

In Re: Meetings of the Governor and Cabinet

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Transcript of Proceedings

January 17, 2023

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STATE OF FLORIDA

IN RE: MEETING OF THE GOVERNOR AND CABINET

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CABINET MEMBERS:

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

DATE: Tuesday, January 17, 2023  
TIME: 10:59 a.m. to 11:55 a.m.  
LOCATION: Florida State Capitol Building  
400 South Monroe Street  
Cabinet Meeting Room, Lower Level  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

STENOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED BY:  
JUDY LYNN MARTIN, STENOGRAPHER

Job No.: 285523

1       them, so thank you for taking a moment to do that.

2               DIRECTOR WATKINS: Absolutely. Thank you.

3       It's a privilege.

4               GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. And, you know, we  
5       do have a lot of reserves. I mean, honestly like  
6       you -- you want to be prepared, but we do need to  
7       return some of that to taxpayers. I know we just  
8       did the Toll Relief, which people are now enjoying.  
9       We'll get those rebates next month starting, but we  
10      need to do more. And so -- so we will work with  
11      the legislature to -- to do that.

12              I mean, I think the -- I don't know, what was  
13      it -- my folks would know, December, November. We  
14      were 430 million over estimate, and these were  
15      revised estimates upwards, and it's coming over and  
16      it's just because, you know, our economy's done  
17      better than most of the parts of the country, so  
18      that's good. But, you know, having too much  
19      stocked away, you know, we'll get that back in the  
20      economy. So we're going to do that in the next  
21      couple months.

22              All right. DEP Board of Trustees.

23              SECRETARY HAMILTON: Good morning, Governor  
24      and Cabinet. I don't know who I got to talk to to  
25      stop following Ben, but I would like to make a

1 motion.

2 No. We have 15 items on the agenda for your  
3 consideration. Item 1 is request to approve the  
4 minutes from the August 23 Board of Trustees  
5 meeting. The department recommends approval.

6 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: All right. I move to  
7 approve. Is there a second?

8 CFO PATRONIS: Second.

9 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Hearing no objection, the  
10 motion carries.

11 SECRETARY HAMILTON: Item 2 is a request to  
12 approve the Rookery Bay National Estuarian Research  
13 Reserve Management Plan and request for delegation  
14 of authority to approve future aquatic preserve in  
15 National Estuarian Research Reserve Management  
16 Plans. This specific management plan was recently  
17 approved by the Acquisition and Restoration Council  
18 on October 14, 2022.

19 The department recommends approval.

20 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: All right. I move to  
21 approve. Is there a second?

22 ATTORNEY GENERAL MOODY: Second.

23 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Is there another  
24 affirmative vote?

25 CFO PATRONIS: I'm good, yes, sir.

1           GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. Hearing no  
2 objection, the motion carries.

3           SECRETARY HAMILTON: Item 3 is the  
4 consideration of an application from Yachting  
5 Promotions Inc. for a modification of an existing  
6 Class IV special events sovereignty submerged lands  
7 lease increase to preemptive area for a temporary  
8 commercial docking facility associated with the  
9 annual Palm Beach International Boat Show.

10           The department recommends approval.

11           GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: All right. I move to  
12 approve. Is there a second?

13           CFO PATRONIS: Second.

14           GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. Three affirmative  
15 votes, the motion carries.

16           SECRETARY HAMILTON: Item 4 is the  
17 consideration of an application from Mill Allen  
18 Management and Development LLC for a modification  
19 of an existing five-year sovereignty submerged land  
20 lease to decrease preempted area in a lease term of  
21 10 years for a commercial docking facility as well  
22 as the authorization to dredge and remove  
23 sovereignty material, the removal and replacement  
24 of a seawall, and the placement of riprap in a way  
25 that's (inaudible).

1 The department recommends approval.

2 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: All right. I move to  
3 approve. Is there a second?

4 CFO PATRONIS: Second.

5 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: All right. Three  
6 affirmative votes, the motion carries.

