

# Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**Date:** December 10, 2020  
**To:** Board of Directors  
**From:** Benjamin H. Pingree, PLACE Director  
**Subject:** Summary Minutes to Board of Directors Meeting of September 17, 2020

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## **MEMBERS PRESENT**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>CITY</b>
Commissioner Bryan Desloge	Commissioner Elaine Bryant, Chair
Commissioner Kristin Dozier	Mayor John Dailey
Commissioner Nick Maddox, Vice-Chair	Commissioner Curtis Richardson
Commissioner Mary Ann Lindley	Commissioner Jeremy Matlow
Commissioner Bill Proctor	Commissioner Dianne Williams-Cox
Commissioner Rick Minor	
Commissioner Jimbo Jackson	

## **I. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS**

Ben Pingree noted that Commissioner Matlow pulled items eight and nine from consent also that Commissioner Richardson requested to move item 14, to the first item for discussion on General Business.

## **II. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDAED ITEMS**

Public comments were received by email to Comments@BlueprintIA.org through 5:00 p.m. on September 16, 2020. All comments received by that time were provided to the IA Board as part of the record. Live comments were also received via phone or WebEx during the meeting. Those comments are summarized below.

### **Citizen Comment**

Max Herrle, addressed items 13, expressing his gratitude to the IA Board for funding of construction to Preservation Way, and 14, in support of option 1 and the previously approved roadway alignment.

Gloria Arias addressed item 14, expressing her support of option 1 and the previously approved roadway alignment.

Pamela Hall addressed items 14 and 15, to encourage that both projects carry forward with the integration of the Welaunee Master Plan and in support of maintaining a rural setting of Bradfordville.

Max Epstein addressed items 3, 8, 9, and 16, spoke on stormwater related updates, requested that project websites provide additional staff explanation of agenda

items, and suggested that the IA Board space the Board of Directors meeting over two days to provide sufficient time for public comment and discussion.

Robert Apgar addressed item 14, expressing concern of urban sprawl along Welaunee Boulevard.

Danielle Irwin addressed items 8, and 14, expressing her concern for stormwater treatment, higher water quality standards for stormwater facilities that also had park like amenities, and encouraged cleaner and less stormwater for new and retrofit construction projects.

Gerri Seay addressed items 9 and 16, requested that the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) be expanded to include a representative of Historic Preservation in order to protect properties at risk from development. She requested reconsideration of water quality standards for as the mist from fountains at stormwater facilities. Lastly, she encouraged reconsideration of funding for the Convention Center project given the ongoing pandemic and uncertainty for the need for large gathering spaces in the future.

Jeff Blair addressed items 14-15, expressing support of the expanded Project and Environmental Study (PD&E) of the Northeast Gateway and for additional trail connections on Capital Circle Southwest.

Daryl Parks addressed item 12, expressing his support for funding renovations at Bragg Stadium.

Sierra Bush Rester addressed items 3-6, 8-9, 12, 16, and non-agendaed items expressing her concern for citizen input during Commission and IA Board meetings. She suggested the allowance of three minutes per item for live speakers, including the ability to provide comment via text and other communication platforms that did not require internet service.

Michelle Reilly addressed item 14, expressed her concern over increased traffic in Killlearn Estates caused by the Northeast Gateway project.

Cherry Alexander addressed item 12, expressing her support for funding renovations at Bragg Stadium.

### **III. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS**

- CAC Chair Report  
Elva Peppers provided a written report of the CAC meeting on September 3, 2020, which was delivered to the IA Board digitally.
- EVLC Chair Report  
Steve Evans provided an overview of the EVLC's meeting on September 2, 2020, which included recognition of awards received from the International Economic Development Council by OEV for the COVID-19 Economic Disaster Relief grant program and the DataTalks video productions. The EVLC also received a presentation on the Florida Agriculture & Mechanical University (FAMU) Bragg

Stadium proposal and the economic impact of renovations to the stadium. The EVLC recognized the importance of the institution of FAMU and the economic benefit of the football program at FAMU. However, members of the EVLC advised against using the limited economic development funds. The EVLC acknowledged that it as a critical project yet felt that it should be funded through infrastructure dollars. Lastly, the EVLC recommended the IA Board approve the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 budget.

- **Blueprint Project Updates**

Autumn Calder provided an overview of the Blueprint projects, which included updates on the Airport Gateway, which was in the Consultant selection stage, the Fairgrounds Market Study that was anticipated to begin early in 2021, and an update on the Skateable Art design-build project. Team Pain, Inc. was the selected contractor for that project that would have a “snake run” theme. Updates on socially distanced pop-up meetings and virtual community engagement activities for Northeast Gateway, Northeast Connector Corridor, and Market District. A copy of the presentation is on file at Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency.

Regarding the Fairgrounds project, Commissioner Dozier expressed her concerns over revenue shortfalls, due to the pandemic. She requested staff address the budget for that project, as related to inflation projections in the out-years of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) contrasted with debt services on bonds. Autumn Calder spoke to the staff process of projecting construction costs, adding 2% annually for inflation. The Fairgrounds was originally 10 or more years out with construction costs estimated at \$12 million. That translated to approximately \$14 million with inflation. However, by the IA Board reprioritizing the Fairgrounds and including it in the 2024 bond, the estimated total cost of the project, including debt services, was closer to \$13 million, saving the Agency approximately \$1 million. Lastly, by the IA Board also allocating funds to the Midtown Placemaking project in FY21, the only project ahead of the Fairgrounds that was previously unfunded, Blueprint was able to maintain the original prioritization schedule.

