

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF RICHMOND COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

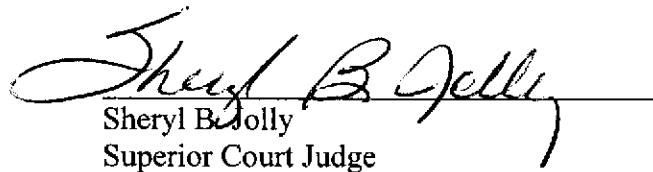
IN RE: GRAND JURY PRESENTMENT FOR THE JULY TERM 2016

The Grand Jury having returned the attached general presentment for the July Term 2016, and the same having been reviewed and accepted by the Court on September 16, 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 16th day of September 2016.


Sheryl B. Jolly
Superior Court Judge
Augusta Judicial Circuit

TO: The Honorable Sheryl B. Jolly
Judge, Superior Court

FROM: Richmond County Grand Jury
July Term 2016

DATE: September 16, 2016

RE: Grand Jury Presentment

We, the members of the Augusta-Richmond County Grand Jury for the July Term 2016, having been duly sworn by the Honorable Sheryl B. Jolly on the 21st day of July 2016, submit our presentment on the 16th day of September 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 Augusta Municipal Building, the Coroner's Office and the Charles B. Webster Detention Center; reports are attached.

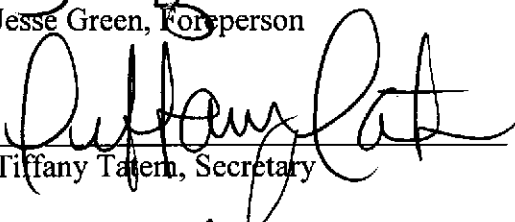
The Grand Jury respectfully submits this presentment on the 16th day of September 2016 and requests that it is published.



Jesse Green, Foreperson



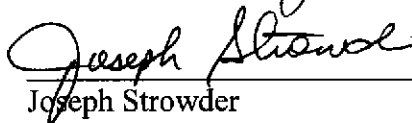
Toni Bryant, Assistant Foreperson



Tiffany Tatem, Secretary



Roy S. Bender III

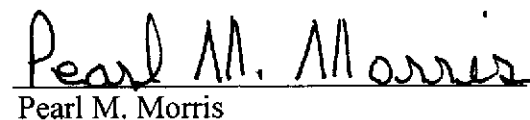


Joseph Strowder

Robert Wilson



Tressie Mae Jenkins

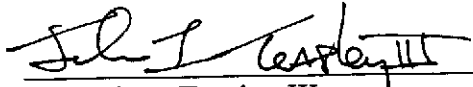


Pearl M. Morris



Raeshod Tameka Moore

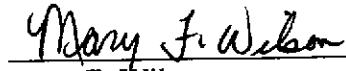
Dana Atkins Pettigrew


John Isham Teasley III


Paul Nopper, Jr.

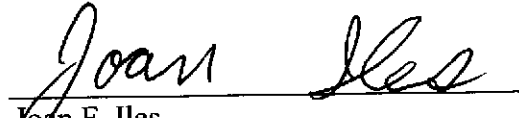

Tabitha Denise Willis


Latavia S. Thompson


Mary F. Wilson

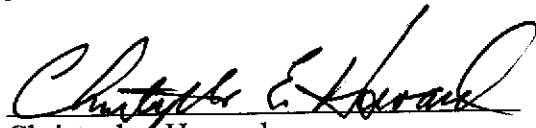
Tonia Crawford Houston


Valerie Peterson


Joan F. Iles

Melanie Calica Baladad


Robbiesteene S. Berrien


Christopher Howard

Virgil Edward Collett

Bobbi Lynn Lane

Stephanie Bennett, Alternate

Christopher Brown, Alternate

Joyce Oliver, Alternate

SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE JULY 2016 GRAND JURY REPORT ON THE AUGUSTA MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Grand Jury Sub-Committee Members toured and inspected the Augusta Municipal Building on August 23, 2016.

