looking at ways they can become more efficient and turn out more cases. Director Keenan stated the crime lab in the next few days, will activate an on-line submission of evidence form. Director Keenan stated currently law enforcement agencies bring the evidence to the crime with a paper document and many times those documents are not completed correctly or the writing is so bad, it cannot be read. Director Keenan stated an OPS bulletin will go out directing law enforcement to go online, pull down the template, fill out the evidence submission form, or they can complete the form at the crime lab and then submit the evidence; this will help productivity in the crime lab.

Mr. Charles Sikes shared when he was at the FBI Academy in 1977, he was talking with a guy from LA PD and told him he was with the GBI and the LA PD officer stated the GBI has a model crime lab system for other states to emulate and Mr. Sikes stated he has always been very proud of that.

Commissioner McDonough added the Fusion Center is a national award winner.

Director Chris Wigginton, Georgia Public Safety Training Center reminded everyone if you build it, they will come, and stated the GPSTC was built approximately 30 years ago and they came for a short period of time and then those numbers started to diminish. Director Wigginton added through the years the parking lot would be fairly empty and now that is not the case, starting the New Year off with a bang. Director Wigginton advised there are over 2500 students at GPSTC this week, anticipating over 2500 students next week and hopes to continue this throughout the year. Director Wigginton stated there are four new courses on line that is part of the governor's initiative and in the first nine days, when one course was released, there were over 500 students to sign up for the course. Director Wigginton expressed the GPSTC is meeting the demand. Director Wigginton praised Ms. Cheryl Greathouse and Mr. Adam Ham as they have worked very hard behind the scenes to get the courses up and running to meet the demand.

In regards to Basic Training, Director Wigginton advised the model was built on a 30 person maximum in a section and have now started a session in every academy to include the fire academy and in two of the academies, Savannah and Forsyth, 84 people are in Savannah and 70 in Forsyth, which is about 40 students that would have been turned away in the past that are sitting in a seat getting the training to meet the community's needs. Director Wigginton stated it is all about being creative and meeting the demand. Director Wigginton advised the GPSTC has a new lab being built, a fence being built out of wood and tarp, the use of force lab, as right now the hot topic across the nation is use of force and de-escalation. Director Wigginton stated the GPSTC has several courses that tie into one that kicked off at the beginning of the year and have use of force instructors who have already developed the first course that will be on line in another week.

Director Wigginton stated he thinks GPSTC is ahead of what is being required nationally when they talk about not doing our part in the community and when it comes back to one of the situations that makes it to the eyes of the media, the first thing people cry from the community, the chiefs, sheriffs and community activists, they are asking what the officer has been trained in and what is the curriculum offered to the law enforcement officer. Director Wigginton stated a lot of the courses coming out this year at GPSTC are ahead of what is going on throughout the national stage. Director Wigginton commended the GPSTC staff and asked the BPS members to check the calendar this year as there are a lot of new courses being pushed out, trying to get into the community along with our requests that were approved by the governor's budget office, the CIT program and when we open it up, it will be community based as well.

Vice-Chairman Wood asked Director Wigginton about the active shooter program and Director Wigginton responded it is still going wide open.

Sheriff Dane Kirby stated it is very important to have someone at the GPSTC that is willing to work with Sheriffs and Chiefs when they have something that needs to be pushed through and commended the GPSTC staff as they have been absolutely great along those lines, helping out, even getting out of a jam or two.

Mr. Kacy Cronan asked Director Wigginton if the GPSTC had broken ground on the driving track expansion and Director Wigginton responded they have not officially broken ground, but have started removing some trees, signed the intent last week and has to be completed by July 10th.

Mr. Pete Skandalakis thanked the GPSTC for hosting the group last November and stated everyone had a great time. Mr. Skandalakis told Director Wigginton that he noticed the morale was up and the staff did a great job and thanked Director Wigginton for everything he does, as the staff does a great job.

DONATIONS

Major Jason Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Public Safety requested approval of the following donations:

One 43" LED Flat Screen TV	\$	400.00	Rincon Chevrolet
Fifteen Taser X26P Devices and Holsters	\$	16,000.00	Carroll Co. Sheriff's Dept.
Monetary Donation	\$	1,000.00	Statesboro Kiwanis Club
Three 40" Televisions & Two Wall Mounts	\$	913.92	Walton Co. Sheriff's Dept.

