In the Matter Of:

MEETING OF GOVERNOR AND CABINET

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March 26, 2024



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MEETING OF THE GOVERNOR AND CABINET

STATE OF FLORIDA

IN RE: MEETING OF THE GOVERNOR AND CABINET

CABINET MEMBERS:

GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS
ATTORNEY GENERAL ASHLEY MOODY
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER JIMMY PATRONIS
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE WILTON SIMPSON

DATE: March 26, 2024

TIME: 9:00 a.m. - 9:38 a.m.

PLACE: CABINET MEETING ROOM

THE CAPITOL

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

TRANSCRIBED BY: STEPHANIE NARGIZ

STENOGRAPHIC COURT REPORTER,

RPR, FPR-C NOTARY PUBLIC,

State of Florida at large

MEETING OF THE GOVERNOR AND CABINET

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Τ	PROCEEDINGS	
2	Proceedings began at 9:00 a.m. as follows:	
3	GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Good morning. We're here on	
4	the March 26th Cabinet Meeting. Before we get into	
5	the business portion of our agenda, I'd like to	
6	welcome Dylan Fisher with our Office of Faith and	
7	Community to lead us in the invocation.	
8	(Invocation commenced.)	
9	GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Next, please welcome retired	
LO	U.S. Army Colonel and Florida Department of Veteran	
l1	Affairs Legislative and Cabinet Affairs Director Roy	
L2	Clarke to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.	
L3	(Pledge of Allegiance commenced.)	
L4	GOVERNOR DESANTIS: The dogs, where are they	
L5	from?	
L6	MR. PATRONIS: Bring them up.	
L7	UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Tallahassee Animal	
L8	Services.	
L9	GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Oh, okay. Great. We just	
20	adopted one ourselves recently.	
21	UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I know. Thank you for	
22	that.	
23	GOVERNOR DESANTIS: We're going to do we're	
24	going to do a pet adoption event at the Governor's	
25	Mansion at some point in the next month or two, so	

1 | stay tuned for that, so...

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UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Great.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hopefully, we have a lot of people that want to come and take a lot of dogs home. And other pets too, because there are other pets that need a home as well. So thank you guys for coming, we appreciate it.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you. And thank you for adopting. It's really important.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Yeah, happy to do it. And my kids are happy too, although I enjoy it. Although, I end up doing all the work with the dogs, but that's just the way it goes. Thanks again.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. The minutes from December 19, 2023. I move to approve the minutes from our December 19th meeting. Is there a second?

MR. PATRONIS: Second.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the motion carries.

We're now going to move on to employment for the Parol Qualifications Committee. Our first appointment item is to designate a Parol Qualifications Committee to consider applicants for an upcoming vacancy to FCOR. As nominated by each of our offices, I move to

- appoint the following individuals: Ginger Bowden

 Madden, State Attorney First Judicial Circuit; Bay

 County Sheriff, Tommy Ford; Mark Ober, Retired State

 Attorney, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit; Brevard County

 Sheriff, Wayne Ivey; and Larry Keefe, Former U.S.

 Attorney for the Northern District of Florida's Chair.

 Is there a second?
 - MS. MOODY: Second.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the motion carries.

Moving to our next appointment. Last week, I nominated our fearless Policy and Budget Director Chris Spencer to serve as executive director of the State Board of Administration. He's been a part of our administration since day one. He has served as director of policy and budget for the past 5 years, and I think that his job was a 10 out of 10 that he did, which is fantastic in every single way, and I'm, although sad to lose him -- we're going to keep him through the budget -- but then, I think this is going to be really, really good.

I'd also like to extend my thanks to Interim

Executive Director Lamar Taylor for his service.

Lamar will remain at SBA as the chief investment

officer, and I know he and Chris will complement one

1 another very, very well. Do you guys have questions for Chris? I think 2 he's here. Do you want him to come up? 3 4 MR. PATRONIS: I talked to him yesterday, I'm 5 good, sir. I've known Chris for 16 years. 6 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. MS. MOODY: Yeah, I was able to personally 7 interview him, go through his background. I think 8 9 this is a role that was bifurcated previously until we 10 had Ash come back, and this will serve as having somebody focus internally on the investment 11 12 management, we'll be able to have somebody to be the 13 face on the outside interactions, and I think Chris 14 will do a great job. So I'm proud to support him. 15 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Good. With that, I move to 16 approve the appointment of Chris Spencer as executive 17 director of the SBA, and the start date will be 18 announced, depending on how can quickly we get through 19 this budget, so we're working it. 20 So is there a second? 21 MR. PATRONIS: Second. 22 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the 23

motion carries. Congratulations to Chris. Moving to -- I think that probably will be a pay increase for you, so good.