Sub-Committee Members were greeted by Lieutenant Bryan Patterson from the Richmond County Marshal's Department.

Lt. Patterson provided certain interesting facts about the new facility before he began the tour. He pointed out that the desk located at the front entrance is bullet proof. The desk was placed at the entrance after you pass through the metal detectors to offer the marshals protection in case of an emergency situation.

Sub-Committee Members toured the Tax Commissioner's Office first. We were greeted by Mr. Tederell Johnson; his demeanor was very friendly and professional. As we toured each area of the department, he introduced many of the employees and gave a brief description of their respective job duties. The employees seemed to be happy at their job locations and were very professional. Sub-Committee Members observed and commented on the cleanliness of the offices and the words of inspiration painted on the walls throughout the department. Every office appeared to be very clean and clutter free.

Next, we toured the Commission Chambers. Before entering, Lt. Patterson brought attention to the chairs located in the lobby area because they originated from the old court house, were restored and permanently installed in the lobby area for overflow seating. Speakers and large monitors were mounted so that everyone could hear and view the meetings. Lt. Patterson used his security badge to enter the area behind the chambers. He pointed out the holding cell and a large meeting room designed for use as a juror liberation room should court need to be held there. Another nice feature was the handicap accessible entrance to the Commission Chambers.

The Marshal's Department, located on the seventh floor, was last on the tour. Lt. Patterson stated personnel conduct background checks and fingerprint Richmond County employees. Any other background checks or fingerprinting is conducted at the Judicial Center. Their offices were included on the tour as was a large meeting room; we were also able to view the security monitors.

Sub-Committee Members had nothing but high remarks for the entire facility. Every area toured was very clean, organized and seemed to operate in a professional manner.

Respectfully submitted by
Sub-Committee Members

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

On August 9, 2016, a nine-member Sub-Committee of the July Term Grand Jury inspected the Augusta-Richmond County Coroner's Office located downtown on Eighth Street. We were greeted by Bonnie Whitehead who lead us to a conference room where we met with Coroner Mark Bowen.

Mr. Bowen began by informing Sub-Committee Members of some issues several years ago and since he has been Coroner, changes have been put in place to correct these problems.

Mr. Bowen explained the main role of his office is investigating the manner and cause of death cases. They also notify families of any death(s) that have taken place. He informed us that the entire staff works diligently to provide accurate information and assistance to any deceased's family members. He was very pleased with the capability of his staff. He explained that there are many years of experience and several degrees held by staff. There is additional ongoing education for the Coroner and all staff and they train together as a team. This is the largest office in Georgia and, out of 154 counties, is one of only four locations with a full-time coroner. This office is the busiest in Georgia and handles approximately 800 to 1,200 deaths per year. The Coroner is salaried with benefits. He is on-call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Mr. Bowen explained the pauper's burial process. He explained that donor tissue recovery is done on site and autopsies are sent to Atlanta. He stated that 300 to 400 deaths per year now go to Atlanta, but he is hoping to be able to perform autopsies locally within the year. The office also works closely with code enforcement and OSHA, as needed.

Mr. Bowen took us on a tour of the facility where we were formally introduced to Bonnie Whitehead, the administrative assistant. We were shown the room with a board indicating locations of bodies for accountability and where they are in the process. We were shown the office where hard copies of the case files are stored. Next, we were shown the family room where families can spend time with their loved ones before burial or cremation. There was also a casket in the room that had been donated and is used for a "Scared Straight" Program for youth in the community. Mr. Bowen explained how deceased individual's property is handled and cataloged and where it is stored. We were shown where body bags, ID bracelets and deceased's medications are stored. With only two keys, the Coroner has one and the Clerk has the other. We were shown the staff's offices. An intern for the past three months has proved to be an asset to the staff and will soon be leaving. The tour included our viewing of the coolers where bodies are stored. The primary cooler stores a recently deceased's body until the death is investigated and then passed over to the family. The secondary cooler is for decomposed bodies that either need to be identified or housed until the body is claimed by next of kin.