Commissioner Richardson questioned the tone of conversations with the Fairgrounds Authority, if there was possibility of relocating the Fairgrounds, or opportunity for the County or Blueprint to purchase the property for future development. Ben Pingree stated that communication with the Authority was in the preliminary stages, advising them of the pending IA Board action. There were no findings, offerings, or negotiations to report.

Commissioner Maddox acknowledged the dogmatic determination of Commissioner Proctor for the IA Board to fund improvements at the Fairgrounds. Efforts that resulted in the significant benefit to IA Board and Tallahassee-Leon County.

- **Status Report on Stormwater Facilities**

Autumn Calder provided an overview of the report stating that the City and County maintained 729 stormwater facilities; 24 of them constructed by Blueprint since 2004, many designed with park amenities. Stormwater facilities provided flood protection and treatment prior to runoff entering natural or recreational water bodies. Recreational and surface-water quality criteria did not apply to stormwater facilities due to the inherently different nature of the ponds. Local Stormwater Design

Standards for Tallahassee-Leon County exceeded the criteria provided by the State of Florida. However, care must be taken by human and pet visitors to the park amenities near stormwater facilities whether from water quality or wildlife. Mitigation of public health concerns was addressed through educational signs at stormwater facilities. The City, County, and Blueprint have and continue to evaluate and invest in innovative technologies and solutions for local stormwater facilities. A copy of the presentation is on file at Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency.

Commissioner Richardson encouraged staff to consider the earlier comments and concerns of citizens in the design and construction of stormwater facilities.

Commissioner Minor noted that approximately 40 of the 729 facilities in Tallahassee-Leon County were multi-use stormwater facilities or were in close proximity to neighborhoods. City staff confirmed that the existence of signs and a web address that provided further educational information for the public. County staff confirmed that they were in process of adding “no fishing” signs; ponds inherited from Blueprint however, included “no mow” signage that also explained the purpose of the vegetation and use of facilities for treatment. Commissioner Minor recommended that staff include additional signage at multiuse facilities to ensure public safety.

Commissioner Dozier spoke to the holistic nature of stormwater facilities from a public health policy perspective. She encouraged staff to continue to be on the forefront of new technologies and encourage the City and County to collaborate through Blueprint on stormwater issues, as Blueprint was the means to address the flooding issues across Tallahassee-Leon County.

Commissioner Matlow stated that he requested the item be pulled from the Consent Agenda when he saw the number of citizen comments related to stormwater. He encouraged utilizing innovative treatment options at multiuse stormwater facilities.

- Office of Economic Vitality Project Updates

Cristina Paredes provided an overview of the OEV project updates, which included employment data, the current unemployment rate was 8.4%, taxable sales dropped 18.6% in April but rebounded 18.1% in May 2020, and the Tallahassee International Airport showing increased passengers from the spring. Updates on the Minor Women Small Business Enterprises (MWSBE) Division Academy offerings, increasing certification metrics, upcoming projects, and Minority Chamber engagements. Updates on Business Development included COVID-19 response efforts, four business relocation or expansion projects were in progress, retail and shopping analysis, a virtual site selection platform, and new website that highlighted the “Why Tallahassee?” story. Lastly, she provided updates on the newly announced \$17 million incubator at Innovation Park, which the IA Board previously approved a \$2.5 million allocation for from OEV. The incubator, which sought to strengthen the student retention rate and recruit new prospects to the talent pipeline, was estimated to create 639 direct jobs. A copy of the presentation is on file at Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency.

Commissioner Richardson commended OEV staff on their work over the last year and inquired about the aspirational targets for the SOMO Walls project, led by a private developer and separate from the MWSBE Policy. Darryl Jones stated that the

aspirational target was 35% participation of MWSBE firms in the construction of the SOMO Walls project. Ordinary targets for that project would have been an aggregate of 23%.

Commissioner Dozier spoke to the results of efforts by OEV and the MWSBE Division, and questioned if helping businesses to obtain equipment or have the means to grow their business through access to capital would be other ways to increase the number of MWSBE certifications and gain access to the business pipeline. Darryl Jones stated that a requirement of all certified firms was to provide documentation of scheduled appointments with the Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU) Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The SBDC provided assistance with estimating and access to capital that supported capacity building. Cristina Paredes stated that OEV also worked with the three Chambers of Commerce to provide interactive platforms for business recovery to educate business owners on how to pivot and expand beyond the challenges of COVID-19.

Commissioner Maddox questioned the average size of the loans processed through the Apalachee Regional Planning Council's Revolving Loan Fund and the willingness of the IA Board to establish a minority microloan program out of economic development dollars. The program, as he saw it, would follow the structure of the state and utilize the FAMU Credit Union. Secondly, regarding the Disparity Study, Commissioner Maddox questioned if willingness of the IA Board to pursue an update to the Disparity Study, for fiscal years 2018-2019 that also included data on purchasing card transactions and new benchmarks for Tallahassee-Leon County. In conjunction with both inquiries, he encouraged the IA Board to ensure that the MWSBE Division was adequately staffed to address the outcome of the study.

In follow up to Commissioner Maddox's request on microloans, Cristina Paredes noted that the average loan through the Revolving Loan Fund was \$25,000. Commissioner Maddox also requested information on the percentage of CARES funds awarded to black-owned businesses.