7 SECRETARY HAMILTON: Item 5 is consideration  
8 of an exchange of eight acres of board of trustees'  
9 owned land with 16 acres of forested land owned by  
10 Charles Kennedy, Derrick Newt, and Denis Newt  
11 adjacent to the Blackwater River State Forest.

12 The exchange will benefit the Florida Forest  
13 Service by creating a more efficiently managed area  
14 and resolving the encroachment within the forest.  
15 The consideration by the board is a  
16 parcel-for-parcel exchange with no cash (inaudible)  
17 to be paid to the board of trustees.

18 The department recommends approval.

19 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: All right. I move to  
20 approve. Is there a second?

21 CFO PATRONIS: Second.

22 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. Three affirmative  
23 votes, the motion carries.

24 SECRETARY HAMILTON: Item 6 is consideration  
25 of a determination that a 4.33 acre parcel of

1 state-owned nonconservation land Broward County is  
2 surplus and is no longer needed. Acceptance of a  
3 bid in the amount of 62.6 million and approval of a  
4 contract for the sale and purchase of the subject  
5 parcel to Namdar Group, LLC. Pursuant to statute,  
6 the funds received from this sale will be deposited  
7 into the architectural and incidental trust fund.

8 The department recommends approval.

9 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: All right. I move to  
10 approve. Is there a second?

11 CFO PATRONIS: Second.

12 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. Three affirmative  
13 votes, motion carries.

14 SECRETARY HAMILTON: Item 7 is consideration  
15 of an option agreement to acquire a conservation  
16 easement over 135 acres within Rainbow River  
17 Corridor, Florida Forever project from GC Rainbow  
18 River Ranch, LLC for 3 million.

19 The Rainbow River has one of the largest  
20 spring runs in the world and is designated as a  
21 national natural landmark and aquatic preserve,  
22 among other designations.

23 Acquiring a conservation easement is crucial  
24 for the protection of water quality as well as the  
25 ecosystem along the Rainbow River. The property

1 also provides a connection to the southern end of  
2 the Rainbow Springs State Park.

3 I believe each of you have received letters  
4 from like organizations such as 1000 Friends of  
5 Florida, the Florida Springs Council in support of  
6 this acquisition, and we received several as well.  
7 This property is within the Florida Wildlife  
8 Corridor, and the conservation easement will be  
9 monitored by DEP's Office of Environmental  
10 Services.

11 The department recommends approval.

12 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: All right. I move to  
13 approve. Is there a second?

14 CFO PATRONIS: Second.

15 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: No objection. The motion  
16 carries.

17 SECRETARY HAMILTON: Item 8 is consideration  
18 of an option agreement to acquire conservation  
19 easement over 287 acres within the Osceola Pine  
20 Savannas, Florida Forever project from Mark Collins  
21 and Katherine Merther (ph) as successor trustees of  
22 the Palmer W. Collins Trust for \$1,894,200.  
23 Acquiring the conservation easement over this  
24 property will eliminate the threat of encroaching  
25 residential development and protects wildlife that



1 requires extensive natural areas. This property is  
2 within the Florida Wildlife Corridor and the  
3 conservation easement will be monitored by DEP's  
4 Office of Environmental Services.

5 The department recommends approval.

6 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: All right. I move to  
7 approve. Is there a second?

8 CFO PATRONIS: Second.

9 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Hearing no objection, the  
10 motion carries.

11 SECRETARY HAMILTON: Item 9 is consideration  
12 of an option agreement to acquire a conservation  
13 easement over 2,000 and 529,000 acres within the  
14 Triple Diamond, Florida Forever project from  
15 Roltran, LLC and the request to place a restrictive  
16 covenant over the property.

17 The board of trustees purchase price is  
18 \$8,220,000 and may be reduced up to \$2,950,000, or  
19 64 percent of the purchase price, by contributions  
20 made by the United States Air Force.

