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Oliver & Weidner, LLC
Clarksville



GSCCCA
1875 Century Blvd
Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30345
Tel: 404.327.9058
Tel: 800.304.5175
www.gsccca.org

Earle becomes 4th executive director of Authority

The Authority Board of Directors has promoted Authority Deputy Director John Earle to the position of executive director. John becomes only the fourth person to serve in this position, which was left vacant by the July death of long-time director David Williams.

"When David learned that he had ALS over a year ago, he promoted John to the position of deputy director," said Authority Chairman F. Barry Wilkes. "He initially hired John in 2004 as director of the Authority's Fines & Fees Division because of the strength of his formal education and the more than 20 years of accounting and tax experience he had garnered in the private sector. However, the reason David chose John last year to be deputy director was because he was certain that John

was uniquely qualified to manage day-to-day operations, would continue team building (which David believed was the



lifeblood of any organization and which he always said was the basis for all the Authority's success), and that he could work with the board to enrich and improve products and services the Authority provides to Superior Court clerks, the legal and business communities, and the citizens of Georgia. Having worked closely with John, all other

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October Board Meeting Review

The Authority board met on October 8 for its quarterly meeting. Following is a summary of the reports and actions of the meeting.

General Business

The minutes of the July 9 scheduled board meeting, and the August 5 and August 28 special called board meetings were approved.

Accountant's Review of Financials

Greg Morgan, with the Authority's outside accounting firm, reviewed the Authority's finances. The FY 2014 Audit Report issued by Mauldin & Jenkins was reported as "clean." Real estate revenue was down approximately \$1.3M compared to FY 2013. But overall, FY 2014 was comparable to FY 2013. Staff was complimented on its preparation of financial statements. No accounting policies were identified by Mauldin & Jenkins as "not identified" in reports. The Authority was given a "clean bill of health" financially.

The internal financial statements for the two months ending August 31, 2014 were reviewed, and it was reported that revenues and expenditures were in line with the budget, although deed fees have been trending down. Staff will continue to monitor expenditures.

UCC Project

It was reported that UCC filings are down slightly for the same reporting period of the previous year but within estimates for the FY 2015 budget.

Fines & Fees Division

In an update on the Fines & Fees Division, it was reported that collections continue to remain steady from the previous fiscal year. Staff is still seeing a slight drop in collections

due to a reduction in the Driver Education Training Fund, but collections are within expectations. Civil funds are slightly higher than for same period of FY 2014.

Historical Deed Re-Indexing Projects

An update was provided on the two main historical projects and the following was reported: over 737,000 instruments have been accepted and are in production as a result of the Voluntary (County-Funded) Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project; nearly 15,000 instruments have been accepted and are in



production as a result of the 1992 Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project; and, of the 24 counties in the 1992 Historical Project, 21 have not submitted 1992 data.

Notary Division

Notary activity remains steady. Staff is expecting 40,000 active notaries for the year, and projecting 30,000 apostilles to be issued.

Premium Search Account

It was reported that the number of Premium Subscriber accounts is trending positive at a conservative rate. Currently, there are 2,401 Premium account holders compared to 2,000 subscribers in January 2014. \$1.3M in revenue has been generated from Premium accounts since the launch in September 2012. ■



Authority adds new features to PSR

In an effort to provide more value and usability to the Program Status Report (PSR), the Authority has added the following new features:

- status columns on Fines & Fees and eFile Project
- the ability to receive email notifications daily, weekly, or only when the PSR contains an alert for your county
- the ability to set up the email alert service for multiple people in your office

The PSR is located in the Clerk Resource Center, www.gsccca.org/clerkresource, under Reporting. To view the report, click Program Status Report. To set up email notifications, click Subscribe to the Program Status Report and follow the instructions. Using this tool will ensure that your office and the Authority are on the same page, as it quickly identifies issues for resolution and maintains current, accurate data. If you have any questions regarding access to the Program Status Report, contact the Authority's HelpDesk at 1-800-304-5174 or help@gsccca.org.

John Earle — Cont. from Page 1

board members and I are certain that David made the right choice and that we have done likewise in promoting him to become the fourth executive director of the Authority since it was created in 1993.”

When legislation was passed in 2004 that mandated the Authority to collect, account for, and disburse the millions of dollars in fines and fees being collected by Georgia's 1,100+ courts, John was hired to build the Fines & Fees Division from the ground up and continues to oversee its daily operations. In 2007, he took on additional responsibilities as director of financial operations for the Authority, and then was named deputy director in 2013. Prior to joining the Authority, John worked as a CPA in a number of accounting and tax-related positions in the private sector.

Born and raised in Anderson, SC, John earned an undergraduate degree in business administration from The Citadel and a master's degree in business administration from

the University of Georgia. He and his wife of 28 years, Denice, have two children, Rebecca (24), who is a graduate of Auburn University, and a son, David (20), who is in his third year of studies at the United States Military Academy at West Point. Denice is a graduate of the University of Georgia. When not in the office, John enjoys playing golf, cheering on the Georgia Bulldogs, and spending time with his family.

