

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF RICHMOND COUNTY  
STATE OF GEORGIA

CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT  
AND JUDICIAL OFFICE  
FILED FOR RECORD  
2009 JAN 16 AM 9:14  
ELAINE S. JOHNSON, CLERK  
RICHMOND COUNTY, GA.

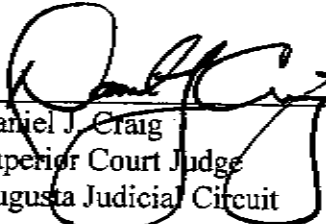
IN RE: GRAND JURY PRESENTMENTS FOR THE NOVEMBER TERM 2008

The Grand Jury having returned the attached general presentments for the November Term 2008, and the same having been reviewed and accepted by the Court on January 16, 2009, it is now,

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

FURTHER ORDERED that the said general presentments 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 16<sup>th</sup> day of January 2009.

  
Daniel J. Craig  
Superior Court Judge  
Augusta Judicial Circuit



SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE NOVEMBER TERM 2008 GRAND JURY  
REPORT ON THE RICHMOND COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT CENTER

On December 16, 2008, a group of 11 members from the November Term 2008 Richmond County Grand Jury toured the Sheriff's Department and the Law Enforcement Center (LEC). The members attending the tour are included at the end of this report.

Upon our arrival, we noticed that the infrastructure was old. The building needed to be painted and cleaned. In the lobby, the carpet was dirty and the smell was not pleasant. The information board in the lobby was too small. We were greeted by Captain Reeves, Officer in Charge.

We were escorted into a break room for an overview of the jail's history, capacity, procedures and questions. We also received a tour by Major Johnson and Captain Reeves.

The Law Enforcement Center was built in 1985 to house 354 inmates. Currently, the LEC normally averages between 440 and 450 inmates daily. The Richmond County Sheriff's Department no longer has the 50 beds for use at the Richmond County Correctional Institute on Tobacco Road. The LEC has inmates charged with simple misdemeanors up to felonies.

The cost of housing inmates last year was approximately \$4 million for medical and dental services and approximately \$1.6 million for food. The inmates eat three hot meals per day. The food that was served to us by the inmates was great. Inmates receive the proper medical, dental and psychiatric care. Their medical staff is great.

The facility is overcrowded and there is definitely a shortage of staff. Some inmates are sleeping on the floor due to overcrowding. The inmates have great privileges. They are authorized to have cable television and telephone and vending machine usage. The inmates were in great spirits when we entered the floor.

We observed that the ratio of guards per inmate was a big concern. The LEC lacks guards/personnel to run an effective and efficient operation. This shortage needs to be identified and addressed as soon as possible before a major problem occurs.

There is a shortage of space in both the men's and women's areas. The east and west wings need to be extended. The facility had water leaks in walls which has caused some areas to mold. There is need for a makeover of the Law Enforcement Center.

It should be noted that the Grand Jurors observed the enforcement officers to be overworked and underpaid. Therefore, it is the recommendation of this Sub-Committee that the major problems be addressed by approving authorities and procedures taken to increase staff pay and add space for the overcrowding.

Sub-Committee Members

Barbara Blueford  
Patricia Bussey  
Phillip L. Cupp  
Cecilia E. Downen  
Gwendolyn D. Ferris  
Mikelle Hornsby  
Kathy Jenkins  
Pamela Moore  
Eva C. Smith  
Alfred J. Tookes  
Biagio J. Vericella

TO: The Honorable Daniel J. Craig  
Judge, Superior Court

FROM: Richmond County Grand Jury  
November Term 2008

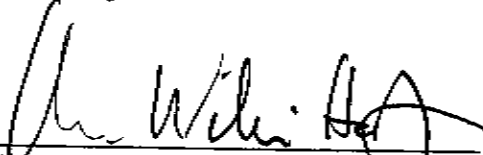
DATE: January 16, 2009

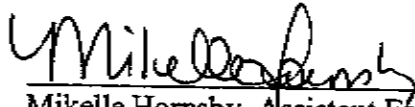
RE: Grand Jury Presentment


We, the members of the Augusta-Richmond County Grand Jury for the November Term 2008, having been duly sworn by the Honorable Daniel J. Craig on the 17th day of November 2008, submit our presentment on the 16th day of January 2009, our last day as an official body of the Grand Jury.

