

BOARD OF CORRECTIONS
April 16, 2009
Glennville, Georgia

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Robert Jones, Chairman
Mr. Wayne Dasher
Mr. Carl Franklin
Sheriff Roger Garrison
Mr. John Mayes
Sheriff Carlton Powell
Mr. Tommy Rouse
Mr. Roger Waldrop
Ms. Rose Williams
Mr. Jim Whitehead, Sr.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Bill Acuff
Mr. Bruce Hudson
Sheriff Bill Masee
Mr. Kris Nordholz
Sheriff Cecil Nobles
Mr. Larry Wynn

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:

Mr. Joe Drolet, Senior Assistant Attorney General

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:

Commissioner Brian Owens
Ms. Laura Jones, Board Liaison
Mr. Derrick Schofield, Assistant Commissioner
Mr. Mark Guzzi, Legal Services
Ms. Joan Heath, Director of Public Affairs

VISITORS:

Members, Peace Officers Standards and Training Council
Members, Board of Public Safety
Mr. Jay Lacienski, State Board of Pardons and Paroles
Executive Director Ken Vance, Peace Officers Standards and Training Council
Ms. NeeNah Yarbrough, Peace Officers Standards and Training Council
Colonel Bill Hitchens, Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Staff Members of Department of Public Safety/Georgia State Patrol
Director Vernon Keenan, Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Staff Members of Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Director Dale Mann, Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Staff Members of Georgia Public Safety Training Center

Chairman Robert E. Jones called to order the April meeting of the Board of Corrections. This meeting was held at the Tattnall County Shrine Club, Glennville, Georgia. Other Boards attending were Peace Officers Standards and Training Council, Board of Public Safety, and a representative for the State Board of Pardons and Paroles.

Chairman Jones began with introducing himself as an attorney working in Atlanta and his home in Madison. Chairman Jones stated he has served on the Board for about six years and was appointed by Governor Perdue. He stated it is an honor for him to serve on this Board; it is a fine group of men and women; but it is also a particular honor to serve as a representative of Department of Corrections in all parts of Georgia.

Chairman Jones stated he had been listening to the presentations of the other state boards; he stated it is stunning to hear what others do on a daily basis. Chairman Jones stated he thought of the scripture, "a greater love hath no man than this but they lay down their life for a friend." Chairman Jones stated it is humbling to hear of all the employees out there laying their lives on the line, not just for friends but for citizens of the state. There are probation officers knocking on doors, there are state patrol officers going up to cars not knowing who is in that car, there are correctional officers in a cell block with 90 inmates. Chairman Jones stated he appreciates each person's work.

Chairman Jones stated he could call roll for the Board members, but chose rather to give background on the Board members.

Chairman Jones described the following Board members. Mr. Tommy Rouse was a Director of Probation in the Department of Corrections; has been a County Commissioner in Waycross. Sheriff Carlton Powell is Sheriff of Thomas County and has been a former Chairman of this Board. Sheriff Roger Garrison is sheriff of Cherokee County. Mr. Roger Waldrop is a retired Army Colonel; went back to work and finished his career as a banker. Former Senator Jim Whitehead is on the Board. Ms. Rose Williams is a new member of the Board; was a warden at number of institutions. Mr. Carl Franklin is a successful business man, appointed three years ago. Mr. John Mayes is the Commissioner in Floyd County and has a number of successful businesses. Sheriff Cecil Nobles is unable to attend today, but Chairman Jones noted that Cecil Nobles is the longest serving Sheriff. Mr. Wayne Dasher has been a friend of law enforcement for so many years and a great advocate for the Department of Corrections.

Chairman Jones requested approval of the Minutes of the March meeting. Mr. Wayne Dasher made the motion to approve the Minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Jim Whitehead, Sr., and voted approval by the Board.

Chairman Jones stated that he wanted to mention that a recent study by PEW has indicated that 1-in-13 adults are under the care, custody, and control of the Department of Corrections. There are about 60,000 inmates; about 160,000 folks who are probationers; 14,000 officers in charge of those folks. If added all together, the Department would be the second largest city in the State of Georgia.

Chairman Jones stated that Mr. Brian Owens is the new Commissioner. General James Donald served as well for a number of years; but, Governor Perdue moved General Donald to the State Board of Pardons and paroles, where General Donald will help with moving folks out due to serious medical issues. Chairman Jones stated that General Donald's right hand person was Mr. Brian Owens. Chairman Jones stated that Commissioner Owens is modest and will not say anything about himself.

Chairman Jones explained that Commissioner Owens came up after serving in the United States Air Force to become a parole officer. Commissioner Owens was a parole officer for six years and ultimately Chief Parole Officer; someone who also carried a gun and knocked on doors in the middle of the night. He then joined the Department of Corrections and has served for ten years, serving as Assistant Commissioner for past five years. Chairman Jones stated Commissioner Owens absolutely knows the organization backwards and forwards. Through Commissioner Owens' leadership and the outstanding leadership in the Department, the budget has shrunk and the size of the prison population has grown. The budget will decrease to \$1.1 billion in 2010, but accomplishing that through re-missioning of facilities and with not laying off employees. This has been done with normal attrition and retirement of the workforce by 1200 folks and by saving the state \$54 million annually. Chairman Jones stated there is outstanding leadership in the Department of Corrections; it is a blessing that Commissioner Owens and his folks are here today.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Brian Owens thanked Chairman Rob Jones. Commissioner Owens stated his report will be brief today and the highlight will be a 15-minute presentation on what is seen with the gangs in the Georgia prison system. Commissioner stated that the current numbers of the prison population are 57,848, which is an increase of about 415 from last month. The Jail Backlog of those inmates sitting in county jails belonging to Department of Corrections is now 2,360, which is a decrease of 90 from last month. The Probation Population increased from 159,000, which is an increase of 3,000 felony probations from last month.

Commissioner Owens then called on retired Army Colonel Tom Sittnick, who is in charge of Office of Investigations and Compliance. Commissioner explained that Mr. Sittnick will

introduce Security Threat Group Coordinator for a 15-minute presentation on the trends seen in gangs in Georgia prison system.

Mr. Tom Sittnick stood before the Board members with stating that when leaving service to the nation and came over to serve the state, he saw Mr. Sharrod Campbell is the kind of individual who demonstrated the professionalism of taking care of the system in this great state. Mr. Sittnick stated that two and half years ago a mission analysis was done to identify what high risk areas should be focused on. One significant area is Gangs. Mr. Sittnick stated the guy behind the brains of this is Mr. Sharrod Campbell, who is the Security Threat Group Coordinator. Mr. Campbell took the mission on, and, in very short order, came to a collaborative way to focus on the problem. Mr. Sittnick then called on Mr. Campbell to show how he systematically put the processes in place that now when the inmate is picked up, can identify them, validate them, and disseminate the information to law enforcement.

Mr. Sharrod Campbell then presented his powerpoint presentation, *Security Threat Group Overview*. After finishing his presentation, Mr. Campbell stated he would be glad to provide a copy of the presentation.

In closing, Commissioner Brian Owens stated that he wanted to remind everybody of the tours following this meeting. Commissioner Owens introduced Mr. Randy Tillman, who has organized the tours of Food & Farm, Signs Plant, or Georgia State Prison.

Commissioner Owens thanked Georgia Correctional Industries and Farm Services for the coolers for Board members. The coolers included strawberries that came off the Farm; there is a jar of ground grits from the Farm, and vanity car tags made for Board members.

Chairman Rob Jones asked if there were any New or Old Business. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Robert E. Jones, Chairman

James L. Whitehead, Sr., Secretary

Laura Jones, Board Liaison

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