Commissioner Minor expressed his support for a microloan program specifically for minority owned businesses. Since the beginning of the pandemic, economic data showed that black-owned businesses closed at twice the rate of other businesses illustrating the significant disparity in the economic and financial hardship of black-owned businesses.

**Commissioner Maddox moved, seconded by Commissioner Minor, to bring back an agenda item on the establishment of a microloan program for minority and women owned businesses.**

Commissioner Williams-Cox referenced a meeting she organized with OEV and the Minority Chambers of Commerce and requested that information be shared with the IA Board. Ben Pingree stated that Commissioner Maddox's statement addressed many of the issues discussed in that meeting. Answers to some of the questions were included in the agenda material, others were works in progress and still others would need IA Board direction to bring to fruition. Maximization of utilization of certified minority firms, through the consolidated MWSBE policy. Commissioner Williams-Cox expressed her support for the motion on the floor however; it was one piece of a

larger conversation. She suggested approaching it holistically by disseminating the list of issues discussed and staff's response to the IA Board for consideration, including increasing staff in the MWSBE Division.

Commissioner Richardson expressed support for the motion and a holistic approach to support for minority owned businesses. He stated that many folks aspiring to start up or grow a business, were challenged to obtain capital through traditional lending institutions. The development of a microloan program made sense in meeting that need. The other issues were also part of his discussions with the Big Bend Minority Chamber and should be included in a holistic approach by the IA Board to addressing minority and women-owned business in the Tallahassee-Leon County community.

Commissioner Matlow expressed support for the motion and stated that providing working capital was possibly the best action the IA Board could take for economic vitality. Especially for people who were challenged to secure those funds through traditional institutions. Regarding the issues in the discussion, he requested that they be fleshed out for additional IA Board consideration.

Commissioner Dozier expressed support for the motion and a holistic approach to support for minority owned businesses. She questioned if the revolving loan fund would meet the goals discussed with the microloan program. She recognized that was not the only program that was needed in the Tallahassee-Leon County community, however, with many new tools in the kit, however she encouraged a thorough review and understanding of what was on hand and what might still be needed. An analysis of current options to prevent the duplication of efforts. Lastly, Commissioner Dozier encouraged the analysis of ecosystems through contract programs and partnerships with the Chambers.

**Commissioner Maddox accepted Commissioner Dozier's comments as a friendly amendment to the his motion, seconded by Commissioner Minor, to bring back an agenda item on the establishment of a microloan program for minority and women owned businesses to include the analysis of programs that were currently in place and the percentages of minority participants.**

**The motion passed: 12-0 (weighted: 70-0).**

**Commissioner Maddox moved, seconded by Commissioner Williams-Cox to bring back an agenda item on the updating the 2019 Disparity with MGT of America to include the following:**

- **Updated FY 2018 & FY 2019 financial data;**
- **An analysis of purchasing card expenditures;**
- **Comparative benchmarking of Tallahassee against other communities;**
- **Evaluate and analyze the creation of a specific aspirational goal for black-owned businesses; and,**
- **Staffing analysis on the MWSBE Division.**

Commissioner Maddox accepted, as a friendly amendment by Commissioner Williams-Cox that the list of items discussed from the letters received by Commissioners from the Big Bend and Capital City Chambers of Commerce be included in the agenda item for IA Board consideration.

**Commissioner Maddox accepted Commissioner Williams-Cox comments as a friendly amendment to the his motion, to bring back an agenda item on the updating the 2019 Disparity with MGT of America and work closely with the Big Bend Minority Chamber of Commerce and Capital City Chamber of Commerce throughout the process. This Disparity Study update would include the following:**

- **Updated FY 2018 & FY 2019 financial data;**
- **An analysis of purchasing card expenditures;**
- **Comparative benchmarking of Tallahassee against other communities;**
- **Evaluate and analyze the creation of a specific aspirational target for black-owned businesses; and,**
- **Staffing analysis on the MWSBE Division.**

Commissioners Dozier and Matlow noted the expansive nature of the proposed item and requested that it be a workshop item, rather than included as a typical IA Board agenda item.

Commissioner Maddox clarified that his motion requested that everything listed in the motion would be included in the updated Disparity Study by MGT of America because they could provide a greater level of analysis and have performed the disparity studies in the past. He sought the allocation of funds for MGT to perform the study. He did not imagine a workshop was necessary to engage MGT in the process.

Ben Pingree stated that the previous motion, for a microloan program, would have multiple components but be a single subject agenda item. However, the current motion on the floor, engaging in an expanded Disparity Study, would be a complex and lengthy analysis into the expansion of the study, should it be MGT of America, and would include real data from fiscal years 2018-2019. His understanding of the expanded motion, to include everything discussed by the Chambers of Commerce in their various letters, looked like a workshop.

Commissioner Maddox stated that he was not requesting a workshop but an agenda item specifically on updating the disparity study. Commissioner Williams-Cox agreed noting that Commissioner Maddox's motion covered all of the items from her notes of her meeting with the Chambers.