The motion to accept these donations was made by Mr. Peter Skandalakis, which was seconded by Sheriff Joey Terrell, and voted approved by the Board members.

Ms. Cindy Franklin, Comptroller, Georgia Public Safety Training Center requested approval of the following donations:

Two Motorcycles	\$	600.00	Corner Lot Towing
One 2005 Ford Crown Vic	\$	693.00	Cherokee Co. Board of Commissioners
One 2009 Ford Crown Vic	\$	1633.00	Cherokee Co. Board of Commissioners
Three 2007 Ford Crown Vics	\$	3333.00	Cherokee Co. Board of Commissioners
One 2011 Ford Crown Vic	\$	1622.00	Cherokee Co. Board of Commissioners
One 2006 Ford Crown Vic	\$	825.00	Cherokee Co. Board of Commissioners
One 2008 Ford Crown Vic	\$	1315.00	Cherokee Co. Board of Commissioners

The motion to accept these donations was made by Mr. Kacy Cronan, which was seconded by Commissioner Greg Dozier, and voted approved by the Board members.

Mr. Zachary Howard, Legal Officer, Department of Public Safety presented for final adoption Proposed GA Department of Public Safety Rules Chapter 570-35-Transportation Network Companies and Taxi Services.

Sheriff Joey Terrell made the motion to approve the final adoption of Georgia Department of Public Safety Rules Chapter 570-35 – Transportation Network Companies and Taxi Services. This was seconded by Mr. Wayne Abernathy and voted approved by the Board members.

Mr. Zachary Howard also presented for initial adoption, Proposed Georgia Department of Public Safety Rules Chapters 570-6 (Repealed) and 570-36 (Non-Consensual Towing).

Mr. Pete Skandalakis made the motion to approve the initial adoption of Georgia Department of Public Safety Rules Chapters 570-6 (Repealed) and 570-36 (Non-Consensual Towing). This was seconded by Sheriff Joey Terrell and voted approved by the Board members.

Mr. Zachary Howard presented for initial adoption, Proposed Georgia Department of Public Safety Rules Chapters 570-6 (Repealed) and 570-37 (Tire Chains).

Mr. Pete Skandalakis made the motion to approve the initial adoption of Georgia Department of Public Safety Rules Chapters 570-6 (Repealed) and 570-37 (Tire Chains). This was seconded by Commissioner Greg Dozier and voted approved by the Board members.

Vice-Chairman Wood advised the BPS received a recommendation from the Governor's office that the salary of the Director of the GPSTC be increased by 10% as a reward for his leadership and service to the state.

Chief Craig Tully made a motion to increase the salary of GPSTC Director Chris Wigginton by 10% to \$138,050.08, effective January 16, 2017. This was seconded by Commissioner Greg Dozier and voted approved by the BPS members.

Vice-Chairman Wood reminded everyone the February and March BPS meetings will be held in the DNR Board Room and will be in Glennville in April.

Vice-Chairman Wood reminded everyone to continue to pray for those that have lost loved ones, for those that serve as law enforcement in the state of Georgia and also remember those going through medical issues in the near future.

Vice-Chairman Wood asked everyone to remember Mr. Lester Rampy as he deals with some heart issues.

On behalf of the Georgia Fire Service, Chief Craig Tully thanked Chief Danny Bowman for what he has meant to the fire service and how he has represented the fire service with his service on the BPS. Chief Tully stated the fire service community has been honored for Chief Bowman serving on the BPS and Chief Bowman sets the bar for what a fire chief should be and told Chief Bowman, from the fire service community, thank you to him for his service.

Vice-Chairman Wood thanked Chief Bowman for his fire service and his friendship as he has been a model leader for all of the BPS and has also appreciated their time together.

Chief Bowman responded it has been his greatest honor to serve on the BPS.

Mr. Lewis Massey thanked the DPS for a great working relationship.

Mr. Tony Hightower, Deputy Director of the GPSTC thanked his friends and the BPS members for their thoughts and prayers following his surgery and has no doubt the uplifting of everyone has made a difference in his recovery.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Chief Mark Revenew
Secretary