

# Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**Date:** December 9, 2021  
**To:** Board of Directors  
**From:** Benjamin H. Pingree, PLACE Director  
**Subject:** Summary Minutes to Board of Directors Meeting of September 27, 2021

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## MEMBERS PRESENT

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>CITY</u>
Commissioner Nick Maddox, Chair	Mayor John Dailey
Commissioner Kristin Dozier	Commissioner Curtis Richardson
Commissioner Carolyn Cummings	Commissioner Jeremy Matlow
Commissioner Brian Welch	Commissioner Jacqueline Porter*
Commissioner Rick Minor	Commissioner Dianne Williams-Cox
Commissioner Bill Proctor	
Commissioner Jimbo Jackson*	

*\*Indicates virtual / telephonic participation.*

## TELEPHONIC PARTICIPATION

**Commissioner Williams-Cox moved, seconded by Commissioner Richardson, to allow Commissioners Jackson and Porter to participate in the IA Board meeting virtually.**

**The motion passed 10-0 (weighted 58-0).**

## I. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

There were two agenda modifications, the addition of a presentation by FAMU on the Bragg Stadium Renovations and the replacement of item 5, Approval of the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency 2022 Meeting Schedule.

**Commissioner Williams-Cox moved, seconded by Commissioner Dozier, to accept the agenda modifications.**

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

## 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 26, 2021. All emails received were provided to the IA Board. Live comments were also taken in person and via WebEx during the meeting. Those comments are summarized below.

### Citizen Comment

Jeff Blair spoke on meaningful citizen engagement and encouraged the IA Board of Directors to convene a process, comprised of citizen stakeholders and public engagement and consensus building professionals to develop a comprehensive policy for consistent, accessible, transparent, and equitable procedures for citizen engagement, public policy development, and citizen participation at IA Board meetings.

### III. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS

- Bragg Memorial Stadium Renaissance Project – Dr. Shawnta Friday-Shroud

Dr. Friday-Shroud provided a brief presentation on the progress of the Bragg Memorial Stadium Renaissance project including the completion Phase 1, ahead of schedule and the first home game. Phase I used approximately 40 percent of the \$10-million allocated by the IA Board and included structural repairs and the installation of new seating. Phase II was scheduled to begin November 1, 2021, after the last home game of the season. Based on current cost estimates for material, renovations to concession stands and restrooms might not be funded.

Commissioner Williams-Cox noted the swiftness of the presentation and requested that the slide deck be made available to each of the Directors for further consideration of the funding shortage it outlined.

- Employment Trends and CareerSource Update – Jim McShane
  - Receipt and File:
    - [Draft Blueprint Citizens Advisory Committee September 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes](#)
    - [Draft Economic Vitality Leadership Committee September 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes](#)
    - [Blueprint Infrastructure Community Engagement Update](#)

### IV. CONSENT

#### Citizen Comments

Max Epstein spoke on Orange Avenue Community Park concept noting the lack of improvements to water quality available with the proposed pond. He encourage the IA Board to reconsider the Blueprint ethos regarding building walking trails around stormwater facilities without including additional filtration systems to the facility.

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

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

1. Approval of the July 15, 2021, Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Option 1: Approve the July 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes.

2. Approval of Amendments to the Economic Vitality Leadership Council Bylaws

Option 1: Approve the amendments to the EVLC Bylaws.

3. Acceptance of the FY 2021 Office of Economic Vitality Annual Report

Option 1: Accept the FY 2021 Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality Annual Report.

4. Acceptance of a Status Report on College Avenue Placemaking Project

Option 1: Accept the Status Update on the College Avenue Placemaking Project.

5. Approval of the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency 2022 Meeting Schedule

Option 1: Approve the *modified* 2022 Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Meeting Schedule.

6. Approval of the Proposed Concept and Authorization to Advertise, Negotiate, and Award Construction Services for the Orange Avenue Community Park

Option 1: Approve the Orange Avenue Community Park Concept.

Option 2: Authorize Blueprint to advertise, negotiate, and award, through IMC approval, a contract for construction of the Orange Avenue Community Park project.

7. Approval of Appointments to the Blueprint Citizens Advisory Committee

Option 1: Appoint Leroy Peck to the CAC to represent the Council of Neighborhood Associations.

Option 2: Appoint Adner Marcelin to the CAC to represent the Civil Rights Community.

Option 3: Appoint Ashley Leggett to the CAC to fill the financial expert position for the remainder of the current term, and for a full three-year term after, through December 2024.

## V. GENERAL BUSINESS

8. Presentation by VisionFirst on the Office of Economic Vitality Strategic Plan Update

Cristina Paredes introduced the item and Mr. Gray Swoope who provided a brief presentation on the Strategic Plan update including defining economic development for Tallahassee-Leon County, the implementation of 82 percent of the current plan, administered \$18.3 million in CARES Act funds through the

pandemic, created 1,200 new jobs, and increased MWSBE certified firms by 73 percent in the first five-years. VisionFirst conducted stakeholder meetings, data analysis, online surveys and developed key findings, themes and leverage points which would be presented at the February 24, 2022, IA Board meeting.

Commissioner Porter noted the consideration of the funding request from Florida State University (FSU) coming up on the agenda and questioned the impact a commitment to that could have on the Strategic Plan and work of OEV. Gray Swoope stated that there would be impacts either way the IA Board voted, however, the Strategic Plan would be predicated on the policy of what was important to the community and for the return on taxpayer investment.

Commissioner Matlow noted the focus on Targeted Industries outlined in the Strategic Plan and questioned if sports and recreation was included as an industry focus. He also questioned if the Strategic Plan contemplated spending on arts, culture, and sports stadiums. Gray Swoope stated while outdoor activities could be a subset of Recruiting, he did not recall the full list of Targeted Industries. Additionally, Mr. Swoope stated that VisionFirst had not contemplated spending on arts and culture to date.

Commissioner Dozier spoke to the return on taxpayer investment through the Targeted Industry approach with the realization of DanFoss and Amazon, projects Juggernaut and Mango respectively. She questioned if through the efforts of OEV, more business would look to Tallahassee-Leon County for business expansion and relocation. Gray Swoope stated that during his years with Enterprise Florida, Tallahassee was experienced as a hard place to do business. That perspective was shifting and interesting was growing because of the aggressive marketing that introduced Tallahassee to other places. Furthermore, capitalizing on the higher education institutions and research assets to drive innovation and commerce. Combining that with the right strategy and policy would generate momentum going forward in ways that were beneficial to citizens.