24

25

1 MR. PATRONIS: They did agree to adopt Glover 2 just a minute ago, so he's got the resources now. GOVERNOR DESANTIS: 3 There we go. MS. MOODY: And Governor, I think it's important 4 5 to thank Lamar. He did such a great job holding the 6 agency steady. And I know he has some issues coming 7 up, but we're just so grateful that you're going to be that steady hand at the helm as to that investment 8 9 strategy. Very, very excited about this agency. 10 Thank you. 11 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Absolutely. Okay. Moving next to the Administration 12

Okay. Moving next to the Administration

Commission, Secretary of Commerce Alex Kelly is here
to present.

MR. PATRONIS: Governor, if I may?

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Yes.

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MR. PATRONIS: Over the last several months working with Alex, he's been amazing. There's been a lot of moving parts going on in the state, and he was just very leaning forward. He's been wearing a lot of hats over the last few months, and I just want to thank him publicly in front of you for how he's handled and managed everything, just a rock star.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Appreciate that. Okay.

MR. KELLY: Thank you. Good morning, Governor

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1
     DeSantis, and Members of the Florida Administration
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     Commission. Today I ask that you consider accepting
     our department's 2023 Florida Keys Area of Critical
 3
 4
     State Concern Annual Report, continuing the Florida
 5
     Keys Area of Critical State Concern designation and
 6
     accepting our department's recommendation that the
 7
     significant progress towards accomplishing the
     strategies of the work plan have been achieved.
 8
                                                      Thank
 9
    you for your consideration.
10
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. Thank you, Secretary
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    Kelly. I move to accept the report as submitted.
12
     there a second?
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         MR. PATRONIS:
                         Second.
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          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. Hearing no objection,
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     the motion carries.
         Next, we have DEM Director, Kevin Guthrie. Is he
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17
    here?
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          MR. GUTHRIE: Yes, sir. I flew in this morning.
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         GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. So we've now rescued
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     -- what's the total Floridians rescued from Haiti at
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     this point?
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          MR. GUTHRIE: 62.
23
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS:
                              Okay.
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         MR. GUTHRIE: 62, sir.
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          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: So, those operations are
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ongoing.

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We also have been in contact with Maryland and just offered support. They may not need it, but I think most people know by now they had a collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge, really a catastrophic event, and so Kevin and his team are standing by to help, if necessary, because that's a major, major issue. I mean, we dealt with things such as the Surfside Tower collapsing, this is a massive, massive disaster. So I appreciate the Division of Emergency Management being willing to help those guys too.

MR. GUTHRIE: Yes, sir. Glad to do it.

Governor and Cabinet, I'm here today to present the Statewide Emergency Shelter Plan as required by State Statute 252.935. The plan projects the hurricane shelter needs, including information on the availability of shelters that accepts pets for the state for the next five years. Beginning with the publication in 2006, the Statewide Emergency Shelter Plan, the division began monitoring the status of the statewide inventory of special needs shelters. Historically, before that, special needs populations were included in the total number, but at that season we divided it out into two separate categories.

The Division recognizes the American Red Cross

Hurricane Evacuation Shelters Section Standards as a minium for hurricane evacuation shelter study criteria.

When appropriately located, designed, and constructed, the following types of facilities are considered suitable for public hurricane evacuation shelters. Those include community and civic centers, gymnasiums, auditoriums, conference and training centers, and other public assembly facilities. To ensure the facilities meet the minimum standards by the American Red Cross, the division implemented a multi-faceted program, which includes a survey -- I'm sorry, a survey of the existing buildings, support of mitigation and retrofitting of the facilities, and constructing new facilities.

This year's report includes 2,178 buildings with 1,989 of those buildings identified specifically as general population and 189 identified as special needs. That equates to 939,405 shelter spaces that have been identified, and 42,883 are special needs. That is the identified. Our demand this year is 824,866 spaces were identified across the state. And then of that, so our demand is 774,000, creating a surplus of 50,000-plus spaces. In the special needs population, we are only at 85 percent of the demand

needing, we're at 42,883 spaces, having a deficit of 7,487 spaces.