**The motion passed: 12-0 (weighted: 70-0).**

#### IV. CONSENT

**ACTION TAKEN: Commissioner Desloge moved, seconded by Commissioner Williams-Cox to approve the Consent Agenda.**

**The motion passed 11-0 (weighted (65-0)).**

1. Approval of the July 9, 2020, Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors Meeting and Budget Workshop Minutes

**The IA Board approved Option 1: Approve the July 9, 2020 Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors meeting and budget workshop minutes.**

2. Acceptance of the Draft Blueprint Citizens Advisory Committee September 3, 2020, and Economic Vitality Leadership Committee September 2, 2020, Minutes

**The IA Board approved Option 1. Accept the Draft Blueprint Citizens Advisory Committee September 3, 2020, and Economic Vitality Leadership Committee September 2, 2020, Minutes.**

3. Acceptance of the Status Report Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Infrastructure Projects

**The IA Board approved Option 1: Accept the Status Report Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Infrastructure Projects.**

4. Acceptance of the End of Year Report on the Operations of the Office of Economic Vitality  
**The IA Board approved Option 1: Accept the Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality Annual Status Report.**

5. Approval of the 2021 Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Meeting Schedule

**The IA Board approved Option 1: Approve the proposed 2021 Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Meeting Schedule.**

6. Approval of a Reappointment to the Blueprint Citizens Advisory Committee

**The IA Board approved Option 1: Reappoint Peter Okonkwo to serve a second three-year term on the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Citizens Advisory Committee.**

7. Approval of Procurement Authorization for the Blueprint Infrastructure Fairgrounds Improvements Project

**The IA Board approved Option 1: Authorize Blueprint to advertise, negotiate, and award a contract in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 for an updated market feasibility study and alternative site analysis for the Blueprint Infrastructure Beautification and Improvements to the Fairgrounds project, contingent on approval of the FY 2021 -2025 Blueprint Infrastructure capital budget.**

8. Acceptance of the Status Report on Local Stormwater Facilities

**The IA Board approved Option 1: Accept the Status Report on Local Stormwater Facilities.**

9. **PULLED** – Amendment to the Canopy Development District Tri-Party Agreement
10. Approval to enter into Memorandum of Understanding with FloridaMakes

**The IA Board approved Option 1: Approve the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with FloridaMakes for the establishment of the Big Bend RMA.**

**CONSENT ITEMS PULLED FOR INDIVIDUAL VOTE:**

9. Amendment to the Canopy Development District Tri-Party Agreement

**Commissioner Desloge moved, seconded by Commissioner Williams-Cox to approve Option 1.**

**Option 1: Approve the amendments to the Interlocal Agreement with Canopy Community Development District and the City of Tallahassee, and execute the Amended Interlocal Agreement.**

**The motion passed 10-2 (weighted: 58-12) with Commissioners Dozier and Matlow dissenting.**

**V. GENERAL BUSINESS**

Ben Pingree stated that the IA Board expressed preference for Item #14, Northeast Gateway, to be the first General Business discussion. He noted the time of the Public Hearing on the budgets and fact that Item #14 had no budgetary impact and called the IA Board's attention to Item #12, Funding Allocation for Bragg Stadium, which would have budgetary impacts on OEV or/and Blueprint. Chair Bryant approved the IA Board discussion of Item #12 ahead of the Budget Public Hearing.

12. Acceptance of the Status Report on the Funding Allocation for Repairs at the Florida A&M University's Bragg Memorial Stadium

Commissioner Maddox questioned if funding for renovations to Bragg Stadium could be funded from either OEV or Blueprint funds or portions from both. Ben Pingree stated that mixing the two would introduce complexities to the process.

Blueprint Attorney Susan Dawson, stated that according to Robert's Rules of Order, to "amend a previously adopted" action, the IA Board would need to make a motion that included that specific language.

**Commissioner Maddox moved, seconded by Commissioner Richardson, to amend an item previously adopted to modify Convention Center project from \$40M to \$30.**

Commissioner Dozier questioned the legality of delaying the start of the Public Hearing. Commissioner Lindley questioned if a substitute motion requesting a delay would be appropriate.

**Commissioner Lindley offered a substitute motion, seconded by Commissioner Desloge, to approve Option 2.**

**Option 2: Accept the Report on the Funding and Economic Analysis for Florida A&M University's Bragg Memorial Stadium and direct staff to proceed with financing options utilizing the infrastructure portion of the sales tax proceeds with corresponding reductions to the following projects: FAMU Entry Points and College Avenue Placemaking. In addition, direct staff to move forward with the Substantial Amendment process to add the Bragg Memorial Stadium Repairs project to the 2020 Blueprint Project within the Interlocal Agreement, including scheduling the two required public hearings.**

Commissioner Maddox questioned the legality of delaying the start of the Public Hearing and offered to rescind his earlier motions to maintain the proper order. His motion was intended to gauge the willingness of the IA Board to move forward with the Bragg project through economic development funds. However, in light of it being a longer conversation he felt that it should be delayed until after the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Lindley questioned if Commissioner Maddox would consider her substitute motion as a friendly amendment to his earlier motion. Commissioner Maddox requested legal guidance on the start time of the Public Hearing to preserve the proper order of the meeting.

Blueprint Attorney Susan Dawson stated that Commissioner Maddox had a motion on the floor to amend a previously adopted item; under Robert's Rules of Order, that could be moved if no other motion was pending. That needed to be resolved prior to the IA Board moving into the Budget Public Hearing because of the impact of that motion on Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency budgets.

Understanding that staff would prefer direction on the budget prior to the scheduled 6:00 P.M. Public Hearing, Commissioner Dozier requested legal clarification on the implications of continuing to delay the noticed Public Hearing for the Bragg funding conversation. She was uncomfortable with time constraints that forced decision when the budget could be amended later if necessary to reflect any changes regarding funding of the Bragg Stadium project. Blueprint Attorney Susan Dawson noted the time and stated that beginning the Public Hearing was the will of the IA Board. Any issues of funding could be discussed and determined as the IA Board deliberated the budgets or as motions to amend items previously adopted later.

