

**BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY**  
May 10, 2018  
Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Forsyth, Georgia

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Danny Bryant  
Mr. Steve D. Cronin-via conference call  
Sheriff Dane Kirby-via conference call  
Mr. Lester L. Rampy, Jr.  
Mr. Charles D. Sikes  
Sheriff Joey Terrell-via conference call  
Chief Craig Tully  
Mr. Ellison G. Wood

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Mr. Wayne Abernathy  
Mr. Kacy Cronan  
Commissioner Greg Dozier  
Chief Mark Revenew

**OTHERS:**

Ms. Tina Piper, Senior Assistant Attorney General  
Ms. Cheryl L. Buie, Board Liaison  
Commissioner Mark W. McDonough, Department of Public Safety  
Lt. Colonel Russell Powell, Department of Public Safety  
Major Jason Johnson, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
Major Hank Fielding, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
Captain Mark Lambert, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
Captain Mark Perry, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
Lt. Shawn Prather, Department of Public Safety/GSP  
Director Vernon Kennan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation  
Mr. Tony Hightower, Deputy Director, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Bruce Stanford, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mrs. Cindy Jones, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mrs. Sharla Shockley, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mrs. Judy Couch, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Ray Saxon, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Rodney Bostic, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Adam Ham, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Ike McConnell, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Ms. Ginny Sapp, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. John Hutcheson, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Hal Braswell, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Marty Smith, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Danny Stephens, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Johnny Irvin, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Craig Kellogg, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Chris Coogle, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Mark Williams, Georgia Public Safety Training Center

Mr. Jeff Dean, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Mr. Jorge Roque, Georgia Public Safety Training Center  
Director Sam Heaton, Cobb County Public Safety  
Mrs. Louise Rampy  
Mrs. Maureen Bryant

Vice-Chairman Ellis Wood called the May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Board of Public Safety meeting to order. Mr. John Hutcheson gave the invocation and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chief Craig Tully introduced new Board member Mr. Sam Heaton, Cobb County Public Safety Director representing the firefighters. Mr. Heaton stated it was truly an honor to sit on the Board of Public Safety.

### **DIRECTOR REPORTS**

Commissioner Mark W. McDonough, Department of Public Safety congratulated Director Heaton on his appointment.

Commissioner McDonough hared he had visited with Mr. Wayne Abernathy and his wife and gave an update on his medical condition. Commissioner McDonough stated Mr. Abernathy said that he appreciates the prayers of everyone and can feel it, and to please keep praying for him.

Commissioner McDonough advised the fatality rate in the state is down for the first five months and specifically highlighted the commercial motor vehicle fatality rate. Commissioner McDonough advised the state was running an average of about 18.5 fatalities per month involving commercial motor vehicles and is down to 17.9 and when thinking about a significant reduction during a period of tremendous growth and expansion in Georgia, the fatality rate has dropped. Commissioner McDonough commended Major Johnny Jones and the Motor Carrier Compliance Division as they have purposely in their plan, moved away from inspection, inspection, inspection to not only inspection, but to concentrate on those causation factors that cause commercial motor vehicle accidents. Commissioner McDonough stated there were 3.3 million commercial motor vehicles that transitioned the state last year.

Commissioner McDonough shared since the Parkland School shootings, the DPS has received requests for firearms instructors to teach local agencies ALERRT training, has gone through the roof. Commissioner McDonough stated the DPS is not turning people down and have accepted this role as the FBI has asked the DPS to assist with this effort, but when looking at the work that has been done at the GPSTC, particularly with firearms, with their shoot houses and with the ALERRT training and the train the trainer training that occurs right here, along with those requests that DPS has been saying we will come help, we are also directing them to GPSTC. Commissioner McDonough stated GPSTC has done a lot of work in this area, and GPSTC will see more people coming to get the train the trainer so they can do their own training. Commissioner McDonough stated DPS is committed too, but it is important to push them in the direction to teach them how to train themselves.