When asked to comment on being named executive director, John responded: “As our good friend David Williams once noted when speaking of his position at the GSCCCA, ‘*It's the job of a lifetime.*’ I feel the same way, and I'm honored, humbled and grateful that the board has entrusted me to continue the legacy that David helped build at the Authority over the last 19 years. I'm confident that, with the outstanding staff we have in place at the Authority, we will continue to do great things for the Superior Court clerks, as well as the citizens of Georgia.” ■



Get to know GSCCCA Senior Management Team

With a combined 75 years of work experience at the GSCCCA, the senior management team has come to understand the issues, needs, and concerns of Superior Court clerks. Along with the other dedicated members of the Authority staff, the senior staff is committed to providing the highest level of professional service to meet the needs and expectations of the Authority's "customers," including Superior Court clerks, our 14,000+ monthly subscribers, the

ing is information on members of the senior management team and their role at the Authority. From left to right in the photo below, staff members include:

Rachel Rice

Rachel serves as project manager for the Authority, and, in this role, manages the Fines & Fees staff, conducts audit reviews while fulfilling statutory mandates, and schedules and conducts training for various groups. Rachel also serves as the business liaison for the Authority's eFile projects, assisting Superior Court clerks' offices and providing participating vendors with current clerk office participation information.

A native of Charlotte, NC, Rachel taught high school math and coached volleyball, basketball and softball for several years following college. She moved to Atlanta in 2004 and began her career with the Clerks' Authority in the Fines & Fees Division before being name training coordinator in 2005. Ra-

chel currently resides in Marietta with her husband, Brandon, and son, Ethan.

Mike Smith

Mike is the director of communications & compliance, and since joining the Authority in 1998, has been responsible for oversight of the Notary Public Division and online subscriber relations. He also serves as the Authority's UCC Information Officer and the private sector customer liaison. In addition, Mike annually conducts training seminars across Georgia for banking associations, bar associations, filing offices and the general



State of Georgia, and the citizens of the state in general. While serving many "customers," the Authority was created by and for Superior Court clerks, and serving your needs will always be our primary goal. With guidance from our ten-member Board of Directors, seven of whom are Superior Court clerks, the staff continually strives to maximize the benefits provided to the clerk's office through a variety of projects at no cost to the clerk, his or her county, or the State of Georgia.

It is truly an honor and a privilege that each of us has been given to serve you. Thank you for your selfless service to others and cooperative spirit in always helping us, help you. Follow-

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public on the topics of Uniform Commercial Code and notary public law.

Mike currently serves as the president of the International Association of Commercial Administrators (IACA), and as vice-president of the Notary Public Administrators (NPA), a staff section of the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS). A native of Gainesville, Mike obtained a journalism degree from Brenau University, and then worked for several years in the radio and print media industries. He currently resides in Alpharetta with his wife, Cindy, and daughter, Anna Kate, and enjoys playing golf and watching high school and college football.

[Andrew Wightwick](#)

Andy is the director of information technology for the Authority, a position he's held since 2002. In this capacity, he oversees all aspects of the IT department including the operation of two data centers, a dedicated helpdesk, hundreds of servers, thousands of desktop systems, over 100 terabytes of managed data, a statewide private network, scores of in-house developed and maintained systems, and a public website that receives over 2.2 billion hits a year. He began his career with the Authority in 1996, and, in his early years, helped design several information systems and develop components of the Authority website including the software that allows for document image viewing and retrieval.

Andy holds a degree in computer science from Georgia Tech, and has obtained several technical certifications ranging from Cisco CCNA to Microsoft development certifications. He also holds the Project Management Professional (PMP) credential from the Project Management Institute, and recently concluded a term serving as chair of the Information Technology Section of the International Association of Commercial Administrators. He currently resides in Atlanta with his wife, Andrea, daughter, Jane, and son, Jack.

[John Earle](#)

John was recently named executive director of the Authority. See the article about John on the front page for more information.

[Jamie McCarron](#)

Jamie is director of financial operations for the Authority, and, in this role, oversees all financial aspects of the Authority including managing the accounting staff, preparing the monthly financial statements, and coordinating the year-end audit report and records. Jamie joined the Authority in 2007 as the financial manager.

Born and raised near West Palm Beach, Florida, Jamie graduated from Florida State University with an accounting degree. She also holds the certified public accountant (CPA) designation. Prior to joining the Authority, Jamie worked in public accounting for 19 years, primarily with Grant Thornton LLP as an audit manager. She currently resides in Dacula with her husband, Lonnie, and son, Bennett. She spends most of her weekends at the lake or traveling to golf tournaments to watch her son compete.

[Richard McPhaul](#)

Richard currently serves as development manager for the Authority, and, in this role, oversees all development for the company including managing the Authority's team of developers. Since joining the IT staff in 2001, he has been involved in many important projects including designing the prototype for the Fines & Fees system that helped convince legislators in 2004 to name the Authority as the statutory agency. More recently, Richard developed the Authority's Premium Search offering and managed the complete redesign of the Authority's website, which receives nearly one million visitors a year. Richard has been recognized by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation for his work on the Georgia Protective Order Registry and has served as a Jury Commissioner in Cherokee County for the last three years.