During the next part of the tour, we met with Carl Eubanks who leads a team that runs the Tissue Donor Program. The Coroner's Office partnered with Augusta University to establish this program and Mr. Eubanks explained how it works. For deaths that occur outside of the hospitals, it offers families of the deceased an opportunity to donate tissue of their loved ones. Tissue is tested for all known diseases, is kept at Augusta University's tissue bank and used locally. There

is an average of 20 to 30 donors each year from Richmond County. These donations help an average of 130 to 150 transplant recipients at Augusta University every year.

Sub-Committee Members feel the systems and programs in place are working very well and the office is professionally staffed. Their priority is extremely respectful of the deceased and their families.

Sub-Committee Members:

Roy S. Bender III
Toni Bryant
Bobbi Lynn Lane
Raeshod Tameka Moore
Pearl M. Morris
Valerie Peterson
Joseph Strowder
John Isham Teasley III
Mary F. Wilson

SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE JULY 2016 GRAND JURY REPORT ON THE CHARLES B. WEBSTER DETENTION CENTER

On August 16, 2016, a Sub-Committee of 11 members of the Grand Jury visited the Charles B. Webster Detention Center. The Detention Center has housing for 1,056 inmates and its current population is 127 females and 796 males (923 total inmate population). The Detention Center opened in 1997. We found the Detention Center to be very clean and it appears staff maintain a safe and secure environment. Access to the units is through a double door system which enhances security.

First, we checked into the facility for clearance by showing our identification and getting visitor passes. We met with Major Robert Leverett, Jail Administrator, Lt. Laura Morris and Capt. Sheila White and then had lunch in the cafeteria. During our tour, we learned that the inmates wearing solid uniforms were non-violent offenders and those wearing striped uniforms were considered violent offenders. We were shown the male sections for misdemeanor and felony offenders. We visited the laundry department. The inmates receive three uniforms per week.

Telephone access is permitted between 10:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., and the phone calls are of limited duration. During the week between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., and on the weekends between 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., family can also visit with inmates through video-conferencing. Inmates may receive up to three, thirty-minute visits each week. Mail service occurs five days each week. The inmates are provided a limited number of newspapers each day. Television access is granted daily when the entire block is clean per the jail's requirements. Inmates have access to Smart Deposit; this system is similar to an ATM and is accessible on-line for family members to make deposits on behalf of the inmates. Family members may also watch certain court proceedings via CCTV.

Defense attorneys are given access to their clients through video-conferencing or face-to-face meetings, as the attorney chooses. The Detention Center will begin Alcoholics' Anonymous and Drug Therapy next month for both male and female inmates. Additionally, the Detention Center will be starting a GED Program using teachers from Augusta Technical College offering morning and afternoon classes, three times a week.

One incentive for employees was highlighted, i.e. the employee of the month received a day off and a parking space for a month. Employees are briefed before the morning and evening shifts.

A doctor, nurse practitioner and a nurse are on staff. Nurses are available 24 hours per day. Inmates seeking medical attention are customarily seen by the medical staff the day after they make their needs known. There is a \$5.00 co-pay; however, indigent inmates are not required to pay. The Detention Center also has the capability of securing assistance for inmates with mental health issues. The medical unit opened in 2010 and is controlled via a tower, as are the other units.

We toured the intake and booking areas where the inmates are photographed and fingerprinted. They are also processed through a security scanner, which the jail purchased for \$185,000.00, before they are placed in the housing units. The area through which the

inmates are released is commonly referred to as the "walk to freedom." When necessary, local bus tickets are provided to inmates.

Ms. Frances is in charge of the inmates' property. A blue bag identifies court clothes and an orange bag is where personal clothes are stored. White t-shirts, underwear and socks are provided to the inmates and these are not recycled; summer and winter clothes are.

Respectfully submitted by
Sub-Committee Members