Commissioner Dozier stated that historically Tallahassee-Leon County had not taken advantage of many assets provided to the area by an excellent community college and two major universities, such as tech-transfer, commercialization, or recruiting businesses that aligned with the MagLab. She referenced the North Florida Innovation Lab and the \$2.5 million committed by the IA Board, which helped leverage \$10.3 million in federal funds, and questioned how having such an incubator in Tallahassee-Leon County, benefited the university and commerce in the community. Gray Swoope stated that the incubator provided more product, or tools in the toolbox, to attract other businesses. He stated that connecting the investments in wet lab space and infrastructure in Innovation Park to being a good partner in private sector investments, created jobs that generated significant payrolls. For example, manufacturing sector jobs where the average annual income was approximately \$55,000. That was the third highest wage producer yet was fifteenth in the overall employment. That was the missing piece, he stated. Mr. Swoope returned to the update of the Strategic Plan and stated that the biggest challenge to Tallahassee-Leon County was in how to align all the great resources available in innovation, commercialized tech-transfer, and people to capitalize on the assets.

Commissioner Dozier noted that the updated Strategic Plan would be reflective of the available resources, depending on the outcome of the current meeting. She questioned what the IA Board could do, if there was a lot less versus what types of incentives and opportunities would require investment from OEV. Gray Swoope stated that his personal and professional belief was to sell value first, evaluate the project and the required investment to win it, and consider the return on that investment. If there was no significant return on a public investment, the question begged then, why pursue it? There were many ways to sell value, for example, working together as a community in partnership on timing to expedite permitting. A significant incentive that sold value through communicating that local government would work hand in hand to figure out how the business could work in Tallahassee-Leon County. The question at hand became, would Tallahassee-Leon County have multiple products, tools in the toolbox or not.

Commissioner Minor stated that he found it compelling to see the contrasting and comparing community statistics similar to Tallahassee-Leon County. It was informative to see how Tallahassee-Leon County stacked up against other communities in industry sectors and evaluating the pitfalls and successes. He also requested that VisionFirst include any best practices to capitalize on the available resources in order to succeed.

Commissioner Proctor questioned if there was any other approach that the IA Board could have taken to leverage the \$800,000 million; or that could still be actualized. He noted that the most significant piece of data presented was that greater than 50 percent of Tallahassee-Leon County citizens held college degrees. With the human resources available, he suggested that the City, County, Florida State, FAMU, etc. contribute two-three percent to uplift the region to a research triangle to foster an arranged effort to implement something transformative in the community. He stated that he was interested in brand new ideas for how the entities that comprise the components of Tallahassee-Leon County could collaborate on something splendid and significant.

Commissioner Richardson addressed the non-financial incentives to bring jobs and industry to Tallahassee-Leon County and provided examples of hotel projects that agreed to come to the area without any financial incentives from the city or county. He felt confident that with the tremendous assets and amenities available in Tallahassee-Leon County, that OEV could attract businesses without offering financial incentives. He stated that investing in the transportation and utility infrastructure necessary to develop land around the airport would provide the ability to attract industry and economic development. He encouraged a regional approach to economic development through partnerships with surrounding counties.

Commissioner Maddox expressed his support for regional collaborations and provided examples from his hometown in North Carolina. He encouraged further discussion and potentially a meeting with the surrounding counties. Regarding infrastructure and standard of living increasing the viability of an economic development hub was also an idea he supported and cited the success of Gaines Street and developments in Colleetown. The financial incentives were not necessary because of the investments in infrastructure that created the framework for businesses to improve on.

Commissioner Maddox agreed with Gray Swoope regarding improvements on business regulations, and yet it remained the greatest weakness for Tallahassee-Leon County despite all of the steps taken to move beyond that. Secondly, the perception of disconnection with business leaders did not align with his experience however, if that was the feedback received from the community; he wanted to understand why. He acknowledged again the progress made over the past ten years and sought to understand why those two perceptions continued to plague Tallahassee-Leon County and take corrective action.

**Commissioner Williams-Cox moved, seconded by Commissioner Dozier, to accept the presentation by VisionFirst on the Office of Economic Vitality Strategic Plan Update.**

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

Commissioner Maddox noted the number of speakers for Item 9, the potential implications that vote could have on the budget (Item 14), and the public hearing, which was scheduled for 6:00 pm. He offered possible alternatives and requested feedback from the Directors for modifying the agenda to maximize time.

All Directors agreed to continue into Item 9 and Citizen Comments.

9. Consideration of Funding Request for the Florida State University's Doak Campbell Stadium in the Amount of \$20 Million

Cristina Paredes provided a brief presentation on the funding request Doak Campbell Stadium that included historical information on infrastructure projects funded from the economic development portion of the sales tax, project priorities for life safety, accessibility, and code compliance and maintenance. The total estimated cost of the project was \$32.98 million; FSU requested \$20 million from OEV. Regarding the economic and visitor impact, Ms. Paredes stated that FSU brought in \$80 million annually through football, \$47 million of that was direct spend. The renovations and maintenance would allow FSU to make Doak Campbell Stadium a year-round venue; hosting non-football events that anticipated a total economic impact of \$102,700,000 annually should it come to fruition.

Cristina Paredes further stated that based on IA Board guidance at the May 27, 2021, IA Board Budget Workshop, the \$20 million to FSU was included as a placeholder in the budget material presented in Item 14. The total estimate cost to OEV, with debt services and closing costs, was \$26.45 million. Additional budget considerations for the 12 percent portion of the 20-year sales tax included the activation of seven infrastructure and business expansion projects, totaling \$34.8 million. Those investments created over 5,600 jobs and generated approximately \$786 million in total economic output. Each dollar invested generated a \$6, return in permanent annual basis to Tallahassee-Leon County.

Should the IA Board approve the funding request, Cristina Paredes stated, OEV would be at their bonding capacity. However, OEV would continue to work competitive and non-competitive projects that focused on diversifying the local

economy. Should any new projects need funding, OEV would seek IA Board direction regarding funding options, in accordance with policy, which could include reallocating resources within the economic development portion of the sales tax.

#### Citizen Comments

Stanley Sims compared the financial impact analysis of Item 12, and spoke to reports of intimidation on social media related to the IC2U proposal.

Delilah Pierre delivered a message written by Isabella Casanova on behalf of the Tallahassee Community Action Committee and Students for a Democratic Society spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium stating that it was an irresponsible use of public money. Citizens would be better served by using public funds for lighting, sidewalks, and supporting food security through neighborhood markets.

Douglas Mannheimer spoke in favor of funding renovations to Doak Campbell Stadium citing the precedent set with funding life safety renovations at Bragg Memorial Stadium.

Whitfield Leland spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium questioning the purpose of OEV; was it to renovate sports facilities or to served minority and women-owned businesses and others.

Jim Gregonella spoke in favor of funding renovations to Doak Campbell Stadium citing the indirect economic benefit to small businesses. His restaurants and businesses generated 40 percent additional revenue from FSU football for hundred jobs that paid on average \$20 hourly. Stadium renovations at FAMU or FSU was beneficial to small businesses, independent vendors, and student entrepreneurs.