So to that end this year, we are looking -- we have public school enhanced hurricane protection area standards going into place, which will create an additional 473,520 spaces. And then by the 2024 Atlantic hurricane season, we anticipate having 1,111,854 shelter spaces, still shy of the special needs population, we will still be under.

By way of region, we only have two regions that are deficit in general population. We have a surplus statewide, but there are some pockets that still have issues. Same way with general -- with the special needs, we have 3 of our 10 regions that are in a deficit as well.

That concludes my report, sir, and Cabinet.

We'll be more than happy to take any questions, if you have any.

MR. PATRONIS: Couple questions, yes, sir. GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Go ahead.

MR. PATRONIS: Good morning. One, you've just inspired me to bring this up. During Irma -- and you're probably the one that fixed it, we had had a situation where you had Floridians evacuating the panhandle because we -- it was almost a statewide

emergency. But as they were going into Houston County and into Dothan there were no shelters open. So are there MOUs with those border counties?

MR. GUTHRIE: Yes, sir.

MR. PATRONIS: If Floridians need a place to go sometimes when they're in the northern part of the state.

MR. GUTHRIE: So the short answer is exactly after Hurricane Irma we went ahead and developed a FEMA Region 4 with our partners Chris Collins, Jeff Smitherman, Matt McCraney, who are the Georgia-Alabama-Mississippi representatives. We now have a a regional shelter strategy, so that if we have to push north we can do that, and we have reciprocating agreements across the FEMA Region 4, the southeastern United States, yes, sir.

MR. PATRONIS: Sure. And it was just -- I never thought about it. I had a legislator from Alabama calling me just because I ate at the restaurant, and they said, what do we do with all of these Floridians? We can't get our shelters open because there's no way that we know we're going to be reimbursed for it.

Like I said, I think you ended up calling, either you or Wes, I think you did, called whoever it was in Alabama and said, hey, you'll get what you want, make

this happen.

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MR. GUTHRIE: Yes, sir.

MR. PATRONIS: Have you seen much of a change in people's mindset when it comes to utilization of Florida shelters, versus evacuation, versus trying to shelter?

MR. GUTHRIE: Yes, sir. So we have traditionally done behavioral studies to see what would happen. What we've done in Irma, Michael, Ian, is we actually were using crowd source data, so we can look at people over Google and some other applications to see where people were going and how they're behaving. The one thing we're trying to change is the division's mindset -- well, it's actually not a division's mindset, but the mindset of our residents is -- you know, when I was young my plan with my family, with my mom and dad, was we would go all the way to Atlanta, Georgia.

You don't need to evacuate 350 miles from

Jacksonville, Florida. If you just get to Baldwin, in

Jacksonville's case, you're going to be fine. So

we've changed our mantra from evacuating hundreds of

miles to evacuating tens of miles. And then also,

through our know our homeowner zone program, we are

able to tell people, what is -- you know, Florida

Building Code works, we've seen that out in these

- disasters all over the place. The Florida Building
 Code works. So you may be in a situation where you
 don't need to evacuate for wind, your home may be
 rated to 150, 125 miles an hour, you're needing to get
 away from that water. So in that case again, tens of
 miles. Just get to the inland shelter and you'll be
 fine.
- 8 MR. PATRONIS: Sure. Thank you.
- 9 Thank you, Governor.
- GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Anybody else? Okay. Thank
 you, Kevin. I move to approve the report as
 submitted. Is there a second?
- 13 MR. PATRONIS: Second.

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- GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the motion carries.
 - Okay. Now, revenue? You're eager to get up there and enlighten us, so thank you.
- 18 MR. ZINGALE: Governor, Cabinet, thank you this 19 morning. The department has one item on today's agenda, that's why I'm so eager. There's only one. 20 21 The department is requesting approval to publish 22 notice of proposed rules for rules relating to 23 property tax oversight and child support, and approval to file for final adoption if the substance of that 2.4 25 proposed rule remains unchanged. Please note the

department made a technical change on page 22 of the package. This technical change is reflected in the package you have in front of you, as well as the package provided on the department's website.

The department is also requesting permission to provide future updates to the standard measures of value guidelines without returning to the governor and cabinet for approval, so long as the requirements set forth in the statue are met. Request approval.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. I move to approve the item as submitted. Is there a second?

MR. PATRONIS: Second.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: All right. Hearing no objection, the motion carries. Thank you, sir.

MR. ZINGALE: Always a privilege.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. FDLE Commissioner, Mark Glass.

