

**STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD OF GEORGIA
MINUTES**

**Georgia Department of Transportation
600 West Peachtree St.
Atlanta, Georgia 30308**

**April 17, 2025
9:00 a.m.**

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ann R. Purcell, Chair
Jamie Boswell, Vice Chair
Dennis McEntire, Secretary
Cathy Williams
Stacey Key
Doug Stoner
Joseph Stein
Tim Golden
Jeff Lewis
Dan Snipes
Micah Gravley

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE VIA TELEPHONE

Emily Dunn

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Robert Brown
Dana Lemon

DOT STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Russell R. McMurry, Commissioner
Brad Saxon, Deputy Commissioner
Meg Pirkle, Chief Engineer
Jannine Miller, Planning Director
Annette Simelaro, General Counsel

Chair Ann R. Purcell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Micah Gravley gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Ann R. Purcell then welcomed Congressional District 6 representative Doug Stoner and Congressional District 7 representative Joseph Stein to their first State Transportation Board meeting.

Secretary to the Board, Kristen Thompson, called roll for the board members in attendance. It was determined that a quorum was present.

Chair Purcell proceeded to call for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 2025 board meeting. Dennis McEntire made a motion to approve the March board meeting minutes, seconded by Tim Golden, and unanimously approved. *

Albert Shelby, Director of Program Delivery, gave a report on the Letting results for Fiscal Year 2025, the March 2025 Letting results and the projects in the May 2025 Letting. Chair Purcell called for a motion to approve the May 2025 Letting. Tim Golden made a motion to approve the May 2025 Letting, seconded by Cathy Williams, and unanimously approved. *

Matt Markham, Deputy Director of Planning, first presented 6 bridge projects for deletion from the Construction Work Program for review with proposed action next month. He then presented the Board with an additional 6 bridge projects for deletion from the program. Congressional District 2 representative Cathy Williams and Congressional District 10 representative Jamie Boswell requested additional information about two of the projects. Chair Purcell called for a motion to approve the revisions to the Construction Work Program. Stacey Key made a motion to approve the revisions to the Construction Work Program, seconded by Dennis McEntire, and unanimously approved.

Congressional District 11 representative Jeff Lewis asked what would have happened if the Board did not approve the revisions to the Construction Work Program. Georgia DOT Commissioner Russell R. McMurry, P.E. responded that the projects would remain on the project list until work needed to begin and said the projects were on the list based on an administrative need as opposed to an engineering issue. Congressional District 3 representative Dennis McEntire then asked how the projects were placed on the Construction Work Program list. Commissioner McMurry indicated that inspection standards had changed, and the request for deletion of the program was aligned with the new standard. Additionally, he mentioned that he had seen some bridges that needed to be added because of new inspection standards and that bridges are inspected every two years. Ms. Williams then asked about weight limit increases on bridges and available data that showed the impact of those increases. Commissioner McMurry indicated that the data is not available yet and the Department is currently working with Georgia Tech on a study to see exactly what impact weight limit increases are having on bridges in Georgia. He said that the study should be completed in a year.

Commissioner McMurry began with the monthly department report including transportation fund collections ending March 2025. Also reported were the total employment figures ending March 2025; and the monthly procurement report for March 2025.

The commissioner moved on to highlight four projects open to traffic in March 2025: construction of a roundabout at the North Westover Boulevard intersection and the construction of 2 bridges and approaches over Westover Boulevard Extension in Dougherty and Lee Counties (Congressional District 2, GDOT District 4); construction of a bridge and approaches on SR 16 over Flint River in Spalding County. (Congressional District 3, GDOT District 3); rehabilitation project consisted of polymer overlay, spall repairs, beam repairs, joint replacement and column Jackets the I-75 bridge over Klopfer Road and Rumble Road in Monroe County. (Congressional District 8, GDOT District 3); construction of a bridge and approaches Old Agateville Road over Cedar Creek in Jasper County. (Congressional District 10, GDOT District 2).

Commissioner McMurry began the awards and recognitions section by recognizing David Norwood, Executive Assistant to the Chief Engineer Meg Pirkle, who will be retiring at the end of the month. Mr. Norwood has been with the Department for over 30 years and has a wealth of knowledge about GDOT and program delivery.

Next, the commissioner discussed a Gold Star Marker Dedication ceremony at the Georgia Visitor Information Center in Columbus. A Gold Star marker is a monument that honors families who have lost loved ones while serving in the United States Armed Forces. There are also Blue Star markers which honors all men and women that serve in the U.S. Armed Services. State Facilities Manager Jim Clute spoke at the event on behalf of the department. These dedication ceremonies are sponsored by the Garden Clubs of Georgia. The Commissioner also said that Jim has done an admirable job representing the Department at numerous marker dedication ceremonies at Welcome Centers and Rest Areas throughout the state. He asked that Mr. Clute stand and be recognized for his role at these events and for the work he does for GDOT as State Facilities Manager. Commissioner McMurry then thanked Congressional District 2 representative Cathy Williams for attending the event, as well as Columbus Welcome Center Manager Lativia Rivers.