Damon Victor spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium noting that FSU's \$2 billion annual budget dwarfed that of the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency. He questioned processes, back-channel beneficiaries, and encouraged the IA Board to listen to the people and act courageously in voting down the request.

Sierra Robinson spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium stating that, unlike FAMU, FSU did not need the stimulus in order to operate the stadium.

Ruth Chase spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium and stated that the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency needed a new model for economic development because trickledown economics did not work. Newer, national economic models that supported job creation through environmental sustainability.

Ramona Abernathy-Payne spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium citing the regressive nature of sales tax. She requested that the IA Board be good stewards

Bill Davis spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium stating that the funding for Bragg Stadium was the result of different circumstances, the multiplier argument smacked of trickledown economics, and was a shell game played by FSU. A sales tax was the most regressive tax, taking

money out of the hands of taxpayers who paid a higher percentage of income. This was divisive and a lost opportunity to address real needs across the community.

Will Crowley spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium stating that sustainability was an essential part of economic development yet the FSU project produced no permanent jobs, only temporary jobs in construction. Giving \$20 million to renovate a stadium perpetuated the perception of Tallahassee as a college town and highlighted yet another barrier to doing business in Tallahassee-Leon County.

Brian Seely spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium stating that as a small business owner, he was excited about the creation of OEV and the dedication of sales tax dollars to economic development. It was not a for or against FSU vote, as some made it out to be, however, it made no business sense to allocate the majority of the 20 year budget to one project.

Sahara McCabe spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium because it did not provide benefit to the average citizen, who are also stakeholders.

Leslie Harris spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium citing FSU's fundraising reputation, and recommended that stadium repairs and upgrades come through fundraising or through the state. He cited the collaboration with FSU and Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency on the Airport Gateway project and questioned the impact the stadium vote could have on the IA Board's ability to encourage meaningful development, that addressed the needs of the people in Providence, Lake Bradford, and Springhill Road communities.

Christie Hale spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium because that was not the intent or purpose of the sales tax. FSU was a stated owned facility and renovations and maintenance should be funded through the Department of Management Services. Not taxpayers of Tallahassee-Leon County. She encouraged the IA Board to use the sales tax appropriately.

Morgan Salcider spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium and stated that the project scope should take a holistic approach and include equity and the environment along with economics. She also questioned the demographics of the statistics provided to see clearly, who benefited and who did not.

David Coburn, Vice-President, Intercollegiate Athletics at FSU, spoke in favor of funding renovations to Doak Campbell Stadium noting the tens of thousands of people that were drawn into Tallahassee-Leon County, both in person visitors and via a nationally televised game with an approximate average viewership of 7.9 million. He spoke of the 3,000 jobs provided on a game-to-game basis and that FSU had more home games scheduled for the next decade than in the past, and with recognizable programs which would draw in greater attention and revenues. He encouraged the IA Board to support FSU in maintaining the economic engine in Tallahassee-Leon County.

Michael Alford spoke in favor of funding renovations to Doak Campbell Stadium citing structural deficiencies, potential life safety, and ADA accessibility issues. He stated that the money would not be used for seating upgrades despite Doak Campbell and the FSU football program being an economic driver for Tallahassee-Leon County.

Max Epstein spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium stating that OEV funds were to be used for competitive processes to bring in jobs, such as the Amazon facility. He strongly encouraged the IA Board to vote no on FSU's request instead of bankrupting OEV and instead, investing in local businesses and communities.

Brian Lupiani spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium expressing his agreement with many of the previous opposing speakers. He emphasized that Tallahassee-Leon County tax payers should not be on the hook for stadium renovations or maintenance.

Steven Broadway spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium stating that bonding \$20 million for a project that would not have a broad benefit across Tallahassee-Leon County was a moral conundrum. He spoke to the regressive nature of the sales tax and the disproportionate impact it had on people living at or below the poverty level and stated that it was immoral not to honor or acknowledge that sacrifice. He encouraged the IA Board to vote no on the request and instead use the money for projects that would bring equity to Tallahassee-Leon County.

Mike Brezine, representing the Alliance of Tallahassee Neighborhoods, spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium citing that taxpayers would be on the hook for \$26 million with the debt services fees. Voting against the funding request would preserve OEV's ability to meet the future needs of Tallahassee-Leon County businesses. Focusing OEV funds on areas that directly stimulated areas with the greatest need made sound economic sense and fit more closely with the community value of reducing economic disparity. He suggested

Donna Cotterell spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium citing the impact to minority and women-owned business by bankrupting OEV. She noted that the economic benefit of jobs gained would be temporary, lasting only through construction.

Bronwyn Chelette spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium stating that the budget would be better suited directed to small, local businesses.

Randie Denker spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium stating that committing \$20 million of economic development funds would negatively affect the IA Board's ability to achieve the goals of OEV.

Claudia Sperber spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium citing the fraying public trust in leadership with questions of inequity, corruption, integrity, priorities, and how the IA Board chose to spend taxpayer money.

Geraldine Seay spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium drawing correlations between FSU's funding request and the corruptions charges investigated by the FBI.

Jeff Blair spoke in opposition to funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium stating that the project had no meaningful citizen engagement and yet it was clear that the overwhelming support was to vote against the request.

Chair Maddox called a recess until the scheduled 6:00 pm Budget Public Hearing.

Chair Maddox reconvened the meeting at 6:03 pm, noting a modification to the agenda. He stated that, due to the budget implications of Item 9, he would open the public hearing, postpone it to continue discussion on Item 9, and hold the budget hearing following the completion of the item.

**Commissioner Richardson moved, seconded by Commissioner Matlow, to delay the Public Hearing until after a vote on Item 9.**

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

Commissioner Proctor expressed his understanding of Chair Maddox's preference to open Director's discussion with a motion. He requested that Chair Maddox consider a round of Director's discussion first, stating that once a motion was accepted it reframed Director's thoughts and amplified anxieties. Chair Maddox stated that he would not require a motion to begin discussion however, the option was open should a Director have a motion to make.

**Commissioner Jackson moved, seconded by Mayor Dailey, to approve option one.**

**Option #1: Accept the Report on the Funding and Economic Analysis for Florida State University's Doak Campbell Stadium Infrastructure Repairs and Maintenance. Direct the Agency to proceed with obtaining bond or bank financing and disbursing of funds of up to \$20 million. Authorize the Director of PLACE to execute the necessary agreements with FSU to effectuate project commencement from the economic development portion of the sales tax proceeds from the Blueprint Sales Tax to meet the bonding deadline requirements for disbursement and expenditure by December 9, 2021.**

Commissioner Minor stated that he believe the economic benefit analysis for the \$102 million annual return on investment the renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium. The economic health of many businesses across the hospitality and recreation industries were directly impacted by FSU football. He also understood the effects to OEV's bonding capacity through at least 2028. He stated that was a tremendous economic opportunity and obstacle in Tallahassee-Leon County contending for future competitive projects.