MR. GLASS: Good morning, Governor, Members of the Cabinet. The department has three agenda items. The first is a report on contracts over \$100,000 for fourth quarter of fiscal year '22-'23, and first and second quarters for fiscal year '23-'24 for your approval.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. I move to approve report as submitted. Is there a second?

1 MR. PATRONIS: Second.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: All right. Hearing no objection, motion carries. Item 2?

MR. GLASS: Notice of proposed rules, the department is also requesting for approval to file for final adoption if no substantive changes to the rules are required.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: I move to approve the item. Is there a second?

MR. PATRONIS: Second.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the motion carries.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Item 3.

MR. GLASS: As a final item, is 2024 Florida Law Enforcement Hall of Fame nominees. The Hall of Fame was created in 2014 to recognize in honor of Florida Law Enforcement officers. Nominations are accepted annually from the Fraternal Order of Police, The Florida Sheriffs, the Florida Police Chiefs, the Police Benevolent and State Law Enforcement Chiefs Association, and a representative from each group serves on the selection committee, and the committee selected the following five nominees for your approval. First one is Mark Bohne; second, Michael Joyner; Rene Landa; Don Moreland; and Daniel Smith for

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1
     your approval.
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          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. I approve to approve
     the items. Is there a second?
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 4
          MR. PATRONIS:
                         Second.
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          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the
     motion carries. Thank you.
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          MR. GLASS: Yes, sir.
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          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Bond and Finance, Ben
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 9
     Watkins?
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          MR. WATKINS: Good morning, Governor and Cabinet.
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          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Good morning.
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          MR. WATKINS: Item number 1 is A through D, it's
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     four different reports of award since we last met.
     Items A and D are refundings for savings for the PECO
14
15
    program.
          And then we have new money issues. Item B is 190
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17
     million dollars for right-of-way, and item C is
18
     97-and-a-half million dollars for a new dormitory at
19
     FAMU. Now, with respect to action items, item 2 is a
     Board of Governor's authorization, 23-and-a-half
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21
     million dollars for refinancing at FSU for dormitory
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     revenue bonds.
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          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: I move to approve the item.
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     Is there a second?
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          MR. PATRONIS: Second.
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          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the
 2
    motion carries.
          MR. WATKINS: And item 3 is a resolution
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     authorizing new money issue of $430.2 million for a
 5
     turnpike, and also a $200 million refunding fees for
 6
    debt service savings.
 7
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. I move to approve the
            Is there a second?
 8
     item.
 9
         MR. PATRONIS:
                         Second.
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the
10
    motion carries. Does anybody have anything else?
11
12
         MR. PATRONIS: I just want to ask Ben a quick
13
    question. Ben, on the new money right-of-way
     acquisition, 3.86 percent, if you're looking at that
14
15
    ridiculous Bloomberg terminal that they don't
16
    negotiate with us on --
17
         MR. WATKINS: You're familiar with that, eh?
18
         MR. PATRONIS: Sir?
         MR. WATKINS: You're familiar with that?
19
20
         MR. PATRONIS: I'm very familiar with it.
21
    bologna.
22
          With 3.86, if you're comparing that to other
23
     states because of our fiscal health, how much would a
24
    bond like that be in New Jersey, or in New York, or
25
     Illinois?
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MR. WATKINS: Well, those are -- those other jurisdictions, while they're states, their ratings are at least two notches below ours, so I would call it 25 to 50 basis points. That doesn't sound like a lot, but when you do the bond math, a quarter of a percent times hundreds of million dollars times 30 years, it ends up being real money.

MR. PATRONIS: Sure. Sure. That's all I've got, sir.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: We got another tranche in the budget to do something with accelerated debt payment. So for this fiscal year, have we gone through all of that already, or are you still working on some of the things from the current budget?

MR. WATKINS: 200 million during the current fiscal year, which was done in July, so immediately. Thanks to your -- and included in your budget recommendation, was an additional 400 million. We got 500 million dollars included in the budget to simply purchase and retire debt. That really moves to a different place, Governor. So when we were talking about paying down debt previously, a lot of that was normal amortizations. Now, we're affirmatively appropriating money to go out and prepay debt before their maturity. 200 million last year, double down

this year, 500 million is what we're looking at.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: And that's only when in financial sense to do, like if you have to buy in ways that are not going to be good for us, you just don't do it, correct?