The focus was then on statewide Area Manager Training which covered a variety of topics important to GDOT. Many of the area managers in attendance have been with GDOT for more than 20 years in other roles but were new to the position of area manager. The Commissioner thanked Corbett Reynolds, GDOT District 2 district engineer and Director of Field Districts, for leading the training, as well as Deputy Commissioner Brad Saxon for attending.

The SASHTO Emergency Response & Recovery Peer Exchange was the next topic. GDOT was honored to participate in the first-ever SASHTO Emergency Response & Recovery Peer Exchange, hosted by South Carolina DOT, where leaders from across the SASHTO states came together to share ideas, experiences, and best practices in emergency response and recovery. The Commissioner mentioned that it was especially informative for the GDOT team to hear from the other states about how they are handling impacts from hurricanes and inclement weather, especially in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene and back-to-back snow and ice storms this past

January. Additionally, he discussed the role FEMA plays in emergency response and recovery and highlighted GDOT's strong presence at the exchange.

Commissioner McMurry then discussed his meeting with the Czech Republic's transportation minister Martin Kupka in Georgia. Mr. Kupka was here to visit two Czech companies doing business in the state. Additionally, the Commissioner mentioned that although the geography is different, the populations of Georgia and the Czech Republic are similar. He thanked the City of Roswell and its mayor for putting together the event and for the opportunity to share ideas.

Moving on, the Commissioner then discussed how the American Transportation Research Institute, or ATRI, has collected and processed truck GPS data in support of the U.S. Department of Transportation Freight Mobility Initiative. ATRI uses this truck GPS data to identify the top 100 truck bottlenecks across the country to quantify the impact of traffic congestion on truck-borne freight. Measuring the performance of freight movement across the nation's highways provides rankings and data that can help DOTs understand where and at what level investments should be made. The Department has continued to work systematically and efficiently to remedy these points of congestion in Georgia. The results of that work can be seen in the recent ATRI ranking of the I-285/SR 400 interchange which has greatly improved. Last year 285/400 was ranked by ATRI as the 9th worst in the country, and in 2025 it moved to number 29. The commissioner then discussed some of the other Georgia roadways on the list and expressed that he was proud of the work the Department has done to address congestion and mobility across the state and that it will continue.

April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month, and the Department has kicked off a number of efforts to educate the public around the dangers of distracted driving. One of the key elements of that campaign is the personal story of Molly Welch. A self-described distracted driver and crash survivor, Molly worked with the Department's communications team to create a 30-second public service announcement for Georgia TV stations. The commissioner then showed Molly's PSA. In 2008, Molly briefly looked away from the road while driving, which resulted in a head-on collision. She sustained a traumatic brain injury, and to this day has no use of her right arm and limited use of her right leg, as well as other lasting impacts. The Commissioner thanked Molly for sharing her story and helping to make Georgia's roadways safer.

Staying on the topic of safety, Commissioner McMurry then provided an update on the Keep Georgia Safe Program which is wrapping up its second academic year with the close of the 2024-2025 school year. Keep Georgia Safe is the Department's Kindergarten through 12th grade Road Safety Program which offers free, ready-to-use classroom resources designed to instill vital road safety skills and safe habits in students from a young age. The program is scheduled to be featured in the Spring 2026 issue of Public Roads Magazine. Public Roads Magazine is published by the U.S. Federal Highway Division and is focused on keeping transportation professionals up to date

on developments in federal highway policies, programs, and research and technology. In its second year, the Keep Georgia Safe program has:

- Reached an estimated 764,000 students across Georgia
- Reached 6,200 total players through Kahoot! Games, which is an online game based learning platform
- Added two additional lessons plans - Distractions and how they impact your brain and See and Be Seen Pedestrian Safety Lessons
- Included two new videos – The Impact of Speed and Nighttime Visibility
- Distributed materials to 6,800 elementary teachers and nearly 1,500 middle and high school teachers for use in their classrooms

The Commissioner mentioned that the Department has counseled other DOTs across the country seeking advice on launching their own curriculum in their respective states. He also stated that he was proud of the program and that he is looking forward to sharing the Public Roads feature article with the Board.

This month is National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week. As it does every year, GDOT joined with NHTSA, other state DOTs and safety organizations to emphasize the importance of safety in and around work zones and on our roadways and to raise public consciousness about the need for safe driving in work zones. This year's theme, "Respect The Zone So We All Get Home" reminds motorists to exercise caution in work zones for their own safety and that of construction and maintenance workers, law enforcement, EMTs, HERO operators, CHAMP operators, and tow truck drivers. The commissioner then showed the events that the department has planned to help educate employees on the importance of work zone safety including a new episode of GDOT's "Ahead of the Curve" podcast featuring a conversation with State Safety Manager Sharon Morales and Safety Program Manager Dave Adams. In recognition to those who have lost their lives, the Commissioner asked everyone in the room observe a moment of silence while the names of the GDOT employees who lost their lives were shown on the screen.