**Commissioner Minor offered a substitute motion, seconded by Commissioner Richardson, to approve option one funded at \$15 million.**

**Option #1: Accept the Report on the Funding and Economic Analysis for Florida State University's Doak Campbell Stadium Infrastructure Repairs and Maintenance. Direct the Agency to proceed with obtaining bond or bank financing and disbursing of funds of up to \$15 million. Authorize the Director of PLACE to execute the necessary agreements with FSU to effectuate project commencement from the economic development portion of the sales tax proceeds from the Blueprint Sales Tax to meet the bonding deadline requirements for disbursement and expenditure by December 9, 2021.**

Commissioner Minor stated that providing a funding allocation for \$15 million supported one of the largest economic drivers in Tallahassee-Leon County and positioned OEV to compete with other communities for future projects. He stressed the importance of that flexibility in attracting businesses such as Amazon, and the economic infusion they created. He advocated that the reserved \$5 million, in bonding capacity, could be used to increase economic equity, for the IA Board to explore and address areas of economic disparity.

Commissioner Jackson stood by his original motion stating that the jobs created through construction that infused \$11 million in wages to the community, which added to local sales and property taxes. Furthermore, the estimated \$47.8 million annually, in indirect spending and economic impact for Tallahassee-Leon County. He estimated that 20-percent of the local population was employed by or dependent on FSU for income and as residents contributed to the economic cycle of spending and taxes. The life safety and ADA access renovations represented a bold step toward equality. Lastly, he noted the annual \$13.9 million in federal, state, and local taxes generated by FSU, and stated that funding renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium at the requested \$20 million would benefit the future of Tallahassee-Leon County.

Commissioner Proctor questioned if, should a competitive project opportunity arise in the future, the IA Board could reallocate fund from other projects to allow OEV to compete. Cristina Paredes stated that the 31 projects, identified on page 8 of the budget material, were Blueprint Infrastructure projects. However, should the IA Board move forward with funding the request, and a future competitive project opportunity come about, OEV staff would work within the competitive project policy, which could include agenda items with funding options for these projects. Those funding options could include reallocation within the economic development budget.

Commissioner Matlow stated that it was clear that no matter the decision made by the IA Board on the funding request, home games for FSU football were not in jeopardy. Furthermore, it was disingenuous to frame the renovations as life safety issues, knowing the scope of the renovation plans at Doak Campbell Stadium. He expressed his frustration that the full scope was not openly discussed, therefore could not have full analysis and consideration of the economic value. However, that was not the conversation before the IA Board. Focusing on life safety improvements did not provide a return on investment. Commissioner Matlow stated that in his review of the material provided, he could not identify the eligibility criteria or anticipated outcomes of the investment. There were no demonstrated demands for the proposed upgrades or documentation provided that the entity had been

unsuccessful in raising outside funds. He saw no substantive difference between the current duplicative events and the proposed that would result in a net positive gain. Lastly, it was not clear that any permanent jobs would be created and would be a net loss on the investment. He could only vote no.

Commissioner Matlow addressed comments that the investment in FAMU Bragg Memorial Stadium set a precedent or that FSU deserved funding too, stating that each economic development project was considered on the merit before the IA Board. In reviewing the economic merits of FSU's proposal, there were no permanent, long-term new jobs created. He underscored that the value of OEV investments in the community was in net jobs created, as evidenced in the Amazon facility where there were thousands of net job gains. Furthermore, any project funded would create construction jobs, however, the considering the request as a non-competitive grant proposal, the IA Board was missing the opportunity for community engagement in the decision of how to spend such a massive investment of sales tax dollars.

Commissioner Matlow spoke of the one-week notice to the public of the vote, and questioned what harm could be caused through allowing for community input in creating something transformational for Tallahassee-Leon County. The decision to allocate \$20 million to any project should take place over several meetings with significant opportunity for community engagement, particularly when it required borrowing the \$20 million for a project that would likely not begin construction until 2024-2025 he estimated. He questioned why the IA Board would consider borrowing money three years in advance without knowing the full scope of the project.

From a financial perspective, Commissioner Matlow reminded the IA Board that the line item budget originated with the Sales Tax Committee committing \$20 million for a Convention Center. The IA Board later decided that the repairs at Bragg Memorial Stadium were so consequential, that they were willing to divert fund from the Convention Center project, to repairs at Bragg. The balance of that original line item, \$10 million, and therefore, should be the maximum amount considered by the IA Board for Doak Campbell Stadium. Furthermore, the IA Board should not rush to bond the money without knowing what outside capital could be raised or what the investment. He also suggested that the request be treated like the small business grants administered by OEV, so that OEV could be reimbursed for the investment. He encouraged the IA Board to consider the whole budget, holistically over several months, to vet other ideas, and to consider reducing other projects offset costs.

Commissioner Welch questioned if the substitute motion were to carry, and the allocation were reduced to \$15 million or even \$10 million, would OEV need to revisit the scope of the project. Cristina Paredes stated that OEV identified the total cost of the 48 items, to be \$32.9 million. The FSU request remained at \$20 million, and should the IA Board elect to use a lesser amount, OEV would work with FSU along those lines. Commissioner Welch stated that he could not support allocating \$20 million to FSU. He recognized the value in the project across the spectrum; however, it should not come at the expense of the IA Board's ability to act on new competitive opportunities.

Commissioner Welch stated that he could support the substitute motion, but not funded at \$15 million. He felt a \$10 million allocation was equitable, given the investment at FAMU Bragg Memorial Stadium. The IA Board elected to allocate funds there and to TCC because they, along with FSU, were community partners and institutions that contributed financially, economically, and socially across Tallahassee-Leon County. He recognized the need, however, jeopardizing OEV's ability to act on competitive projects was poor policy and problematic.

Commissioner Welch stated that FSU football was a driver of local economy and guaranteed thousands of visitors through the fall; however, he did not want to break the bank for helping them. He questioned if reserving \$5 million would provide the flexibility to respond to competitive projects for the next seven years. He preferred \$10 million, based on the \$2.5 million allocated to Amazon, which he thought was the largest economic development project in Leon County. Cristina Paredes clarified that the contribution amount for competitive projects was formula driven and based on the number of jobs created, the investment made, location of the business, etc. She confirmed that Amazon was the largest recruitment project to date, however the targeted business program was based on the County-only millage rate meaning, the investment could be larger for a project located inside city-limits.

Commissioner Welch stated that even \$10 million, could go quickly and while he understood the importance of the renovations, he thought it irresponsible to leverage that much money for so long, at a cost of \$26 million. He requested a friendly amendment to the substitute motion, to fund option 1 at \$10 million.