MR. WATKINS: That's correct. So some debt will prepay. When we have the option to prepay -- an awful lot of our debt is not prepayable, but we have a lot of bonds trading at a secondary market at a deep discount. Some of them as low as 50 cents on the dollar. So the notion is, well, let's just use the resources that we have and go purchase those bonds and retire them to give us savings over the long term. So we have not only avoided interest costs on that debt that's outstanding, but we're also retiring debt at 50, 60 cents on the dollar.

So that positions us very well going forward. So not only are we well-positioned today because of the fiscally prudent decisions that have been made, and record reserves created from surpluses, and intentionally leaving money on the table, we're also taking care of the longer term, Governor, in terms of taking out debt and realizing savings over the longer term, which is exactly what they're not doing in Washington D.C.

1 So they really need to take a page out of our 2 book, because they've got a spending problem in Washington, D.C., Governor. And for the first time 3 we're starting to see some chatter -- there was an 4 article in the Wall Street Journal yesterday, front 5 6 page, about the amount, \$23 trillion of federal government debt that had to be refinanced last year. 7 Well, I can't even do the math on trillions, and I do 8 bond math for a living, there's so many zeros. So we 9 10 have a persistent and perpetual federal deficit. the current year, \$1.8 trillion. We've added \$8 11 12 trillion of debt to the fed's balance sheet over the 13 last five years. So we're in a Zip code, we're in 14 unchartered waters, and not in a good way at the 15 federal level. And I'm happy to say at the state 16 level we've done exactly the opposite. So it's 17 sunshine in the Sunshine State. Thank for your 18 leadership, Governor.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: So looking forward for the balance of this year, are they -- I guess as a conventional wisdom we're going to see fed rate cuts?

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MR. WATKINS: Right now we've got an inverted yield curve, but the street has been uniformly wrong about the path forward, if you'll recall. First, it was transitory, then it was supply train, then it was

Ukraine on the inflation side, and the fed is reacting to the economic numbers. And we've had -- all the focus is on fed speak right now and economic releases from day-to-day, and they keep pushing the date back.

Because remember, the conventional wisdom is we're supposed to be in an economic recession right now. And interest rates are already supposed to have been moved down four times. Well, that hasn't happened because of the constraint of the consumer and the strength of the economy.

So, now they're talking about three rate decreases over the next -- during this calendar year, but they've pushed that out two or three times now, Governor, from what the conventional wisdom was. So it's a long-winded way of saying that's the conventional wisdom, but I don't necessarily always agree with what the prognosticators say. So we take them one at a time. And I hope rates, short rates, do come down, but there's going to be pressure on the long end because of all of the federal government borrowing that's got to be done.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Anybody else?

MR. PATRONIS: No.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Thank you, sir. Appreciate

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1
          All right. SBA, Lamar Taylor. Welcome.
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          MR. PATRONIS: You know Lamar has got a band?
 3
          MR. TAYLOR: Oh, no.
          MR. PATRONIS: He does, he's got a band, he's
 4
 5
     letting his hair grow out --
 6
          MR. TAYLOR: Letting all my secrets --
          MR. PATRONIS: -- he's got a little mullet
 7
 8
     working.
 9
          MR. TAYLOR: Good morning.
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          MR. PATRONIS: Good morning.
          MR. TAYLOR: Governor, if I could take just a
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12
     moment and extend my congratulations to Chris Spencer
     for his selection as the next executive director of
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14
     the State Board Administration. I can tell you myself
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     and all of the senior leadership out at the State
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     Board are looking forward to his start date after the
17
    budget.
18
          And I'd also like to thank you, and General
19
     Moody, and CFO Patronis for the opportunity to serve
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     in the interim role over this period of time, and I'm
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     very much looking forward and appreciate the
22
     opportunity to continue serving you as chief
23
     investment officer. So again, thank you very much for
24
     that opportunity.
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GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Thank you. Thanks for your

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service. 1 2 MR. TAYLOR: If nothing else, I can jump right 3 into the agenda. 4 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Let's do it. MR. TAYLOR: So items A, B, and C -- items 1, A, 5 6 B, and C, are fiscal sufficiencies, relating to the bond resolution you just approved for Director 7 Watkins. If you would like, we can take those as one 8 9 item. GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. I move to approve the 10 item. Is there a second? 11 12 MR. PATRONIS: Second. 13 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the 14 motion carries. 15 MR. TAYLOR: Item 2 is request approval of draft 16 letter to the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee 17 affirming the SBA trustees have reviewed and approved 18 the monthly Florida PRIME summary reports and actions 19 taken, if any, to address any impacts with the 4th 20 quarter 2023. There were no impacts; and therefore, 21 no action was taken. Request approval. 22 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: I move to approve the items. 23 Is there a second? MR. PATRONIS: Second. 2.4 25 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the

motion carries.