The Commissioner then announced that Deputy Commissioner Brad Saxon has submitted his retirement notice for the end of May. Commissioner McMurry then announced that the current Deputy Chief Engineer Andrew Heath has been appointed to replace Brad Saxon as Deputy Commissioner.

The Commissioner also announced that David Norwood, Executive Assistant to the Chief Engineer, would also be retiring at the end of the month. The board thanked Mr. Norwood for his years of service to GDOT and always being extremely helpful anytime they needed something.

Congressional District 2 representative Cathy Williams then acknowledged the GDOT District 2 team for their work in response to a recent tornado. Congressional District 10 representative and Vice Chair Jamie Boswell then said a few words in support of David Norwood and Brad Saxon

for their service to the Department. Congressional District 12 representative Micah Gravley thanked the Commissioner and the GDOT crews for the mobile billboards on I-20 announcing scheduled delays. Congressional District 6 representative Doug Stoner asked a question about the work currently happening on the I-75 express lanes. The Commissioner answered that design work has recently started to make the I-75 express lanes bidirectional. Mr. Stoner then highlighted the importance of safety education.

Committee Chairman Dennis McEntire gave the Finance Committee report. * No actions were taken during this committee.

Committee Chairman Dan Snipes gave the Legislative Committee report. * No actions were taken during this committee.

Under new business, Chair Ann R. Purcell made a motion to move the June board meeting to a one-day meeting on Wednesday, June 18th due to the Juneteenth holiday. Cathy Williams made a motion to approve the new meeting date, seconded by Dennis McEntire and unanimously approved.

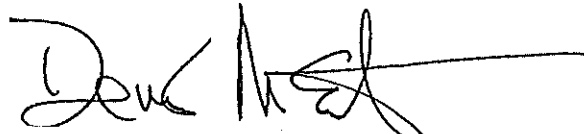
There being no further business, Chair Purcell adjourned the board meeting at 10:06 a.m.

Approved:



Ann R. Purcell., Chair

Respectfully submitted



Dennis McEntire, Secretary

***Denotes documentation in file.**

FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES

STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD OF GEORGIA
Georgia Department of Transportation
600 West Peachtree Street
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

April 16, 2025
3:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

(indicates committee member)*

Ann R. Purcell*

Jamie Boswell*

Dennis McEntire*

Cathy Williams

Stacey Key*

Doug Stoner*

Joe Stein*

Tim Golden

Jeff Lewis*

Dan Snipes

Micah Gravley

DOT STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Russell McMurry, Commissioner

Brad Saxon, Deputy Commissioner

Angela Whitworth, Treasurer

Meg Pirkle, Chief Engineer

Annette Simelaro, General Counsel

Jannine Miller, Planning Director

Committee Chair Dennis McEntire called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM

Angela Whitworth, Treasurer, presented the final version of the FY 2026 budget. The FY 2026 budget increased by \$294,029,696. This reflects an increase of \$274,976,802 in excise funds, a \$9,656,617 increase in transportation trust funds, \$5,592,384 in transit trust funds, and an increase of \$3,803,893 in state general funds. This increases the FY 2026 budget to \$2,797,870,083.

There being no further business, Committee Chair Dennis McEntire adjourned the meeting at 3:38 PM.

Approved:



Dennis McEntire, Chair

Respectfully submitted:



Dennis McEntire, Secretary

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
MINUTES

STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD OF GEORGIA
Georgia Department of Transportation
600 West Peachtree Street
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

April 16, 2025
3:39 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

(* indicates committee member)

Ann R. Purcell*

Jamie Boswell*

Dennis McEntire*

Cathy Williams

Stacey Key

Doug Stoner

Joe Stein

Tim Golden*

Jeff Lewis*

Dan Snipes*

Micah Gravley*

DOT STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Russell McMurry, Commissioner

Brad Saxon, Deputy Commissioner

Angela Whitworth, Treasurer

Meg Pirkle, Chief Engineer

Annette Simelaro, General Counsel

Jannine Miller, Planning Director

Committee Chair Dan Snipes called the meeting to order at 3:39 PM

Joshua Waller, Director of Policy and Government Affairs, provided a legislative update summarizing the conclusion of the legislative session and highlighting key legislation sent to the Governor including H.B. 575 which is GDOT's annual statutory update. The Governor has until May 14th to review legislation and to decide which bills he will sign, veto, or allow to become law without his signature. Abbye Handel, GDOT's Policy and Government Affairs Specialist, provided an update the road dedications adopted by the General Assembly including the dedication of the interchange of I-75 and the U.S. 280 in Cordele as the Honorable Johnny Floyd Interchange.

There being no further business, Committee Chair Dan Snipes adjourned the meeting at 3:57 PM.

Approved:



Dan Snipes, Chair

Respectfully submitted:



Dennis McEntire, Secretary