A native of Georgia, Richard has lived all over metro Atlanta and obtained his computer science degree from Georgia Tech. He currently resides in Acworth with his wife, Meghan, son, Bryce, and daughter, Hannah. In his free time, Richard enjoys travel, boating, movies, and spending time with his children at their never-ending activities. ■



Logan awarded 2014 ÉCLAT

The Superior Court Clerks' Association of Georgia recently presented its 2014 ÉCLAT award to **Beverly Logan**, Superior Court clerk of Clarke County. The ÉCLAT was created to recognize Superior Court clerks for exceptional commitment, leadership, accomplishment and teamwork. Following are some of the comments made by ÉCLAT Trust Chairperson F.



Barry Wilkes, Superior Court clerk of Liberty County, during the presentation ceremony.

“When her peers describe her, it is usually

without hesitation. They use phrases and adjectives to paint an affectionate portrait of her with words: ‘A clerk’s clerk.’ ‘A behind-the-scenes clerk.’ ‘Serving in many capacities, but always for the benefit of all Superior Court clerks.’ ‘A leader.’ ‘A fine, genuine Southern lady.’ Then, almost always, they add, ‘A die-hard Dogs fan who bleeds red and black.’

“Those with whom she’s served for the past 23 years say she is content to follow but, like other dedicated Superior Court clerks, she is both willing to shoulder the burden of leadership and to take on duties and responsibilities essential for improving her profession whenever there is need and however she can. Her motivation, they note, is always for the common good and never self-serving or for personal gain or acclaim.”

Wilkes gave specific examples of Logan’s numerous contributions during her 20-plus years

as clerk, including her work with the Georgia Crime Information Center to resolve issues impeding the process of the electronic submission of criminal dispositions, and, years earlier, promoting the need to create an eFiling system so child support pleadings and other records could be electronically filed with and stored in Superior Court clerks’ offices. As Wilkes stated, “She realized the benefits that could be derived for her office, staff, and taxpayers, and consequently took a bold leap, volunteering her office as a pilot site for the new child support eFiling system.”

In 2011, Logan was named *Constitutional Officer of the Year* by the 636 members of the Constitutional Officers Association of Georgia (COAG), and, in 2007, she received the prestigious *Superior Court Clerk of the Year Award* from her peers.

Ranci Jones, who has worked with Logan for 20 years, offered these words about her: “She brought the clerk’s office into the advanced technology age and continues to introduce new and improved ways to perform services, from eFiling to iPads and upgraded software. She uniquely cares about her office, her staff, her fellow clerks, and all those she serves.” ■

Happy Holidays!

The Clerks’ Authority will be closed for the holidays on the following dates:

- ❖ Thursday, November 27
- ❖ Friday, November 28
- ❖ Thursday, December 24
- ❖ Friday, December 25
- ❖ Thursday, January 1

The Authority will also close early (at 3:00 p.m.) on November 26, December 24, and December 31. Best wishes for a safe and joyous holiday season and a wonderful year ahead!



GSCCCA Image Agreements

After years of urging from the Authority's independent auditors and our representative with the Office of the Attorney General, Wright Banks, the Authority Board of Directors passed a Resolution during the July 9, 2014 quarterly meeting wherein the Authority staff was directed to work with the Office of the Attorney General in crafting Agreements that help formalize long-standing board policies surrounding the disbursement of funds for real estate deed images. To that end, two Image

Agreements ("CASH" and "NON-CASH") were finalized after receiving input from Authority board members and legal sign-off from the Office of the Attorney General.

It is the belief of the Board of Directors, the GSCCCA staff, and the Office of the Attorney General that these Image Agreements:

- provide transparency for all;
- are legally sound and will afford legal protection to the Authority, as well as your office; and
- help insure that the Authority will continue to maximize financial benefits to your office.

The Authority must have your signed Agreement in place no later than December 31, 2014, so that image payments/credits are not delayed.

It is critically important that the Authority has your signed Agreement in place **no later than December 31, 2014**, so that image payments/credits are not delayed. For

those who have not yet submitted the Agreement, please do so as soon as possible by mailing or emailing to John Earle. If you have any questions or need help in deciding which Agreement is in your best interests, please contact John Earle (john.earle@gsccca.org) or Gary Yates (gary.yates@gsccca.org). ■

New BSITF surcharge begins 1/1/15

During the 2014 legislative session, the Georgia General Assembly passed HB 870. This bill required that a constitutional amendment be ratified by Georgia voters to add a 10% assessment for violations of O.C.G.A. § 40-6-390 (reckless driving) to the Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund (BSITF). The constitutional amendment was ratified in the November 4th general election. As a result, in addition to violations of O.C.G.A. § 40-6-391, the 10% BSITF surcharge will now also apply to violations of O.C.G.A. § 40-6-390 for offenses occurring on January 1, 2015 or after.

Any questions or concerns should be directed to Rachel Rice at rachel.rice@gsccca.org or 1-800-304-5175, x1010.