MR. TAYLOR: Item 3, is request approval of the SBA quarterly report required by the Protecting Florida's Investment Act. Florida law requires the SBA to submit a quarterly report that includes a list of continued examinations and scrutinized companies with activities in Sudan, Iran, anti-BDS, Northern Ireland, Cuba, Syria, and Venezuela. This quarter we are adding one company to the scrutinized companies with activities in Sudan list and the scrutinized companies with activities in the Iran terrorism sector list, that company is a subsidiary of a company that's already on those lists, and so we're adding that company list to the list this quarter. We are not taking any companies off the list this quarter.

In addition, we are in the process of implementing legislation that was adopted in November that expanded the number of sectors included in the Iran terrorism sectors list. We have preliminarily identified about 40 companies with whom we've begun engagement to determine their compliance with Florida law in this area. We will, of course, keep the trustees informed, and any company that we determine to be violating Florida law we will adding them to the list and updating the trustees quarterly.

And so if I could take a moment to provide a brief update on Morningstar. So, as you recall, Morningstar was added to the scrutinized companies that boycott Israel list in October. The SBA identified and raised some concerns about the ratings methodologies of a subsidiary of Morningstar called Sustainalytics. Specifically, we objected to the use of an occupied territories rating tag that we believe contain invade anti-Israel bias.

Since October, Morningstar has provided the SBA with a report of two experts retained in the area of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that also objected to the use of the occupied territories rating tag and made additional recommendations with respect to the rating processes of Sustainalytics. Morningstar has since indicated it has ceased using the occupied territories ratings tag and will undertake to implement the recommendations of the expert report.

As of this quarter's PFIA report, Morningstar remains on the scrutinized companies that boycott Israel list, and included in the materials is a daft letter to Morningstar that would require Morningstar to confirm in writing not only that they have ceased using the occupied territories ratings tag, but no other tag is being substituted for that tag in the way

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to contain the same anti-Israel bias. They are also to provide a timeline for the implication of the expert report recommendations, provide monthly status reports regarding those implementations, and provide a final report upon completion of those implementations.

And staff recommends upon receipt of those written confirmations that Morningstar would be placed on the continued examinations companies that boycott Israel list and removed from the scrutinized companies that boycott Israel list. And, of course, we will continue to monitor Morningstar's activities in this area to determine compliance with Florida law. So with that item, we would request the trustees accept the report, including the recommendations with respect to Morningstar.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Well, thank you for that. I think clearly, Morningstar is responding to Florida's policy on anti-BDS, which is good, and I think their actions are promising, but I also agree with SBA's recommendation to ensure Morningstar follows up with its commitments, including providing formal confirmation that the anti-Israel pro-BDS tag and related criteria have been removed entirely. And as such, I move to one, accept the quarterly report as submitted; and then, two, direct the SBA to transmit

```
1
     the provided draft communication to Morningstar
 2
     detailing the steps necessary to be removed from the
     scrutinized companies that boycott Israel list and be
 3
 4
     placed under continued examination.
 5
          Is there a second?
 6
          MR. PATRONIS: Second.
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. Hearing no objection,
 7
     the motion carries.
 8
 9
          MR. TAYLOR: Great. Thank you, Governor.
10
          Item 4, is request of approval of the Charter of
     the Audit Committee of the State Board Administration.
11
12
     This makes changes to the audit committee charter to
13
     reflect the fact that the duties of the Inspector
14
     General have been added to the chief audit executive
15
     role and provides for quarterly reports around
     Inspector General activities, and provides the
16
17
     opportunity for audit committee members to provide
18
     feedback directly to the executive director around the
19
     chief audit executive and the inspector general's
20
     performance. Would request approval.
21
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: All right. I move to approve
22
     the item. Is there a second?
23
          MR. PATRONIS: Second.
24
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the
25
     motion carries.
```

```
1
          MR. TAYLOR: Item 5, is request approval of
 2
     changes to the investment policy statement for the FRS
     Defined Contribution Plan. This makes -- updates
 3
 4
     language in the investment policy statement to reflect
 5
     recent legislative changes and recent investment glide
 6
    path changes. Would request approval.
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. I move to approve the
 7
     item. Is there a second?
 8
 9
         MR. PATRONIS:
                         Second.
10
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the
11
    motion carries.
12
          MR. TAYLOR: Item 6, is nomination of
13
     appointments to the Investment Advisory Council.
14
    believe we have the nomination of the appointment of
15
    Mr. Jeffrey Jackson, and the nomination for the
     reappointment of Mr. Freddie Figgers. Their
16
     information is included in the materials.
17
18
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: I move to approve the
19
     appointments. Is there a second?
20
          MR. PATRONIS:
                         Second.
21
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the
22
    motion carries.
23
          MR. TAYLOR: And then, finally, item 7 is a
     standing quarterly reports pursuant to Section
2.4
25
     215.44.2(e) of The Florida Statutes. These include
```

```
1
     the reports from the Investment Advisory Council, our
 2
     general counsel, chief audit executive, inspector
     general, chief risk and compliance officer, as well as
 3
     performance reports for all of our major mandates.
 4
 5
     And I'm happy to say there are no issues reported in
 6
     the standing reports and performance over the last
 7
     quarter has been solid. Happy to answer any
 8
     questions.
 9
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: I move to accept the reports.
     Is there a second?
10
11
          MR. PATRONIS:
                         Second.
12
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the
13
     motion carries. Thank you, Lamar.
14
          MR. TAYLOR:
                       Thank you.
15
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: All right. Final part of our
     agenda is the Board of Trustees and State Lands.
16
17
     Shawn Hamilton is here to present.
18
          MR. HAMILTON:
                        Thank you, Governor. Good
19
     morning, Trustees. Item 1 represents two district
20
             The first out of the northeast district is
21
     Jacksonville Port Authorities' Application for a
22
     5-year sovereignty submerged land lease, a 25-year
23
     easement, and the severance of sovereign-submerged
```