Commissioner Minor stated that his main concern was to ensure that something passed that left money in the bank for OEV. Commissioner Minor stated that at a previous IA Board meeting, he suggested a similar motion, with \$10 million remaining for OEV that did not pass; that was the basis for his request to consider \$5 million. He declined the friendly amendment stating that he did not think \$10 million would pass and at that point, preferred to allow discussion to continue.

Commissioner Dozier referenced an earlier comment by staff that there were always options for reallocating funds and stated that should the IA Board approve the full \$20 million, any reallocation would come from existing projects or operations of the OEV office. Cristina Paredes confirmed that it could be a reallocation of resources within the economic development capital budget including funding business development activities, MWSBE Industry Academies, and possibly operations.

Commissioner Dozier stated that the vote to fund or not, the request for renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium was the most significant vote any of the Directors would take on economic development. She based that on Mr. Gray Swoope's presentation on the Strategic Plan and the information presented in the item, no money until 2028 because it exhausted the bonding capacity. Drawing a comparison to DanFoss, which created 239 direct, permanent manufacturing jobs with an economic impact of \$140.6 million annually. She stated that 248 temporary, construction and restaurant jobs, was an insignificant return on a \$20 million investment.

Commissioner Dozier stated that the project lacked public support noting that every citizen email received on the item spoke against it; twenty-four of the twenty-eight speakers that evening spoke against it. The item included no comments of support

the three Chambers of Commerce and it was not fully supported by the EVLC. The EVLC members that did support funding a portion of the request felt it needed further time and consideration. The EVLC was looking to the Strategic Plan updates, for those details to inform the trajectory. Commissioner Dozier stated that voting to bond \$20 million for renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium was the IA Board giving away opportunity never before seen in Tallahassee-Leon County. Commissioner Dozier stated that she could not support funding the request at any amount in the current meeting and strongly encouraged the IA Board Directors to bring it back in February 2022, along with the updated Strategic Plan, for a comprehensive discussion

Commissioner Dozier stated that every organization in Tallahassee-Leon County asked for years to diversify the economy, recruit new businesses, and support entrepreneurs, local, minority and women-owned businesses, and workforce development. She stated that renovations at Doak Campbell Stadium, while a good project, did not meet any one of those goals; and it would happen anyhow. FSU would raise \$110 million, in addition to the \$20 million request and should fund the life safety improvements before the fan experience.

Commissioner Dozier questioned how they arrived at that position stating that it was unfair for the IA Board, for FSU, and for the community. She stated that everyone should be asking who encouraged FSU to submit the request and that it would be possible because the numbers bust the budget and left nothing else for the Strategic Plan. The item was packaged with the Convention Center item in May 2021; it was never FSU project dollars to be reallocated. The Convention Center was in the Interlocal Agreement and based on a joint-partnership toward the fulfillment of a long-standing goal. It was clear that the \$40 million approved for study, in March 2020, was not realistic. She stated all Directors should be asking themselves, why encourage FSU to move forward. Particularly when, all of the work in tech transfer, recruitment, and with Innovation Park all supported FSU and helped them meet their goals for research dollars and commercialization. It also help the IA Board meet goals of creating permanent jobs, such as Danfoss and Amazon.

Commissioner Dozier stated that in 21 months, the IA Board allocated \$8 million to four great economic development projects: minority and women business loans, Innovation Park, Amazon, and Danfoss. Following that trend, she predicted that if the IA Board followed Commissioner Welch's suggestion to leave \$10 million in the bank, OEV would face a budget shortfall in a couple years. The vote today would change the face of the Tallahassee-Leon County community for the next 18 years or more. She encouraged the IA Board delay the vote to February 2022, for additional analysis and discussion with the Strategic Plan.

Commissioner Porter stated that she stood by her May 27, 2021 vote not to move forward with the project. She expressed her support for FSU as alumni and the economic impact on the community. However, the proposal was rushed, had minimal public input, and without a robust discussion alternative or the opportunity cost of proceeding. She felt that the timing of the item was inappropriate as it placed everyone in a difficult position. Of the many citizen emails and conversations received through her office, only one supported funding the proposal. She agreed with the comments of Commissioners Matlow and Dozier. She agreed with the benefits of the project, however, it was not the job of taxpayers to

fund it. She felt confident that the project would move forward without sales tax funding and was therefore uncomfortable committing any allocations to it.

Commissioner Richardson acknowledged the articulate opposition to the Doak Campbell Stadium project; however, he thought it worthwhile and held merit. Using all of the bonding capacity concerned him. He noted that Commissioner Proctor raised a poignant point, especially in light of the substitute motion by Commissioner Minor. Having \$5 million in bonding capacity and the possibility of reallocating other project funds to address future economic opportunities would provide financial incentives for business recruitment. However, the IA Board could also negotiate incentives with utility costs (through the City owned utility), infrastructure improvements, or land in lieu of economic incentives.

Commissioner Richardson stated that the request from FSU was quite similar to those of FAMU and TCC. In both of the earlier cases, the IA Board did not question the projects because the merit and value of the project on the community was clear. The return on investment for the FAMU and TCC requests did not include permanent jobs, but the economic impact of the continuation of current programs and ability to host regional and state tournaments. He stated that permanent indirect jobs were created through the hospitality industry.

Lastly, Commissioner Richardson spoke about the Civic Center, a joint project with the City, County, FSU, and FAMU. He encouraged the IA Board to remember that when the facility was hemorrhaging money FSU stepped up, absorbed the renovation and maintenance costs and to consider the economic benefit that provided to Tallahassee-Leon County.

Commissioner Cummings stated that FSU was a great partner and economic driver for Tallahassee-Leon County. She reflected on citizen comments, in particular the comment by Mr. Leland who stated that the public needed to be educated on what OEV does. To address that, she talked through the structure of the penny sales tax, the percentage split between infrastructure (66 percent) and economic development (12 percent) projects, and confirmed that infrastructure projects would be unaffected if the IA Board approved the allocation to FSU. Ben Pingree confirmed her statement. She questioned if any funds would remain of the 12 percent for economic development. Cristina Paredes stated that based on the Fiscal Year 2022-2026 budget, the Office of Economic Vitality is fully funded for business development and MWSBE activities and operations.

Commissioner Williams-Cox stated that scare tactics worked both ways and no previous information educated the public as clearly as Commissioner Cummings comments. She stated that to make money, one had to spend money and that scared money cannot make money. At the May 27, 2021 meeting, the IA Board made a decision and the analysis of the decision was presented in Item 9. The interim was the time to educate and explain. She stated that the sudden attention on the item in the last few days prompted a frantic choosing of sides that was unfair to the community, FSU, FAMU, and the IA Board.