Chair Bryant clarified that the IA Board would proceed with votes on the substitute motion, the primary motion, and then move to the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Dozier protested a vote without discussion of the item.

Commissioner Matlow stated that the IA Board was in a position where they were unable to ask staff for the details necessary to make this decision. He inquired about FSU's position on the potential loss of \$10 million from the IA Board's commitment. He inquired about how a \$30 versus \$40 million Convention Center would look for Tallahassee-Leon County. The FAMU Bragg Stadium and Convention Center were both worthy of their own separate conversations He hoped to have answers to the implications of the funding source, how it could look, what Infrastructure projects

would the IA Board choose to cut, etc. He wanted to have that conversation and could not vote on any item in the meantime.

Ben Pingree stated that Blueprint duly noticed the 6:00 P.M. Public Hearing however, the IA Board was in good legal standing to discuss and dispense with the issue on the floor prior to opening the Public Hearing. Mr. Pingree provided a brief summary of the agenda item and steps taken by staff following the IA Board guidance to fund the FAMU Bragg project at the July 9, 2020, Board of Directors meeting. The economic impacts of FAMU football for Tallahassee-Leon County, of the Bragg project, and funding from either Infrastructure or economic development were outlined in the analysis provided by the agenda item. Staff presented two options for IA Board consideration, one was the primary motion, and the second became the substitute motion.

Speaking to Option 2, the substitute motion on the floor, Ben Pingree stated that the IA Board could take \$10 million from Infrastructure to create a new project and allocate funds to FAMU in the timeframe necessary. It would activate the substantial amendment process, which required two public hearings and a super-majority vote. The impact to the Blueprint 2020 program would be that the lowest ranked approved projects would likely be unfunded in the out years of the program. The two projects were the FAMU Entry Points and College Avenue Placemaking.

Regarding Option 1, the primary motion on the floor, Ben Pingree stated that the IA Board could fund the FAMU Bragg Stadium project through economic development funds. It would require rescinding a prior vote, on the Convention Center, to reduce the funding of that project from \$40 to \$30 million. The \$40 million projected cost was the baseline estimate of the cost to construct a Convention Center that aligned with the market study for Tallahassee-Leon County and did not already exist somewhere else. It could be six months before staff could report on the impact of reducing the Convention Center project by \$10 million because of standing direction to develop the Memorandum of Understanding with FSU to flesh out the project. If, through that process, it happened that \$30 million would not construct a facility that met the minimum recommendations by the consultant, staff would likely have a different recommendation to the IA Board at a future meeting.

Ben Pingree reminded the IA Board that the purpose of the project was to create a facility that did not already exist in the community, in order to generate the traffic for the economic benefit to Tallahassee-Leon County marketplace. Mr. Pingree reported that FSU understood the options and decisions before the IA Board and were willing to continue to work with OEV to construct the Convention Center and maintain it beyond opening. However, this was all contingent upon it successfully meeting the value proposition of a \$30 versus \$40 million investment.

Commissioner Matlow stated that should the IA Board vote to fund the Bragg Stadium project from Infrastructure, the two projects likely to go unfunded, FAMU Entry Points and College Avenue Placemaking were identified as Tier 1 projects for Tallahassee-Leon County by the Sales Tax Committee prior to local residents voting on the sales tax extension. Conversely, the economic development capitals seemed the logical place to fund the Bragg Stadium project from in order to maintain the agreement with voters.

Commissioner Desloge stated that the only motion he could support was for funding to come from Infrastructure. He reminded the IA Board that the economy also took a hit during the Blueprint 2000 program and he strongly that the quickest way out of the current downturn, as in the Blueprint 2000 program, was through the construction of the Convention Center. He thought that the IA Board had the ability to do both the FAMU Bragg Stadium project and the FSU Convention Center project. He did not want to cannibalize one for the other however.

Commissioner Minor expressed his appreciation for the members of the Sales Tax Committee who invested two years into developing the project list for the Blueprint 2020 program. He felt it a great disservice to all of their work for the IA Board to chip away at the project list on a whim. He expressed his commitment, dedication, and support for the Bragg Stadium project. He questioned if staff had any insight into the Animal Service Center project. In his review of the project list, the Animal Service Center seemed a decent prospect that would have minimal impact on projects as a whole as it was currently at the bottom of the list.

Ben Pingree stated that several of the 2020 projects were already underway because of the early work of the IA Board to prioritize and advance fund the planning stages of project work. The success of Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency, in part, came through the IA Board's direction on leveraging opportunities, cost saving collaborations, and the reconfiguration of projects that would arise over time. Currently, the Animal Service Center was the lowest ranked of the 27 Blueprint 2020 Infrastructure projects. However, it could be elevated in rank over the life of the Blueprint 2020 program, as others have as well. Currently though, it was in the unfunded project list. If the IA Board chose to insert another project into the list, the appropriation of \$10 million for that project would push the bottom ranked unfunded projects off the list completely.