21 Acquiring less-than-fee protection of the  
22 property would help protect habitat, surface water,  
23 function of wetlands, and groundwater recharge of  
24 this area as well as further sustain the Avon Park  
25 Air Force Range's mission. The conservation

1     easement will be monitored by DEP Office of  
2     Environmental Services and the acquisition will  
3     complete this Florida Forever project.

4             The department recommends approval.

5             GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: I move to approve. Is  
6     there a second?

7             CFO PATRONIS: Second.

8             GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. No objection. The  
9     motion carries.

10            SECRETARY HAMILTON: Item 10 is the  
11     consideration of an option agreement to acquire  
12     8.68 acres, so within the Charlotte Harbor Estuary,  
13     Florida Forever project from the Conservation  
14     Foundation of the Gulf Coast, Incorporation for  
15     \$2,695,000.

16            The Charlotte Harbor Estuary is one of the  
17     largest and most productive estuaries in Florida  
18     and supports a vital recreation and commercial  
19     fishery.

20            Acquisition of the parcel would serve as a  
21     valuable buffer space to facilitate natural  
22     resources management and expand boating opportunity  
23     to Don Pedro State Park from Lemon Bay. The  
24     department has received letters from multiple  
25     organizations like the Bonefish & Tarpon Trust,

1 also Heartland National Estuary Partnership, and  
2 the Board of County Commissions of Charlotte County  
3 in support of the acquisition. The parcel will be  
4 managed by DEP's Division of Recreation of Parks.  
5 It is as an addition to Don Pedro State Park.

6 The department recommends approval.

7 CFO PATRONIS: Mr. Secretary, and I just want  
8 to make sure, so that will be expanding the marina  
9 kind of also --

10 SECRETARY HAMILTON: Yes. That is  
11 contemplated by providing public access to --

12 CFO PATRONIS: Okay. Because I read where  
13 there were slips available. I thought, man, this  
14 would be a great way to compliment. I just wasn't  
15 sure --

16 SECRETARY HAMILTON: Yes.

17 CFO PATRONIS: -- if that was an  
18 opportunity --

19 SECRETARY HAMILTON: Yes, sir, most  
20 definitely.

21 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. I move to approve.  
22 Is there a second?

23 CFO PATRONIS: Second.

24 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Hearing no objection, the  
25 motion carries.

1           SECRETARY HAMILTON: Item 11 is consideration  
2 of an option agreement to acquire 565 acres within  
3 the Tiger Island/Little Tiger Island, Florida  
4 Forever project from Ann Cavanaugh, LTI; Nassau,  
5 LLC; and Nassau TI Holdings, LLC; and the authority  
6 to waive the survey requirements.

7           The board of trustees' purchase price is  
8 \$1,965,000 and may be reduced up to 1 million, or  
9 49 percent of the purchase price from the U.S. Fish  
10 & Wildlife's Coastal Wetlands Planning Protection  
11 and Restoration Grant.

12           The parcel contains a dense population of  
13 coastal nesting birds and important cultural  
14 resources from aboriginal populations that inhabit  
15 coastal islands as early as the second millennium,  
16 but there are more.

17           The acquisition protects incompatible  
18 development that could threaten the mission of  
19 Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay that is located to  
20 the north of the property. Letters of support  
21 include Nassau County Board of County  
22 Commissioners, U.S. Department of Navy, and the  
23 Florida Department State's Division of Historical  
24 Resources. The parcel will be managed by DEP's  
25 Division of Recs and Parks and as an addition to

1 Fort Clinch State Park, and acquisition will  
2 complete this Florida Forever project.

3 The department recommends approval.

4 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. I recommend  
5 approval. Is there a second?

6 CFO PATRONIS: Second.

7 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. Motion carries.

8 SECRETARY HAMILTON: Governor, for Item 12, I  
9 respectfully request and withdraw the item for  
10 consideration at this time.

11 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay.