Commissioner Williams-Cox stated that she was clear about the commitment made to FSU at the May 2021 IA Board meeting and that, like with FAMU, once that commitment was made, FSU brought back the analysis and list of items to be addressed. She spoke to the integrity of IA Board guidance and commitments. Based on that guidance staff and FSU provided what the IA Board requested in

order to allocate the \$20 million. If the IA Board was not in the position to honor that commitment, it needed to be made clear at the level possible to invest.

Commissioner Williams-Cox stated that she supported the substitute motion because it was as close as could be to the original commitment. However, FAMU provided an update earlier in the meeting, and while interrupted by the fire alarm, they were experiencing shortfalls due to construction costs. FSU also spoke to shortages anticipated due to construction costs. She stated that if OEV was unable to fund the original commitment, that information should have been communicated to the IA Board in May 2021.

Mayor Dailey expressed his support for the substitute motion.

Commissioner Dozier expressed her agreement with Commissioner Williams-Cox's last statement that the IA Board should have known about budget shortfalls in May. She spoke in briefing then and at the IA Board meeting in May 2021, to the estimated expenditure in the first two years and that was the reasoning behind her questions about how the IA Board and FSU were put in the current situation. Multiple people in Chambers saw the trend knew the budget projections and she too, wondered why it was not included in the agenda item then. However, Commissioner Dozier stated that IA Board guidance to study a project was not a commitment to funding. Item 9, was exactly what the IA Board requested in May, the economic impact analysis of the study, and was not renegeing on any commitment.

Commissioner Dozier stated that the economic impact analysis had a far worse return on the investment than Danfoss at \$2.3 million. She referenced Commissioner Richardson's earlier comments on regionalism and stated that there was more economic development coordination occurring through the nine counties affiliated with the Apalachee Regional Planning Council, that ever before. However, if the IA Board were not doing as much as possible to support that, they would be unable to help the surrounding counties. She agreed with the continual need to education the public on the structure, funding, and mission of the Agency and while the budget in questions represented only 12-percent of sales tax revenues, it was the only money available for economic development. Tallahassee-Leon County had never before had financial incentives to offer businesses. She repeated Cristina Paredes comments from earlier in the meeting stating that any reallocations for recruitment incentives over the next seven years could come from the economic development capital budget, staffing, MWSBE program, and the core functions of OEV.

Commissioner Dozier summarized her arguments by stating that the request from FAMU was pressing in order to salvage the 2021 football season. The request from FSU was not, the vote could be delayed until February 2022 when it could be considered along with the Strategic Plan. She implored Commissioner Minor, as the holder of the substitute motion, to consider strongly if Doak Campbell Stadium was where the IA Board wanted to invest all of their economic development dollars.

Commissioner Williams-Cox requested clarification of the vote at the May 27, 2021, meeting. Cristina Paredes stated that the IA Board approved the discontinuation of the MOU with FSU on the Convention Center project, to study the stadium repair request, and to analyze, assess, and identify new convention center project opportunities.

Commissioner Proctor stated that the \$5 million that would remain in bonding capacity in the OEV budget, by the substitute motion, was itself insufficient to meet the needs of the IA Board's ambitions. He stated that there was no clear structure to frame the conversation because he was unclear if OEV was a business stimulator, cheerleader, or pretender. He spoke to the opportunities football programs provided to young black men, the transformation made to the lives and communities through them, and stated that discussion centered on life safety and fan experience but it was equally important to invest in renovations because it served the young men on the field. Because of them, Doak Campbell Stadium distinguished the whole of Tallahassee-Leon County and it would be neglectful not to invest in the renovations. He stated that he would vote against the substitute motion, and for the original motion.

Commissioner Welch stated that he could support the substitute motion, because it captured the spirit of his interest in that it sought to retain some bonding capacity at OEV. He stated that he thought the project worthwhile and understood the contribution FSU football made to the local economy.

Commissioner Minor stated that the IA Board and OEV could accomplish many great things with \$5 million to address future competitive projects that could address economic disparity. He noted that for half of that amount, OEV landed the largest economic development project in the history of Leon County. The substitute motion represented a fair compromise that recognized the partnership with FSU, what the athletic program brought to Tallahassee-Leon County, provided for infrastructure improvements, ADA accessibility, and enhancements to the fan experience, which in turn improved the overall economic benefit of the stadium and the community.

Commissioner Jackson stated that he agreed with Commissioners Williams-Cox and Proctor and would support the original motion on the floor.

**The first substitute motion failed 4-8 (weighted: 24-46) with Mayor Dailey and Commissioners Matlow, Porter, Cummings, Dozier, Jackson, Proctor, Maddox dissenting.**

Commissioner Matlow questioned if the original motion officially cancelled the Convention Center project. Cristina Paredes stated that based on IA Board guidance at the May 27, 2021 meeting, OEV discontinued negotiations with FSU on the Convention Center and would bring back any future opportunities should they arise. That freed up \$20 million of bonding capacity in the OEV budget; based on revenue projections presented in the May 27, 2021, IA Board Budget Workshop agenda item.

**Commissioner Matlow moved, seconded by Commissioner Porter, to allocate \$10 million for repairs at Doak Campbell Stadium and direct staff to bring back an analysis of FSU's full project for IA Board consideration in the Strategic Planning process in February 2022.**

Commissioner Dozier stated she could support Commissioner Matlow's substitute motion in order to have more time to consider item because the drastic implications of the vote. Regarding the Convention Center, she stated that it was important to have on the record that the Interlocal Agreement specifically committed up to \$20 million for the study of a convention center as a joint project with FSU. There were

two economic development projects affirmed before the sales tax extension went to referendum: the previously committed airport funding and the commitment to studying the convention center. Commissioner Dozier stated that her biggest problem with the May 27, 2021 agenda item was that it implied that there would be no Convention Center and FSU would reallocate that line item to a new project. The budget material include in Item 14, referenced the FSU Project. The money, past votes, and promises made to citizens before the referendum never identified the funds as a line item for FSU.

Commissioner Cummings requested clarification regarding the bonding aspect of the substitute motion. Cristina Paredes stated that should the substitute motion pass, the \$10 million would not be included in the bond item that would go before the IA Board at the December 9, 2021, meeting.

**The second substitute motion failed 4-8 (weighted: 24-46) Mayor Dailey and Commissioners Richardson, Williams-Cox, Cummings, Jackson, Minor, Proctor, Maddox dissenting.**

Commissioner Maddox returned to the original motion on the floor for a roll call vote.

**The original motion passed 8-4 (weighted: 46-24) Commissioners Matlow, Porter, Dozier, and Welch dissenting.**

## VI. PUBLIC HEARING

### 14. Second and Final Public Hearing on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget and Fiscal Year 2022 – 2026 Five-Year Capital Improvement Program Budget for the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency

#### Citizen Comments

Stanley Sims spoke on economic diversity and stated that OEV had not leveraged recruitment of a black-owned mega-company to Tallahassee-Leon County.