Commissioner McDonough advised the Distracting Driving bill was signed by Governor Deal at the Statesboro Airport, with families of the five nurses that died in the horrific accident on I-16 present for the signing. Before July 1<sup>st</sup>, Commissioner McDonough stated there will be a concerted campaign to get the word out to everybody. In the first 90 days, Commissioner McDonough stated DPS will be as compassionate as we can be, and will use that time as an opportunity to educate as well.

Commissioner McDonough stated if there is a person that pretty much asks for getting a citation with a attitude, will get a citation, something that causes a wreck, causes an injury, charge for vehicular homicide, there will not be a warning for distracted driving. Commissioner McDonough stated DPS will treat distracted driving and cell phone issue no different that DUI. Commissioner McDonough stated this is a huge problem and can make a significant dent in the fatalities by going after distracted driving.

Commissioner McDonough presented the 2017 Pursuit Summary Report with 854 total pursuits reported. Commissioner McDonough stated it is the younger troopers between the age of 25-35 that are more engaged and also have the Major Hank Fielding column at the end of the report, for those over 55, with 3-4 pursuits. Commissioner McDonough stated Troop C had the highest number of pursuits by troop assignment. Concerning Troop I pursuits, Commissioner McDonough stated Troop I recently participated in the beginning to end I-95 enforcement effort and the troopers in Troop I arrested more wanted persons in that period of time on I-95, that all the other participating states combined. Commissioner McDonough noted this is a reflection in what is going on at the coast and the work they do down there and commended Troop I for their efforts. In regards to CIU Command pursuits, supervisors for the Criminal Interdiction Unit, Commissioner McDonough stated they call this the Charles Chapeau category, as Charles is probably involved in 21 of the 24 pursuits, and despite his age, goes after those that need to be gotten. Commissioner McDonough noted pursuits by month, it holds true that November and December are the highest months for pursuits, with more pursuits on Friday and Saturday nights. Concerning pursuits by county, Commissioner McDonough advised the most were in Chatham, DeKalb and Fulton counties. In regards to length of service for reporting trooper, Commissioner McDonough stated the greater majority are those that are in the first ten years of their career. Commissioner McDonough stated the pursuit business is a messy business and all in law enforcement knows this and stated the number of pursuits where crashes were involved out of the 854 pursuits, there were 473 crashes. Commissioner McDonough went on to say there were 865 vehicles involved in and the total number of pursuits in which the violator's vehicle was involved in the crash was at 467. Commissioner McDonough added out of the 854 pursuits, the PIT maneuver was used 251 times, with the # of pursuits used more than once was 72. Concerning how the pursuit was terminated, Commissioner McDonough stated that overall 1 in 8 of the pursuits were terminated because of the discretion of the officer saying that circumstances are just too great. Commissioner McDonough advised the number of injuries and fatalities resulting from the crashes of pursuits out of 854 pursuits, three bystanders and nine violators lost their lives. Commissioner McDonough reiterated pursuing is a messy business, a difficult business and the number one reason the violators are losing their life is because they are not wearing their seatbelt. Commissioner McDonough stated the average age of the driver is 27.92 and is a male that's either DUI or has a suspended license, or wanted for some reason. Commissioner McDonough reminded the BPS members that back in 2007 there was an ad-hoc committee that was put together specific to the PIT and out of that came a white paper and out

of that came a GA Tech study and out of that came the first white paper that was used in a GA case for a decision of exactly what the PIT was before the Supreme Court. Commissioner McDonough stated the recommendation of the committee was for DPS to have additional training on an annual basis as far as decision making, which is done to this day and then report to the Board of Public Safety on an annual basis as to what is occurring as far as pursuits.

Mr. Sam Heaton asked Commissioner McDonough when an accident does occur, are they reviewed by the Command staff. Commissioner McDonough stated there is a pursuit critique and every single pursuit that occurs is critiqued, with the assistant troop commanders working closely with the post commanders, following a very strict template. Commissioner McDonough added from beginning to end, different things they are required to do in their decision making, different ways that they handle the pursuit, and everything that is involved in communication and how and what occurs, gives the opportunity to critique and if discipline is required, discipline is taken or additional training.