material to accommodate the navigation and mooring of

24

25

commercial vessels.

The second, from the southeast district, is Pure B Development Corporation's request for a lease modification to expand their lease area to what is currently authorized under a temporary use agreement and to extend the lease term to 25 five years. They will be required to pay \$49,207.31.

The department recommends approval of the item.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: I move to approve the items as presented. Is there a second?

MR. PATRONIS: Second.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: A third, I think I heard two. Hearing no objection, the motion carries.

Next item?

MR. HAMILTON: Item 2 is a consideration of the Florida Community's Stan Mayfield Working Waterfronts 2024 Priority project ranking list, as well as the 2024 Florida Forever Priority List & the Division of State Lands Annual Florida Federal Work Plan for fiscal year 2024-2025.

The department recommends approval for item 2.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: I move to approve the items as presented. Is there a second?

MR. PATRONIS: Second.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the motion carries. Please present bundled Items 3 and 4?

MR. HAMILTON: The first part of item 3 is the consideration of the determination that four parcels totaling 1.35 acres of conservation land is no longer needed for conservation purposes, and that it is surplus, which was recommended by the Acquisition Restoration Council.

We are also requesting the approval of four contracts of sale and purchase to the four adjacent property owners as detailed in the item for \$294,695. The second part of item 3 is the consideration of the acceptance of a bid of the amount of 8.75 million, submitted by AC Tampa Bay, Incorporated, for approximately 20 acres of surplus non-conservation land and approval of the contract for sale and purchase of the property.

Item 4, is the consideration of exchange of 2 acres of state-owned conservation land for 10 acres of land owned by Carolyn Bermes, in addition to the payment of \$3,000 to the State. This will resolve encroachment issues within the Black Water River State Forest and helps us resolve an opportunity that we've work with Black Water Baptist Church that was built on the property since 1965, and we have Pastor Levy Blackman here today in support.

The department recommends approval of items 3 and

4. 1 2 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: I move to approve the items as presented. Is there a second and third? 3 4 MR. PATRONIS: Second. 5 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. Hearing no objection, the motion carries. 6 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Ttem 5? 7 MR. HAMILTON: Item 5, consists of two Florida 8 9 federal acquisitions that if approved will bring over 10 2,700 acres under conservation. These properties are 11 within the Lake Hatchineha High Water Shed Yarborough Ranch Florida federal projects. Both acquisitions 12 will serve Florida's natural lands and provide vital 13 14 linkages for wildlife habitat, as the properties are 15 within Florida wildlife corridor to threatened and 16 endangered species. 17 The department recommends approval of item 5. 18 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. I move to approve the 19 item. Is there a second? 20 Second. MS. MOODY: 21 GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Hearing no objection, the 22 motion carries. 23 MR. PATRONIS: I'm abstaining -- I'm going to 24 vote no on that.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: You're down?