Will Crowley spoke in opposition to the budget process citing issues with transparency and public engagement. He stated that it was unacceptable that \$20 million could disappear in two meetings.

Tres Long provided a brief presentation on the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, operating budget and FY 2022 – 2026, Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the Agency. The budgets were consistent with the materials provided at the May 27, 2021 budget workshop, incorporated the series of recommendations approved at the workshop and later ratified at the July 15, 2021 IA Board meeting.

Cristina Paredes provided a brief presentation on the proposed OEV draft FY 2022 operating budget and five year CIP including an anticipated \$28.7 million in sales tax collections, \$21.5 million in bond funding, funded debt services, operating expenditures, and all capital commitments to date.

Autumn Calder provided a brief presentation on the proposed Blueprint draft FY 2022 operating budget and five year CIP including an anticipate \$158 million in

sales tax collections, \$170.5 million in bonds and loans, and the collection of \$5 million in local and state grants. She also highlighted the operating budget, project allocations, a breakout of the 31 projects anticipated to be under construction within the next five years, and the community engagement strategy.

A copy of the presentation is available at Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency.

**Commissioner Williams-Cox moved, seconded by Commissioner Richardson to approve Options 1, 2, and 3.**

**Option 1: Conduct the Public Hearing to adopt the FY 2022 Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Operating Budget as presented and approve the FY 2022 Operating Budget Resolution (Resolution No. 2021-02).**

**Option 2: Conduct the Public Hearing to approve and adopt the FY 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Program as presented and approve the FY 2022 Capital Improvement Program Budget Resolution (Resolution No. 2021-03).**

**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. Allocations are listed under the “Annual Allocations” heading of Table 1 in Resolution No. 2021-03.**

**The motion passed 9-2 (weighted 51-12) with Commission Porter not on Webex and Commissioners Matlow and Dozier dissenting.**

**V. GENERAL BUSINESS – continued**

**10. Acceptance of the FY 2019 and FY 2020 MWSBE Annual Expenditures for Leon County, City of Tallahassee, and Blueprint IA and Status Report on the Disparity Study Update**

Darryl Jones provided a brief presentation on the MWSBE FY 2019 and FY 2020 annual expenditures and status report on the Disparity Study update including the demonstrated impact of new processes born out of the 2019 Disparity Study on mandatory solicitation development and pre-bid meetings and an update on the data migration process, expenditure reports, certifications, and consolidated aspirational goals.

Commissioner Proctor requested clarification on the aspirational goals. Darryl Jones clarified that the tables presented in the agenda material reflected the previous, independent MWBE goals for Blueprint, City of Tallahassee, and Leon County and the hybrid goals formed out of the consolidated policies, which went into effect in April 2020. The 2019 Disparity Study consolidated the goals of all three jurisdictions. This lowered the County goal from 17 percent to 14 percent, but it raised the City’s goal from 7.5 percent to 14 percent and the WBE from three percent to nine, to meet the County.

Fred Siemens, with MBT of America, provided a brief presentation on the update of the Disparity Study including history, scope, and drew comparisons to other MWBE

programs in similar markets. He noted the variations between programs and stated while there was no one-size-fits-all program, a common theme appeared staffing levels, which reflected the value placed on the MWSBE program.

A copy of the presentation is on file at the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency.

**Commissioner Richardson moved, seconded by Mayor Dailey to approve option one and provide the IA Board with the cost and impact to the timeline for the FY 2021 data in the Disparity Study.**

**Option 1: Accept the Minority, Women, and Small Business Enterprise Annual Report FY 2019 and FY 2020.**

Commissioner Proctor expressed his concern that 2020 would skew the data curve due to the economic impact of the pandemic. He noted the impact of COVID on minority owned businesses and stated that 41-percent of black owned business closed in 2020 and suggested that it be addressed independently, rather than included in fiscal year averages.

Commissioner Williams-Cox reiterated Mr. Siemens comments regarding staffing of the MWSBE office, noting that Tallahassee-Leon County was serious about the MWSBE goals and committed to success. Regarding 2020 data analysis, she agreed with Commissioner Proctor and questioned if 2021 data could be incorporated. Darryl Jones stated that the updated Disparity Study would capture data from 2018 – 2020; the next update in 2026 would include FY 2021-2025 unless the IA Board changed the scope of the study.

Cristina Paredes stated that the final updated Disparity Study could be presented to the IA Board at the December 9, 2021, meeting where Directors could consider including the FY 2021 data. There was no objection from the IA Board. Commissioner Williams-Cox requested that it include a cost estimate for expanding the scope of the study.

#### Citizen Comments

Antonio Jefferson spoke on behalf of the Big Bend Minority Chamber in favor of the IA Board's leadership and the diligence of the OEV team regarding minority businesses in Tallahassee-Leon County.

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

#### 11. Approval of the Policy #114 Regarding a Process for Evaluating Non-Competitive Economic Development Project Proposals

Cristina Paredes provided a brief presentation on the proposed policy to codify the evaluation of competitive (such as Danfoss or Amazon) and non-competitive (such as North Florida Innovation Labs) economic development projects including project pipelines and the eligibility criteria used in the evaluation process.

A copy of the presentation is available at Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency.

**Commissioner Richardson moved, seconded by Commissioner Minor to approve option one.**

**Option 1: Approve a Policy regarding the Evaluation of Non-Competitive Economic Development Project Proposals.**

Commissioner Dozier noted the significance of the policy and questioned if the IA Board needed to discuss cuts to staffing and programming at the December 9, 2021, meeting, as a result to the \$20 million commitment to FSU. She stated that if OEV was to invest time into recruitment efforts, the IA Board should provide direction for cuts or identify other resources that could be used to support incentives. Cristina Paredes stated that the policy specifically address non-competitive projects, which were evaluated at the direction of the IA Board. The resulting report and recommendation could include the reallocation of resources within OEV's budget.

**The motion passed 11-0 (weighted: 63-0) with Commissioner Proctor out of Chambers.**

12. Analysis of the Funding Request for the I.C.2.U Professional Services Program in the amount of \$1.1 Million

Cristina Paredes provided a brief presentation on the IA Board requested analysis of the funding request for the I.C.2.U Professional Services Program including proposed services and use of public funds; I.C.2.U. Professional Services was not incorporated. The funding request included \$565,000 in capital expenditures, \$50,000 for building upgrades for property owned by a church, \$195,000 for personnel, benefits, and office equipment. With over 66-percent of funding budgeted for personnel and capital expenditures, for one year, the proposal was whole dependent on OEV funds with no plan for sustainability. I.C.2.U. Furthermore, the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency could not legally use tax dollars to purchase real estate or vehicles for a private entity, nor to aid churches.