Commissioner Williams-Cox expressed her frustration on behalf of the citizens who were waiting to speak on the Budget Public Hearing. She also expressed her disappointment that the IA Board felt that the Convention Center was sacred and could not pull \$10 million from it to reallocate to the FAMU Bragg Stadium project but was willing to sacrifice the Animal Service Center. While she originally supported the \$40 million commitment to the Convention Center, she wanted to pull \$10 million from there to fund the Bragg project. The future of large gatherings in a Convention Center was uncertain, in light of the pandemic. However, it was clear that if the IA Board did not support FAMU, the annual economic contributions brought to Tallahassee-Leon County through their football program would leave the community. Furthermore, local MWSBE businesses would be denied the opportunity to make money off the repairs without the Bragg project. She firmly held that the Animal Service Center, FAMU Entry Points, and College Avenue Placemaking project all needed to stay on the Infrastructure prioritization list and the funding for Bragg stadium needed to come from economic development program because it meant economic benefit to MWSBE businesses and Tallahassee-Leon County.

Commissioner Dozier expressed her sadness over the conversation that pitted good community projects against one another and the implication that the process did not matter. She wondered if the Convention Center would be like the Performing Arts Center in continual increase in cost to achieve the project and suggested waiting until

the current design study was complete. If the IA Board did not have the budget available to invest in a Convention Center that would be marketable and generate revenue, then it too was a waste. The Convention Center had several value added points, however, the full scope of details was not yet available or if the budget was available to fund it.

Commissioner Dozier stated that the IA Board first heard the FAMU Bragg Stadium project proposal in July 2020 with the current agenda item the first opportunity to discuss it as a Board. She spoke of her concerns with all funding scenarios and the need for more information. She questioned why the item could not be taken up at the December 2020 IA Board meeting, have opportunity for constituent input, and complete the FAMU Bragg Stadium project in between the 2021-2022 football seasons. Otherwise, the IA Board was making a decision with little information about the implications. Regarding leveraging and the unfunded Infrastructure projects, Commissioner Dozier, reading from the agenda item, stated that with a \$64 million reduction in sales tax revenue, Blueprint Infrastructure did not anticipate having funding available to support locally preferred improvements for Orange Avenue, Springhill Road, or any of those projects. That would have a substantial impact on walkability, stormwater and flood control, alternative sewer solutions, and additional projects and other amenities that the people of Tallahassee-Leon County wanted as part of the Blueprint method.

Commissioner Dozier stated that the IA Board fully supported FAMU. The question however was when and how would be best for Tallahassee-Leon County. Voting that day to fund the Bragg Stadium project out of any of the three options available was doing so without real public input because it was occurring ahead of the Public Hearing, and without knowing what other projects would be effected or if Tallahassee-Leon County might lose the Convention Center. The IA Board needed to delay the vote until December 2020.

Commissioner Maddox stated that in order for the IA Board make the Bragg Stadium project happen for Tallahassee-Leon County, sacrifices would need to be made. He was willing to do that for FAMU who was in dire need. He would vote in favor of the substitute motion by Commissioner Lindley, and if it failed, he would vote in favor of his own primary motion because he wanted to see this project move forward and for FAMU to continue to be a community asset.

**The substitute motion to approve option 2 failed: 6-6 (weighted: 34-36) with Mayor Dailey and Commissioners Bryant, Williams-Cox, Dozier, Minor, and Proctor dissenting.**

Commissioner Maddox restated his motion to amend an item previously adopted.

**The primary motion to amend an item previously adopted to modify Convention Center project from \$40M to \$30M, passed 9-3 (weighted: 55-15) with Commissioners Desloge, Dozier, and Jackson dissenting.**

Chair Bryant called for a motion to allocate the available \$10 million.

**Commissioner Williams-Cox moved, seconded by Commissioner Richardson, to approve Option 1.**

**Option 1: Accept the Report on the Funding and Economic Analysis for Florida A&M University's Bragg Memorial Stadium and direct staff to proceed with financing options, utilizing the economic development portion of the sales tax proceeds with corresponding program or project cuts to be determined by the IA Board.**

**The motion passed 9-3 (weighted: 55-15) with Commissioners Desloge, Dozier, and Jackson dissenting.**

Regarding his dissenting vote, Commissioner Jackson stated that the IA Board could be more ingenious with Infrastructure funding.

## **VI. PUBLIC HEARING**

16. Second and Final Public Hearing on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget and Fiscal Year 2021 – 2025 Five-Year Capital Improvement Program Budget for the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency

Chair Bryant called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00 P.M.

Ben Pingree provided a brief summary of the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency budget process, the incorporation of updates from the July 9, 2020 Budget Workshop, Agency budget overview including an anticipated \$173.5 million in sales tax revenue, funding 23 Infrastructure projects totaling \$260 million, 16 economic development projects totaling \$41.5 million, and reduced operating expenses across the Agency.

### **Citizen Comment**

Mariann Darcangelis spoke of the record levels of poverty in the 32304 zip code, one of the worst in the state, and called for the IA Board to support other uses of sales tax dollars on small businesses or to address homelessness. She also encouraged the IA Board to conduct a new feasibility study or at a minimum, consult with an external subject matter expert on how convention market was changing because of the pandemic.

Sierra Bush Rester expressed her frustration with the delay to the Public Hearing.

Max Epstein expressed his frustration with the irregular discussion and votes by the IA Board, City, and County Commissions without proper public notification and input in the middle of a pandemic and economic shortfall. In light of the pandemic, he encouraged the IA Board to rethink the Convention Center project and how Blueprint funds were invested.