Director Vernon Kennan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation began his report by stating the GBI investigates most of the officer use of force cases, if not, all, of the use of force cases in Georgia and the use of force cases are those that have resulted in death, serious bodily injury, or an officer has discharged a firearm at a human being. Director Kennan stated the GBI is averaging two use of force cases a week across the state, but this past Tuesday ended a spree of eleven in eleven days. Director Keenan shared he was out of state and spent half the days doing interviews about what in the world is happening in Georgia to have eleven officer use of force cases in eleven days. Director Keenan stated most of the cases involved a fatality and as he told the media, he has not analyzed all of the cases as they are still under investigation, but 11 in 11 days is certainly a high point for those instances in this state. Director Keenan stated he is asked what he attributes to the increase of officer use of force cases and told the media he cannot speak to the individual cases because he does not know, has not completed the investigations and has not read the background. Director Keenan stated an officer use of force generally involves three factors, either singularly or a combination of these factors and they are mental health issues or drug use and or criminals in possession of firearms. Director Keenan stated the vast majority of the cases the GBI investigates, when they are concluded and turned over to the district attorney, and a decision is made as to the justified use of force, will be just that, lawful use of force. Director Keenan added that many of the cases involve gun battles between law enforcement and someone mentally ill, someone on drugs, or someone that is a criminal in possession of a firearm. Concerning the drug use, Director Keenan stated everyone in this state has been fixated over the opioid epidemic and that is what is killing Georgia citizens, over 900 last year, but the major drug problem in Georgia is methamphetamine, 40% of the drugs submitted to the GBI Crime Lab are methamphetamines. Director Keenan stated heroin, fentanyl, opioids, and prescription drugs will kill the user, but methamphetamine will make you want to kill somebody. Director Keenan added methamphetamine is a stimulant that was developed by the Nazis in the Second World War for their storm troopers. Director Keenan stated a meth user is very prone to violence, increased sexuality for children, increase of assault on family members and then just random acts of violence and so many of these instances are seen not only in Georgia, but across the nation, very violent encounters, the person is going to have a history of meth use and then couple that with mental illness, you will have the volatile situation that law enforcement has to deal with. Director Keenan stated we will see what

comes out of all of this and thank goodness, there have not been any use of force cases in the last two days. Director Keenan stated the last incident the GBI worked was in Rome and involved a lady with mental health issues, involved in a pursuit, wrecked and then she opened fire on law enforcement officers. Director Keenan stated one of her bullets clipped the sunglasses on one of the officers, was that close to coming to having a fatality and turned out she was a fatality. Director Keenan stated the GBI cannot predict which use of force cases are going to be controversial, have given up trying to, have seen cases where the officer used poor judgement and made some bad decisions and nothing ever comes of it and then have seen other cases where the officer is very clear cut, involved in a gun battle, they have prevailed and that becomes controversial. Director Keenan stated the officer's best defense in any use of force is thorough fact finding, because the officer does not come to work hoping they are going to get to shoot someone that day or seriously injured by them.

Director Keenan shared he was at an event at the Capitol this morning concerning youth suicide prevention, which was hosted by Behavioral Health and some advocacy groups. Director Keenan added the GBI is the keeper of much of the data, as there is a child fatality review panel which has the responsibility to collect all of the information related to child deaths under the age of 17. Director Keenan stated each county in the state has a child review panel that collects their data, with their investigators who sit down and write a report and then is sent to the state panel at the GBI, where it is analyzed state wide. Director Keenan stated in the last five years, there have been 212 children, 17 and under commit suicide, and are still collecting data for last year, and in 2016 there were 51 deaths, 52 deaths in 2015 and this year, January until today there have been 18 child suicides, the youngest victim being nine years old. Director Keenan stated this is what the forum was about, how to prevent this, what is occurring and the consensus is that it pertains to mental health issues which is what the investigation shows and a lack of schools not being properly engaged with this, families not understanding when dealing with a troubled youth, combination of factors, but it is all mental health. Director Keenan stated he believes when dealing with the issues of school shootings, many of the perpetrators fall in this same category, commonality is mental health issues. Director Keenan stated he hopes at some point there will be dialogue and strategy nationally about how we are going to deal with child death as it relates to suicide and the shooting instances in school. Director Keenan stated law enforcement is not the answer for this, we are not the social services of agencies for communities, for our state, for our nation, but the fact is we are, whether we want to be, as there is no one else to turn to.