Cristina Paredes stated that the proposal allocated \$310,000 for non-competitive, pass-through grants to eight organizations. Despite staff requests for additional documentation, the proposal failed to provide a grant process, provide justification for the selection of recipients, and duplicated other technical and financial resources already available. Ms. Paredes reiterated that the proposal was for only one year of funding and was wholly dependent on OEV resources. The proposal did not include a plan for sustaining financial operations and identified no additional financial partners.

Cristina Paredes stated that OEV staff did not recommend approval of the I.C.2.U. Professional Services proposal, based on the legal constraints concerning the purchase of vehicles and real estate for private entities with public tax dollars and issuing grants to religions organizations. Should the IA Board choose to affirm the staff recommendation, the MWSBE office would contact the business and organizations identified in the proposal to facilitate connection with the currently available financial and technical resources.

**Citizen Comments**

Agatha Altas stated that the Old West Florida Enrichment Center represented 40 churches and confirmed their 501c3 status.

Dr. Chris Berney spoke to the regional services provided by the Old West Florida Enrichment Center including COVID testing and vaccinations, food bank, and

support to title one and charter schools. He stated that they sought partnership with the IA Board and requested their consideration of support.

Stanley Sims defended the I.C.2.U. Professional Services proposal listing documentation provided, resources identified and consulted, and requested that the IA Board's consideration of support.

Commissioner Maddox requested clarification of the legal constraints to funding the proposal. Susan Dawson stated that the I.C.2.U. Professional Services proposal included the acquisition of vehicles and real estate, essentially for the benefit of Mr. Stanley Sims because the business was not a corporate entity. Public tax dollars could not be used to purchase vehicles or real estate for a private entity. Stanley Sims stated that, given time, I.C.2.U. Professional Services could make the changes necessary to meet the legal standard.

Susan Dawson stated that there was no cure; the surtax dollars available through Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency and the Office of Economic Vitality could be used to purchase vehicles or real estate for local government agencies only. Property acquisitions made through Blueprint or OEV projects were ultimately transferred to the City of Tallahassee or Leon County. Furthermore, should the IA Board direct staff to re-evaluate the proposal, based on earlier approval of Policy 114, they would however, the outcome would be the same because I.C.2.U. was not a corporate entity.

Commissioner Matlow spoke to the yearlong discussion of the proposal, and his request for an equitable evaluation, process and policy, alongside other non-competitive proposal. He concurred with the legal opinion regarding use of sales tax funds, understood the request to look for a cure. However, his issue was in the framing of proposals. He did not believe that the IA Board was given adequate tools to vet the proposal. He noted that many of the organizations listed request assistance with life safety issues, as with the FSU proposal. Furthermore, he did not think that the economic impact of small, local business was adequately captured. Analysis of that data, with the proper multiplier included, would provide the effects of \$25,000 to support small business or \$20 million to sustain a stadium. He encouraged the IA Board to consider how they could enable small businesses. He wanted to know about the job creation aspects off investments in small businesses. Based on the legal position, he could not support the proposal. He hoped to spark conversation of how the IA Board could create opportunities in the areas of greatest need.

Commissioner Proctor stated that Commissioner Matlow's comments captured the essence of his own concerns and encouraged the IA Board to consider what could be done to support small businesses and other areas of need across Tallahassee-Leon County. He suggested that the item be pulled to study the variables and other areas of need across Tallahassee-Leon County. He suggested that the item be pulled to study the variables. He could not support the item however, based on the legal opinion provided and the pass-through nature of I.C.2.U.

Commissioner Proctor moved to table the matter indefinitely, pending reformatting and contingent upon legal standards. The motion failed for the lack of a second.

**Mayor Dailey moved, seconded by Commissioner Richardson to approve option one and direct staff to coordinate with the agencies listed for the technical assistance with resources.**

**Option 1: Accept the analysis of the funding proposal submitted by I.C.2.U., do not approve funding for the I.C.2.U proposal, and bring back a report, under Receipt and File, on the outreach done to the eight organizations within the proposal.**

Commissioner Williams-Cox stated that the I.C.2.U. Professional Services proposal identified a community need whereby the organizations identified were unable or ineligible for currently available financial and technical support. She confirmed that the eight-organizations identified would receive high-level technical assistance with a staff report on progress available at the December 9, 2021, IA Board meeting.

Commissioner Cummings stated that Frenchtown was in need of even greater revitalization. Many people spoke against allocating \$20 million to FSU and suggested that supporting small businesses would be the better use of funds. She too encouraged the facilitation of financial and technical assistance to the identified organizations. The I.C.2.U. Professional Services proposal needed work but was salvageable. It was a minor request, compared to the \$20 million affirmed for FSU earlier that would serve eight community organizations that would have significant impact on Frenchtown.

Commissioner Richardson confirmed the IA Board's commitment to supporting minority owned businesses in Tallahassee-Leon County. He referenced the MWSBE report provided earlier by Darryl Jones, and stated that it was a model for MWSBE programs across the state. He spoke of personal efforts made to shop minority business and encouraged others to do so. Regarding the I.C.2.U. Professional Services proposal specifically, he supported Commissioner Williams-Cox's suggestion and underscored the IA Board's commitment to facilitate those connections.

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

13. Acceptance of the Tallahassee-Leon County Animal Service Center Project Status Report with Cost Considerations to Advance the Project

**Commissioner Dozier moved, seconded by Mayor Dailey to approve option one.**

**Option 1: Direct Blueprint to present a budget amendment at the December 9, 2021 meeting to advance fund the Animal Service Center project in FY 2022 through a \$3,800,000 bond increase.**

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

## **VII. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Lennoris Barber requested that the IA Board direct OEV to collect economic indicator data on economically distressed neighborhoods such as Frenchtown, Bond, and South City. He also requested that the IA Board consider participating in a regional proposal

with Capital City Chamber, Big Bend Minority Chamber, and the Apalachee Regional Council, for the Build Back Better grant.

Commissioner Maddox requested OEV consider Mr. Barber's request. Cristina Paredes agreed to a meeting with Mr. Barber and stated that OEV was working with several partner organizations and discussed at length, at Office's Entrepreneurial Resource Organization, the ADA grants available.

**VIII. DIRECTOR DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Matlow stated that due to the late nature of the meeting he would hold the motion for the December 9, 2021, meeting. However, he requested that the IA Board consider reviewing the Interlocal Agreement, particularly the segment on the Convention Center project. Additionally, if there might be a better way to structure the entire Agency to be more accountable to voters, through the IA Board. He noted that the Community Redevelopment Agency Director, and other similar positions, reported directly to the Board of Directors and thought it should be considered for the IA Board also.

**IX. ADJOURN**

**The meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.**

*The next Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for  
**December 9, 2021, at 3:00 p.m.***