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2016 MAR 18 AM 9:40

ELAINE C. JOHNSON, CLERK
RICHMOND COUNTY, GA

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF RICHMOND COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

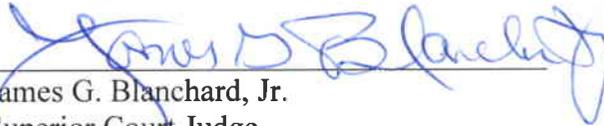
IN RE: GRAND JURY PRESENTMENT FOR THE JANUARY TERM 2016

The Grand Jury having returned the attached general presentment for the January Term 2016, and the same having been reviewed and accepted by the Court on March 18, 2016, it is now,

ORDERED that the said presentment shall be filed in the Office of the Clerk of Superior Court for Richmond County, and that it shall be published once in the *Augusta Chronicle*, the legal gazette for said County; and

FURTHER ORDERED that the said general presentment shall be posted by the Director of Information Technology on the Augusta-Richmond County website for public access through the Internet (World Wide Web).

It is so ORDERED this 18th day of March 2016.


James G. Blanchard, Jr.
Superior Court Judge
Augusta Judicial Circuit

TO: The Honorable James G. Blanchard, Jr.
Judge, Superior Court

FROM: Richmond County Grand Jury
January Term 2016

DATE: March 18, 2016

RE: Grand Jury Presentment

We, the members of the Augusta-Richmond County Grand Jury for the January Term 2016, having been duly sworn by the Honorable James G. Blanchard, Jr. on the 19th day of January 2016, submit our presentment on the 18th day of March 2016, our last day as an official body of the Grand Jury.

To discharge our sworn duties, as prescribed by the laws of the State of Georgia, we met on nine (9) dates during our term and acted upon Bills of Indictments presented to us by the District Attorney's Office.

Sub-Committees were formed to inspect the Coroner's Office and the Finance Department; reports are attached.

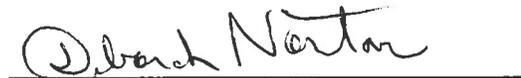
In addition to our assigned duties, this Grand Jury appointed two members to the Board of Equalization; the report is attached.

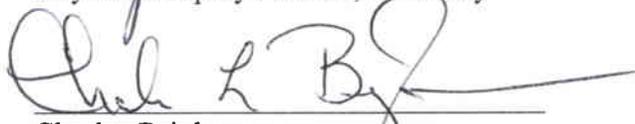
The Grand Jury respectfully submits this presentment on the 18th day of March 2016 and requests that it is published.


Lashanda Tasheka Mills, Foreperson


Elaine Marie Ashley, Asst. Foreperson


Keyanna Sequoya Miller, Secretary

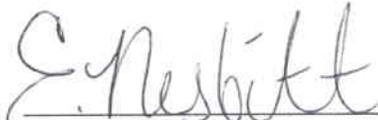

Deborah Lee Norton

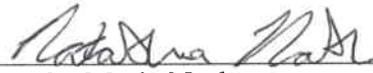

Charles Brigham

Lakeila Lonika Laster

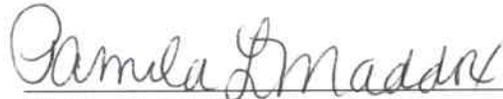

Milton Mays Berry, Jr.


Marjorie E. Hollimon


Elisehia Camp Nesbitt

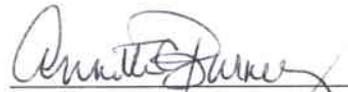

Natasha Maria Nash

James Gordon Burney, Jr.

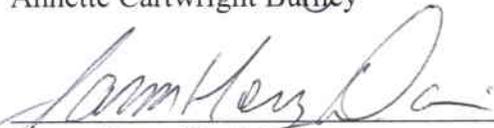

Pamela L. Maddox

Christopher G. Bailey

Lehman Ryan Geiger


Annette Cartwright Burney

Alfred Jermaine Stallings


James Henry Davis

Kimberly Lynn Perry


Beverly Jean Barnhart


Yashika Lavasielte Halls


Carl Edward Thomas

Robert B. Ledford

Constance Shaunta Jones

SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE JANUARY TERM 2016 GRAND JURY REPORT ON THE CORONER'S OFFICE

On February 2, 2016, a three-member Sub-Committee of the January Term Grand Jury inspected the Augusta-Richmond County Coroner's Office located downtown on Eighth Street. We met with Coroner Mark Bowen and his staff. Coroner Bowen and his staff presented information on their operations and we toured the office.