Mr. Tony Hightower, Deputy Director, Georgia Public Safety Training Center welcomed everyone to the GPSTC and welcomed new Board member Mr. Sam Heaton. Mr. Hightower advised last March the GPSTC touched almost 27,000 students and noted that every month, every quarter and every year the student population is increasing. Mr. Hightower thanked the GPSTC staff that was present at the meeting for their talent, their focus on training and the vision they have for the GPSTC. Mr. Hightower stated currently year to date, the GPSTC has touched over 174,000 students, compared to last year at 133,000, and GPSTC is busy, busting out of the seams, trying to be creative on space, building new facilities, doing what we can to make sure the GPSTC provides the best training in the nation. Mr. Hightower thanked the BPS for their support.

Mr. Hightower reminded the BPS of the Peace Officers Memorial Ceremony on May 22, 2018 at GPSTC.

Concerning the Volunteer Fire Program that has been going on for about a year, Mr. Hightower advised there have been 67 classes and have touched over a 1,055 volunteer firefighters, noting the demand was there and sent instructors out in the field and see a future expansion for continuing to provide this service. Mr. Hightower thanked Chief Tully and the fire industry for helping promote the program.

Mr. Hightower stated 2-3 months ago, the GPSTC partnered with the GOHS and Dept. of Education, making a film for distracted driving/impaired driving public service announcements. Mr. Bruce Stanford explained this is a public service announcement with a targeted audience of school children getting ready to go to proms, going to homecoming in the fall and made the video to where clips can be pulled to make a 30 second TV commercial. Mr. Stanford advised the film involves two couples of children in the drama club at the Strong Rock Academy that are getting ready to go to the prom, filmed them getting ready in the home setting, doing the hair, the whole nine yards, with the film crew going to the prom, filming at the actual prom, getting into the car, cutting up and carrying on. Mr. Stanford stated they did a live crash at GPSTC with a Ford Expedition, had them going down the road weaving, when the vehicle ran off the road, T-boned a tree at 45 mph, a tremendous crash. Mr. Stanford stated there were 8-9 cameras set up and got some really good footage, then had the first responders come in, had a trooper that worked the wreck, the fire departments came in, the ambulance came in and transported them to the hospitals and filmed at the hospital. Mr. Stanford shared there was a candle light vigil that was filmed at the courthouse square for them and had an unfortunate funeral service that was filmed at a local cemetery. Mr. Stanford advised they are still working on pulling all of the film together, actually creating it, 20-25 mins long, and are working with parents from MADD that will be included at the end of the film to talk about the impact. Mr. Stanford stated they have high hopes for the film, and if it will save one child, then they have done their job, and should be completed in about six months.

Mr. Hightower requested the Board's approval to transfer the training center from Cherokee County to Pickens County.

Chief Craig Tully made the motion to transfer the training center from Cherokee County to Pickens County. This was seconded by Mr. Lester Rampy, Jr., and approved by the Board members.

Vice-Chairman Wood thanked Mr. Hightower and the GPSTC staff for hosting the BPS meeting today.

Vice-Chairman Wood called for approval of the April 2018 minutes. Mr. Charles Sikes made the motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Danny Bryant and voted approved by the BPS members.

