



DeSoto County

Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Tuesday, July 22, 2025

1:00 PM

Budget Workshop II

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PRESENTATION

Discussion of the 2025-2026 Budget

PowerPoint Presentation on the 2025-2026 Budget

Attachments: [M Rev. Budget Workshop 2 \(07-22-2025\) REV3 7-21-2025 MH Final Rev1](#)

Brian Wagner presented the second General Fund Budget Workshop finalizing a balanced budget of \$67,516,917, reversing a \$1.49 million shortfall from the first workshop. Key adjustments included reductions to contingency and capital reserves. The Clerk of Court, Nadia Daughtry, is requesting a final budget of \$211,943, which reflects a modest increase primarily driven by a 2% cost of living adjustment for all staff. Operating expenses nudged upward due to higher costs for paper and processing tax deeds, but a successful passport fair helped offset \$210,000 of the budget. Any remaining funds will be returned to the Board. The Tax Collector's budget saw a slight decrease in personnel costs-down 3% -after eliminating overlap from a previously retired employee. While the 2% COLA or a \$1,000 minimum is incorporated per state guidance, operating costs have risen slightly, mainly due to increased postage for tax bills and DMV notices. Moving expenses are not yet factored in because the timing remains uncertain. Supervisor of Elections Debbie Wertz amended her budget to include a prior \$50,000 update. She efficiently expanded staffing to two full-time employees without significantly increasing costs. New budget elements include travel and training expenses (previously unbudgeted), a new website under construction (around \$15,000), upgraded office equipment, and roughly \$25,000 in unpaid invoices rolled over. No capital expenses are currently planned, and voting tabulators will receive maintenance next week. Her budget also includes a 2% COLA. Property Appraiser David Williams proposed a budget of \$1,613,816, a \$5,000 decrease from the previous year. Key adjustments included cutting \$90,000-half for furniture and half for vehicles. The budget includes a 2% COLA and accounts for a flat insurance rate, which will be corrected via amendment. It also factors in an increase to Florida Retirement System contributions. Looking ahead, the office may need an additional \$10,000 next year to replace a vehicle

that recently failed. The upcoming office relocation is scheduled for late September, and most furnishings will be reused, with server migration and IT setup planned in phases to minimize service interruption. Any required overtime has already been accounted for. Sheriff Potter presented a total proposed budget of \$21,227,083. This includes allocations for communications (\$1.7 million), law enforcement (\$10.7 million), corrections (\$6.6 million), court security (\$750,000), and 911 operations (\$59,775). His team made a substantial \$1,025,000 reduction compared to the prior budget workshop, with an additional \$22,000 cut in operating expenses. Capital funding remains unchanged at \$133,000. Revenues from fuel taxes and communications services tax are expected to remain flat. Elected official salary updates, typically released in September, have experienced delays in recent years. If they are still unavailable at the time of adoption, the necessary figures will be added by amendment in October. Although Ad Valorem and Law Enforcement MSTU millage rates remained flat, this created an initial \$2.5 million deficit, addressed through spending reductions and modest revenue shifts, such as gains in discretionary funds and a dip in business tax income. TRIM rate setting was emphasized: while TRIM locks in the maximum allowable rates, the board retains the ability to lower them later-mail-out notices will reflect both full cost recovery and a 5-year maximum, serving only as informational. Fire and EMS assessments were redistributed based on call volume, leaving total revenue unchanged but adjusting impacts across property types; residential households face a \$32 annual increase. Additional options for 5%, 10%, and 15% increases were presented, along with full cost recovery scenarios that could raise residential assessments by \$141 annually. Other districts and assessments-including lighting districts and landfill fees-saw no proposed changes, though some lighting districts are operating in deficit and may be realigned next year. Womack Sanitation requested a 6% increase in curbside collection fees, in line with previously set CPI limits. The Board agreed on full cost recovery for Fire and EMS assessments to reflect service funding needs and gradually ease General Fund pressure, projecting up to \$6.3 million in new revenue. With additional support from MSTU increases and curbside fee adjustments, staff were directed to model a millage rollback-potentially to 6.6-and maintain a \$491,000 cap on contingency reserve use. After much discussion the consensus centered on TRIM rate consistency, equity implications, and proactive public messaging to mitigate sticker shock and prepare residents for long-term fiscal sustainability. Staff will prepare updated options showing reduced millage for next the workshop.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business before the Board, Chairman Deriso adjourned the workshop at 2:35pm

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA

MANDY HINES
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

J.C. DERISO
CHAIRMAN

SUPPLEMENTAL BOARD DOCUMENTS

NOTE: For quasi-judicial matters, any party desiring a verbatim record of the proceeding of this hearing for the purpose of an appeal is advised to make private arrangements for the production of a record and anyone wishing to present documents or other written evidence to the Board must provide eight (8) copies of the written material . If special accommodations are required in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals should contact the County Administrator's Office by calling 863-993-4800 at least 48 hours prior to the hearing.