12 SECRETARY HAMILTON: Lastly following  
13 (inaudible) I'd like to go a little off script and  
14 just acknowledge all the great work of the meeting  
15 staff who endeavor to bring these lands into  
16 conservation, but more importantly I'd like to  
17 thank you for your continued support, Governor, and  
18 the Cabinet as you've invested the Florida Forever  
19 program.

20 With that Items 13, 14, and 15 will be  
21 presented by Portia Sapp (ph) with the Department  
22 of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of  
23 Aquaculture. Thank you.

24 MS. SAPP: Good morning, Trustees. I have  
25 three items for your review today. Item 13 for

1 your consideration are two leases, one is  
2 five acres and one is three acres, requested by  
3 Florida Oyster Farms, LLC to expand an existing  
4 oyster aquaculture business in Saint George Sound  
5 in Franklin County.

6 All of these items have been reviewed by the  
7 Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
8 and the Department of Environmental Protections,  
9 Florida Coastal Office and had no comments.

10 Additionally the National Marine Fishery  
11 Service and the Army Corps of Engineers have  
12 reviewed the items and determined the activities  
13 proposed are not likely to have adverse impacts and  
14 are compliant with our programmatic general permit.

15 These proposed sites are within Gulf sturgeon  
16 critical habitat, but the applicant is proposing  
17 floating gear which is authorized within our  
18 permit.

19 Staff recommends approval of this item.

20 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. I move to approve.  
21 Is there a second?

22 CFO PATRONIS: Second.

23 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. Three affirmative  
24 votes, the motion carries.

25 MS. SAPP: Item 14 for your consideration is a

1 new five-acre lease requested by Mr. Gelt Barbour  
2 (ph) in Indian Lagoon in Gulf County to expand his  
3 existing oyster aquaculture business. Again, this  
4 site is in Gulf sturgeon critical habitat but the  
5 applicant will be using floating gear, which is  
6 authorized in our permit.

7 Staff recommends approval of this item.

8 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. I move to approve.  
9 Is there a second?

10 CFO PATRONIS: Second.

11 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. Motion carries.

12 MS. SAPP: Finally Item 15 for your  
13 consideration are two new 10-acre leases requested  
14 by Pasco Gibson (ph) and the Florida Oyster Trading  
15 Company, LLC in Escambia Bay in Santa Rosa County.

16 Again, these sites are in Gulf sturgeon  
17 critical habitat but the applicants or proposing to  
18 use floating gear, which is authorized in our  
19 programmatic permit.

20 Staff recommends approval.

21 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: All right. I move to  
22 approve. Is there a second?

23 CFO PATRONIS: Second.

24 GOVERNOR DeSANTIS: Okay. Motion carries.

25 Thank you.

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA  
COUNTY OF LEON

I, JUDY LYNN MARTIN, do hereby certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript, pages 1 through 56, is a true record of my stenographic notes.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative, employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

Dated this 31st day of January, 2023.



JUDY LYNN MARTIN



## Errata Sheet

### Meeting of the Governor and Cabinet

Meeting Date: January 17, 2023

<b>Page</b>	<b>Line</b>	<b>Error or Change</b>	<b>Reason for Change</b>
41	17	Change 'Mill Allen' to 'Middle Island'	Incorrect entity
41	24-25	Change 'in a way that's (inaudible)' to 'and a wave attenuator.'	Incorrect phrase
42	10	Change 'Newt' to 'New' in both instances	Incorrect name
42	16	Change '(inaudible)' to 'boot'	Word insertion
43	17	Change 'GC' to 'Gissy'	Incorrect name
44	21	Change 'Merther (ph)' to 'Murtha'	Incorrect name
45	13	Change '2,000 and 529,000' to '2,529'	Incorrect acreage
45	23	Change 'function of' to 'functional'	Incorrect term
47	11	Change access to to access to that	Correcting phrase
48	15	Add '.' Following millennium	Correction
48	16	Delete 'but there are more.'	Correction
48	17	Add 'Furthermore' in front of 'The acquisition...'	Correction
49	13	Change '(inaudible)' to 'Ben S.'	Correction