Darwin Gamble spoke in opposition to spending any money on a Convention Center project due to the pandemic, minimal public input, and increase in cost to Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency.

Sara McCabe spoke in opposition to spending on the Convention Center project recommending instead that money be spent on sidewalks and approved projects from the 2014 ballot initiative. If legal to do so, she thought housing and the creation of jobs that paid a living wage should be top of list.

Chelsea Rimert expressed her concern over the development interests in Tallahassee-Leon County, deviation from the 2014 ballot language on the sales tax extension, and suppression of public comment.

Jon Rimert spoke to the egregious misuse of taxpayer money through funding the Convention Center project. The IA Board could help the Tallahassee-Leon County community though investing in housing and job creation; issues that were compounded by the current pandemic.

Jordan Scott encouraged the IA Board to take the best action for Tallahassee-Leon County and residents whether or not it was not in the best interest of FSU or FAMU. Any economic benefit that might have existed in building a Convention Center was no longer relevant because of the effects of Coronavirus on technology and ways that people meet.

Gerri Seay expressed her concern with the lack of leadership and sound decisions. Local government heard citizen comment but pushed forward the agenda through giving funds to FSU while no one reflected the viewpoints of their constituents.

Michael Yost spoke in opposition to spending any money to construct a Convention Center in the middle of the worst global pandemic in over a century that had annihilated the convention industry. As a PhD candidate on the very subject matter, he strongly encouraged the IA Board to use those funds to benefit the people of Tallahassee-Leon County, instead of local interests of FSU. Even if the project could recover its costs at some future point, it would not be enough however, to justify the expenditure when the people of Tallahassee-Leon County had so many needs that are more pressing.

Lucia Sommer spoke in opposition to spending any money to construct a Convention Center stating that the hospitality and convention industry had been devastated by COVID-19. The world's leading epidemiologists believed that COVID-19 would be active for decades with periodic outbreaks that would necessitate social distancing and shutdowns. Moving ahead with the project in the face of such uncertainty could easily amount to a multi-million dollar loss to Tallahassee-Leon County.

Elizabeth Winchester echoed the comments of Michael Yost and Lucia Sommer regarding the foolishness of spending any money on a Convention Center in light of a decimated industry and the uncertainty of recovery.

Commissioner Matlow requested to reallocate \$216,000 from the Business Recruitment and Incentive Fund (BRIF) to the Alabama Street project. Ben Pingree confirmed that there were no issues with Commissioner Matlow's request from a staff level.

Commissioner Matlow requested a clarification of what the \$500,000 line item for the Convention Center would actually fund. Ben Pingree stated that the IA Board previously authorized OEV to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding with FSU on the terms and conditions for the size, scope, and scale of the Convention Center, how it would be constructed, operated, etc. The \$500,000 allocation would fund the preliminary design and determine if the minimum of what was desired for the facility could be constructed with the money allocated. That information would be reported to IA Board at a future Board of Directors meeting. Commissioner Matlow stated that he did not support building a Convention Center currently and he did not support spending more than \$20 million of economic development funds on it period.

Commissioner Dozier stated that she could not support the budget. She felt that it was more appropriate to complete the design study ahead of adjusting the budget. The IA Board could not assume that \$30 million could get the Convention Center that Tallahassee-Leon County needed based on the earlier assertion of the \$40 million cost estimate. She did not support zero cost of living increases for employees. It was not a raise but good business practice. Blueprint, as a separately governed Agency with an independent budget should not be subjected to the restrictions of City or County Commission actions.

Commissioner Proctor stated that his support for the Convention Center was inspired by the 2017 Nashville trip, organized by the Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce, and the economic driver that was their Convention Center. The investment of local dollars in a Convention Center that would be available for use by local institutions to national organizations relied on future economic returns. He could not speak to why FSU would not contribute more to the funding; nevertheless, the purpose of the project was to generate tax revenue and elevate Tallahassee-Leon County. The people voted to support the \$20 million investment, not the expanded ask by FSU or the most current compromised allocation. He strongly encouraged the IA Board to hold to a dollar amount for the investment.

Commissioner Richardson spoke in favor of the feasibility study in order to provide the IA Board with the requisite information to make an informed decision. He recommended that the consultant be from outside this area with no ties to FSU or Tallahassee-Leon County in order to ensure objectivity. He was willing to see the project forward to that point however, he would reserve final judgement until the information was available for him to make a final decision.

**Commissioner Matlow moved, seconded by Commissioner Proctor, to approve Options 1-3, including the prior Bragg action (item 12); to reallocate \$216,000 from BRIF to Alabama Street, and use the \$500,000 to conduct feasibility study on the Convention Center.**

Commissioner Dozier stated that a feasibility study on the Convention Center was conducted by a third party prior to approving the \$40 million in March 2020. Ben Pingree confirmed and stated that after months of research to identify market demand, the study supported the funding levels request reviewed by the IA Board at the March 12, 2020 meeting. Commissioner Dozier stated that the next steps should be the preliminary engineering and design work that would provide an accurate

budget number. She did not feel that the IA Board should approve funds for a second market study unless they found fault in the earlier one.

Commissioner Williams-Cox noted that the earlier market study did not know to consider the changing needs brought about by the pandemic. This was an opportunity to review the project through that lens ahead of signing a Memorandum of Understanding with project partners. She also questioned the funding source for the feasibility study and level of public engagement. Ben Pingree stated that the IA Board approved \$500,000 for the preliminary engineering and design service and assumed that the IA Board would fund a new feasibility study from that line item. Public engagement was a vital component of the study to determine if people would hold conventions in Tallahassee-Leon County, the size of conventions already accommodated by the market, deficits in the market, and the demand to fill that gap.