Mr. Bowen provided an extensive background of the operations and responsibilities of the Coroner's Office including the qualifications of his staff and their roles and responsibilities.

Mr. Bowen explained the majority of what is handled through the Coroner's Office is investigating death cases. In addition to investigating deaths, the Coroner's Office also notify families of any death(s) that has taken place.

On the tour, we were shown the family room where families spend time with their loved ones. Mr. Bowen explained this provides closure for many families. The office is dedicated to helping families during this time of bereavement.

We received an extensive presentation from the Tissue Donor Program. The Coroner's Office partnered with Augusta University to establish the Tissue Donor Program. The program contacts the next of kin of all deceased to offer them the opportunity to donate to the program. If a deceased individual has indicated donation on their driver's license, the program still contacts the next of kin to obtain permission for donation. Details of tissue removal, freezing, testing and releasing of tissue, if no disease is found, was thoroughly explained.

We were shown the board indicating locations of bodies for accountability. This helps the office know if a body is at autopsy or at a funeral home. We were also shown the cooler and the light indicating a body was present in the office. We were shown a new freezer to hold decomposing bodies.

Mr. Bowen and his staff explained the "Scared Straight" program which will be implemented later this year. This program will bring youths into the Coroner's Office to show them the repercussion of their actions.

Mr. Bowen explained how deceased individual's property is handled through the Coroner's Office. The chain of custody includes photographs of items and accountability of keys. There are only two keys and the Coroner has one.

Sub-Committee Members were impressed with Mr. Bowen and his staff. Mr. Bowen and his staff are very caring, organized and professional. The Tissue Donor Program is professionally managed and is a very respectful program of the deceased and their families.

Sub-Committee Members:

Annette Cartwright Burney
Yashika Lavasiette Halls
Pamela L. Maddox

SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE JANUARY TERM 2016 GRAND JURY REPORT ON THE AUGUSTA-RICHMOND COUNTY FINANCE DEPARTMENT

On March 1, 2016, a Sub-Committee of the January Term 2016 Richmond County Grand Jury, consisting of three members, toured the Augusta-Richmond County Finance Department located at the Augusta-Richmond County Municipal Building, 530 Greene Street, Augusta, Richmond County, Georgia. Sub-Committee Members were met by Donna Williams, Director, and Timothy Schroer, Deputy Director. We were given an overview of the mission, Divisions and activities of the Finance Department.

The Finance Department's mission is to manage the fiscal affairs of Augusta-Richmond County and to provide effective decision-making support for City-County leaders and executives. The Finance Department functions through six Divisions, i.e., Accounting, Administration, Fleet Management, Financial Services and Budget, Payroll and Risk Management.

Sub-Committee Members toured the Finance Department's offices located on the eighth floor of the Municipal Building. As we entered a conference room, we were given an opportunity to direct questions to the Director and Deputy Director. Both, Williams and Schroer, readily responded to our questions pertaining to the Finance Department.

The Finance Department's recent renovation appeared attractive, well organized and adequate to most of their needs with the possible exception of specialized storage. We noted neatly organized boxes placed in front of the receiving areas. The Director indicated the need to have these business papers and receipts available providing a fast and efficient response to their customers.

It is the opinion of Sub-Committee Members that the facilities of the Finance Department have greatly improved the efficiency of the Department. Adequate wiring for equipment used by personnel was a huge step forward in modernization. Locating the old safe to a special strong room was an economical move as opposed to purchasing a new safe.

The visit of this Sub-Committee was satisfactory.

Sub-Committee Members

Beverly Jean Barnhart
Annette Cartwright Burney
Robert B. Ledford