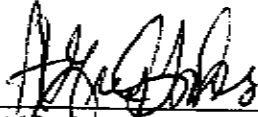
To discharge our sworn functions, as prescribed by the laws of the State of Georgia, we met on numerous occasions during our term and acted upon Bills of Indictment presented to us by the District Attorney's Office. Sub-Committees were formed to inspect the Augusta-Richmond County Law Enforcement Center and the Charles B. Webster Detention Center on Phinizy Road. The reports are attached.

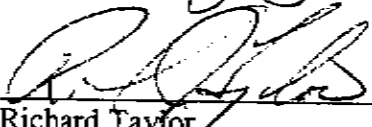
Respectfully, we submit this presentment on the 16th day of January 2009 and request that it be published.

  
Charles William Hock, Jr., Foreperson


  
Mikelle Hornsby, Assistant Foreperson

  
Kathy Jenkins, Secretary

Patricia Bussey  
  
Alfred J. Tookes

  
Richard Taylor

Betty Draughon

  
Barbara Blueford

  
Gwendolyn D. Ferris

  
Richard Bramlett

Renee Harris  
Renee Harris

Lester Hampton  
Lester Hampton

Everette Morris  
Everette Morris

Biagio Vericella  
Biagio Vericella

Cecilia E. Downen  
Cecilia E. Downen

Kelley A. Flynn  
Kelley A. Flynn

Eva C. Smith  
Eva C. Smith

Rebecca Rule  
Rebecca Rule

Yvonne Marshall  
Yvonne Marshall

Perry Keith  
Perry Keith

Pamela Moore  
Pamela Moore

Phillip L. Cupp  
Phillip L. Cupp

Michael T. Hogue  
Michael T. Hogue

SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE NOVEMBER TERM 2008 GRAND JURY  
REPORT ON THE CHARLES B. WEBSTER DETENTION CENTER

On January 13, 2009, a group of eight members from the November Term 2008 Richmond County Grand Jury toured the Charles B. Webster Detention Center on Phinizy Road in Augusta, Georgia.

Upon our arrival, we were greeted by Captain Huffman, the officer in charge. He welcomed the Sub-Committee members. Captain Huffman proceeded by telling the history of the Detention Center located on Phinizy Road. He stated that the facility was opened in November 1997 to alleviate the overcrowding of inmates at the Law Enforcement Center at 401 Walton Way. The facility opened with 552 beds. Currently with 600 inmates, the Detention Center houses only non-felony prisoners and most have short-term sentences.

It was noted that the physical condition of the Detention Center is excellent and the inmates are well treated. Inmates are fed three times a day and they receive medical and dental services as needed.

There are two major problems that the facility must contend with on a day-to-day basis. The facility is overcrowded and there is a personnel shortage. The ratio of inmates to correctional officers is 11 to one. This is a major concern with Captain Huffman.

When the Detention Center opened, the correct number of guards/personnel was not hired, but Captain Huffman was promised the personnel would be added later. The personnel headcount is written on paper, but the staff was never hired and placed within the facility. This shortage has potential for a major problem. The Detention Center is overcrowded with inmates and understaffed with guards. It was also noted that there is a tremendous shortage of space in the women's pod area.

Captain Huffman let the Grand Jurors know that there are future plans to expand the Detention Center. It is the recommendation of the Sub-Committee that the two major problems found at the facility be addressed by approving authorities and procedures taken to increase the staff and add space for the overcrowded inmates.