**DONATIONS**

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

Five Kustom Signals ProLaser 4	\$	11,585.00	Coweta Co. Commissioners
One Stalker DSR 2X Radar	\$	3,012.50	Randolph Co. Commissioners
One Stalker DSR 2X Radar	\$	2,080.50	Coffee Co. Sheriff's Dept.
Two MPH Industries Inc. BEE3 Standard Radar Units	\$	3,600.00	Decatur Co. Sheriff's Dept.
One Stalker DSR 2X Radar	\$	3,070.00	Baker Co. Commissioners
Eighteen Rohn 45G 10ft. Mid Tower Sections	\$	5,274.00	Southern Comm. Services
One Stalker DSR 2X Radar	\$	3,012.50	Dodge Co. Sheriff's Dept.
Two Stalker DSR 2X Radars	\$	5,990.00	Cordele Police Dept.
Two Stalker DSR 2X Radars	\$	5,990.00	Turner Co. Sheriff's Dept.
Donation for Attendance at 100th American Legion National Convention	\$	3,400.00	Dept. of GA American Legion

The motion to accept these donations was made by Mr. Lester L. Rampy, Jr., which was seconded by Chief Craig Tully, and voted approved by the Board members.

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

2014 Dodge Charger	\$	5,220.00	City of Augusta/Fleet Management
Prom Flowers for Video Shoot	\$	105.00	Goggans Florist, LLC Barnesville, GA
Two Tuxedos	\$	450.00	Black Tie Formal Wear McDonough, GA
Pizza for Volunteers of Distracted Driving/impaired video-PSA	\$	206.25	Marco's Pizza-Forsyth, GA

Monetary Donation	\$	1,000.00	Southern Co. Gas
Charity 5K Race Entry Fees (GPSTC Cadets)	\$	1,178.00	Mr. Moonwalk Events Gray, GA

The motion to accept these donations was made by Chief Craig Tully, which was seconded by Mr. Danny Bryant, and voted approved by the Board members.

Mr. Charles Sikes reminded everyone that May 15<sup>th</sup>, is Peace Officers Memorial Day by Presidential Proclamation. Mr. Sikes shared there are two Presidential Proclamations for flags to be flown at half-mast, Peace Officers Memorial Day and Memorial Day, itself. Mr. Sikes stated this was the result of legislation in 1962, by President Kennedy. Mr. Sikes stated as a historical fan, he is always so appreciative when entering the GPSTC facility of the foresight the General Assembly had in regards to establishing Peace Officers Memorial Day in the State of Georgia. Mr. Sikes stated in regards to facilities like the GPSTC in the Southeastern US, there are none except for the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Brunswick and it makes one appreciative of the foresight of the great leaders and citizens of the state in establishing this type of training facility. As to Peace Officers Memorial Day, a lot of emphasis is placed on this and reminded the leaders at the meeting today, to bring their flags at half-mast next Tuesday to support May 15<sup>th</sup>, as Peace Officers Memorial Day. Mr. Sikes noted Georgia did not recognize this proclamation all that much once it was created and have to appreciate people who help make things come about. Mr. Sikes stated back in 1980 when he was serving as chair on the Peace Officers Association, they were meeting at the state capitol and Mr. Bill Hutson was the President of Peace Officers Association at that time, and Mr. Sikes had a proclamation regarding Peace Officers Memorial Day and brought it up to the board and tried to get everyone to support it and recognize it. Mr. Sikes stated Mr. Bill Kline and Mr. George Bagby were our representatives in the General Assembly at that time and can remember so well when they both asked to see the proclamation. Mr. Sikes added they went out and came back in a couple of minutes and said the Speaker said the proclamation would pass the house this afternoon and be onto the state Senate and this is when the Peace Officers Memorial Day was recognize after this. As a result of this proclamation, Mr. Sikes stated the GPSTC and many other agencies throughout the State of Georgia on Tuesday, will recognize Peace Officers Memorial Day and in today's time, if there is one time we need to stop and recognize our group, peace officers in regards to the number of deaths and asked everyone to remember to bring the flag to half-mast on this date.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Chief Mark Revenew  
Secretary