25

```
1
                         Yes, sir.
          MR. PATRONIS:
 2
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. So motion carries.
     Move to the final item.
 3
          MR. HAMILTON: Item 6, is first, the
 4
 5
     consideration of an option agreement to acquire
     approximately 25,039 acres within the
 6
 7
     Caloosahatchee/Big Cypress Corridor Project.
          Secondly, as provided in the laws of Florida, the
 8
 9
     authorization of the 10-year lease to the current
10
     property owners with an option for 2, 5-year renewal
     terms, as well as a delegation of authority to the
11
12
     Secretary of the Department of Environmental
13
     Protection, our designee to approve leases or
14
     subleases to for-profit corporations, and the
15
     determination of awarding leases or subleases to
16
     for-profit corporations without conducting a
17
     competitive bid is in the public interest.
18
          The department recommends approval for item 6.
19
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: I move to approve the item.
20
     Is there a second?
          MS. MOODY:
21
                      Second.
22
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. Hearing no objection,
23
     the motion carries.
          MR. PATRONIS: I'll be a no on the next two.
24
25
          On this one and the next one.
```

```
1
                              Six and 7?
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS:
 2
          MR. PATRONIS: Yes, sir.
         GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. Item 7?
 3
 4
          MR. HAMILTON: All right. This completes the
 5
     position of our agenda. Item 7 will be presented by
 6
     Portia Sapp with the Department of Agriculture and
     Consumer Services of Aquaculture, and then item 8 will
 7
     be presented by Sue Mullins of the Department of
 8
     Agriculture Rural and Family Lands program.
 9
10
          MS. SAPP: Good morning, Trustees. Item 7, for
     your consideration is a request by Goose Island Gold,
11
12
     LLC, for two aquaculture leases. One parcel is
13
     one-and-a-half acres and the second is 3 acres.
14
    proposed sites are located in Gulf Sturgeon Critical
15
    Habitat; however, the applicants will be using
16
     floating gear, which is approved in our programmatic
17
     general permit. The department recommends approval.
18
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. I move to approve the
19
     item. Is there a second?
20
                      Second.
          MS. MOODY:
          GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Third? Hearing no -- Well,
21
22
     there is one objection, but we have three votes, so
     the motion carries. Okay. Thank you.
23
          Rural and family lands?
24
25
          MS. MULLINS: Good morning, Governor, Trustees.
```

Two items for you today. This First, is in Osceola County. This is the Heart Bar Ranch. It's a request to acquire a perpetual rural lands easement over approximately 3,080 acres within the Heart Bar Ranch for consideration of \$12,650,000. This is an intact property with four cutouts over a 7th Generation cow-calf operation. They also grow seed, citrus, and sod, this operation. So the operation will be managed by the Heart Bar family, they're all Partin. And today we have a representative of that group here, Dean Saunders out of Polk County that's been supportive of this. And we will monitor it in-house through the FDAC staff, and this is part of the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

The second one is in Marion County, rainy pasture. It's 5,269 acres, within the rainy pasture project for a consideration of \$12,646,000. This is also perpetual rural lands protection easement, and it's over an intact property with cutouts totaling approximately 100 acres, a working pine timberland bordering the Ocklawaha River, and also be monitored by FDACs in-house, and is also in Florida Wildlife Corridor.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. I move to approve the items. Is there a second?

1	MS. MOODY: Second.
2	GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. Hearing no objection,
3	the motion carries. Thank you.
4	MS. MULLINS: Thank you, sir.
5	GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Anything else for the good of
6	the order?
7	MR. PATRONIS: The aquaculture vote, I made a
8	mistake. I'm up on aquaculture, I'm down on the other
9	two large bulk purchases.
10	GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Okay. That will be noted.
11	Okay. This meeting is adjourned. Thank you.
12	(The proceedings were concluded at 9:38 a.m.)
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	

1	COURT REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE
2	
3	STATE OF FLORIDA)
4	
5	COUNTY OF LEON)
6	
7	I, STEPHANIE JORDAN NARGIZ, FPR-C, RPR, certify
8	that I was authorized to and did stenographically report
9	the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript is a
LO	true and complete record.
L1	DATED this 24th day of May, 2024.
L2	
L3	
L4 L5	Stephanie Marg
L6	STEPHANIE J. NARGIZ
- ° L 7	Court Reporter, RPR, FPR-C
L8	
L 9	
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