Commissioner Minor stated that with the uncertainty of long-term economic impacts of the pandemic, he was not confident that a feasibility study conducted in the next six months would be an accurate predictor of the long-term market demand.

Commissioner Proctor spoke to the impacts that the upcoming election would have on the economy and the outcry of citizens everywhere asking for the reimagining of how public money was allocated. He echoed the sentiments of Commissioner Williams-Cox and Commissioner Minor, and encouraged the IA Board to slow the decision making process to, engage in smaller commitments, and determine FSU's level of commitment to the Convention Center in the context of the pandemic.

**Mayor Dailey offered a substitute motion, seconded by Commissioner Desloge to approve Options 1-3 and prior Bragg action (item 12).**

**Option #1: Conduct the Public Hearing to adopt the FY 2021 Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Operating Budget as presented and approve the FY 2021 Operating Budget Resolution (Resolution No. 2020-04).**

**Option #2: Conduct the Public Hearing to approve and adopt the FY 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Program as presented and approve the FY 2021 Capital Improvement Program Budget Resolution (Resolution No. 2020-05).**

**Option #3: Direct Blueprint staff to make direct transfers to Leon County and the City of Tallahassee for annual allocations of funds for Blueprint 2020 projects being implemented by those jurisdictions.**

**The motion passed: 10-2 (weighted: 58-12) with Commissioners Dozier and Matlow dissenting.**

**V. GENERAL BUSINESS – Continued**

Ben Pingree noted that staff was prepared to provide a presentation on the remaining agenda items at the IA Board's discretion however; the material was thoroughly outlined in the agenda material.

14. Acceptance of the Northeast Gateway Buckhead Alignment Analysis and Consideration of Operational Alternatives at Roberts Road

**Mayor Dailey moved, seconded by Commissioner Richardson, to approve Option 1.**

**Option 1: Accept the Northeast Gateway Buckhead HOA Alignment Analysis staff report.**

Commissioner Desloge stated that the citizen led initiative of the Killearn homeowners is what brought the IA Board to the current point in the project. He supported the motion and asked that staff be conscious of the conservation agreements in the area.

Commissioner Dozier noted the challenges at the Roberts and Centerville Road intersection and questioned if staff could move forward with further analysis of the intersection without further consideration of the existing options of a five-point intersection or round a bout. Autumn Calder stated that Option 1 would allow for in-depth consideration of alternatives of that northern project area including evaluations of the proposed solutions and to seek other not yet identified engineering solutions that would support that intersection. Ben Pingree stated that Option 2 would include consideration of the area south of the schools on Centerville Road.

Commissioner Matlow stated that the IA Board made a deal with Killearn Homes Association to go to Roberts Road, and Option 2 would negate that. In listening to all of the citizen speakers, the logical conclusion was the no-build option. In lieu of that however, the next logical solution would be to disable a section of Roberts Road with it connecting through Welaunee Boulevard.

**The motion passed: 12-0 (weighted: 70-0).**

11. Election of the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors' Vice-Chairperson

**Commissioner Jackson moved, seconded by Commissioner Desloge, to elect Commissioner Nick Maddox to Vice-Chair of the IA Board of Directors.**

**The motion passed 12-0 (weighted: 70-0).**

13. Approval of the Northeast Connector Corridor Feasibility Study and Consideration of Project Funding Options

Ben Pingree introduced the item and offered a staff presentation if it was the will of the IA Board.

**Commissioner Desloge moved, seconded by Mayor Dailey to approve Options 1 and 2.**

**Option 1: Approve the Northeast Connector Corridor Traffic Feasibility Analysis.**

**Option 2: Direct Blueprint staff to move forward with community engagement and further refinement of Alternative A for Bannerman Road Segments 1 and 2, as well as refinement of Segment 3 improvements, and direct Blueprint staff to develop funding options consistent with these improvements through the Fiscal Year 2022 budget process.**

Commissioner Dozier stated that while she would love to support the project, she questioned the budget impact. Ben Pingree stated that the estimated cost was \$13 million; noting that it was approximately \$3 million less because of the agreement, that Leon County negotiated with the Hawthorn Development. Should the motion pass, staff would continue to refine the project to identify and implement other cost saving measures.

**The motion passed: 12-0 (weighted: 70-0)**

15. Approval of the Capital Circle Southwest Greenway and Debbie Lightsey Nature Park Concept

Ben Pingree introduced the item and offered a staff presentation if it was the will of the IA Board.

**Commissioner Williams-Cox moved, seconded by Commissioner Proctor, to approve Option 1.**

**Option 1: Approve the Capital Circle Southwest Greenway Conceptual Design Plan.**

**The motion passed: 12-0 (weighted: 70-0)**

**RECONSIDERATION OF EARLIER VOTE**

**Commissioner Richardson moved, seconded by Commissioner Minor, for the reconsideration of his earlier vote on the Budget item**

**The motion failed: 4-7 (weighted: 24-41) with Mayor Dailey and Commissioners Bryant, Williams-Cox, Desloge, Dozier, Lindley, and Maddox dissenting and Commissioner Proctor absent.**

VII. **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

*The next Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors Meeting  
is scheduled for*

**December 10, 2020, at 3:00 p.m.**