



DeSoto County

Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes - Final

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

3:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioner JC Deriso
Commissioner Judy Schaefer
Commissioner Steven Hickox
Commissioner Elton Langford
Commissioner Jerod Gross

TURN OFF OR SILENCE ALL CELL PHONES

PRAYER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ed Horne of Pine Level Church gave the invocation.

INTRODUCTION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

SET/AMEND

A motion was made by Commissioner Schaefer, seconded by Commissioner Deriso, to set the agenda . The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

PUBLIC FORUM FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Carol Malher invited the Board to the Grand Reopening and Ribbon Cutting of the Historic John Morgan Ingraham House May 1st | 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

CONSENT AGENDA-MOTION TO APPROVE

Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Commissioner Langford, seconded by Commissioner Gross, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

- 1. Public Official Bond term date revised for County Commissioner of District 1 and District 5.**

Attachments: [Sufficiency Bonds Listing - 4-28-26](#)
[Bond Rider correcting Term to 11.20.2028_21BSBIY0587_Steven Hickox](#)
[Bond Rider correcting Term to 11.20.2028_21BSBIY7228_Jerod Gross](#)

2. Resolution appointing a new member to the Economic Development Advisory Committee

Attachments: [EDAC Resolution 2026 Justin Fussell](#)

This Resolution was adopted.

Enactment No: 2026-040

3. Contract Reassignment- Surveying and Mapping, LLC

Attachments: [AMENDMENT-REASSIGNMENT - Hyatt and Surveyingfinal Letter of Assignment Hyatt-Sam Desoto County](#)

4. Piggyback Agreement / Okeechobee County / Clarke Environmental Mosquito Management, Inc for FY 2026.

Attachments: [Clarke Third Amendment - Exercising Second Renewal Signed 20](#)

5. Application/Community Development Block Grant Library Hardening and Generator

Attachments: [PID- 142352 DeSoto County Library Ian_HMGMP Application_F ENABLING RESOLUTION LIBRARY](#)

Enactment No: 2026-034

6. Application/Community Development Block Grant Fire Station 1 Safe Room

Attachments: [PID-142345 Ian_HMGMP Application_Final ENABLING RESOLUTION SAFE ROOM FS 1](#)

Enactment No: 2026-035

REGULAR BUSINESS

7. Utility Service and Conveyance Agreement (Water and Phase 1 Wastewater ERU Allocation)

Attachments: [Utility Service & Conveyance Agreement \(Water & Ph 1 WW ERI Allocation\) \(McAlpine\) \(Maronda\)](#)

Greg Harris, Utilities Director presented a request to approve Utility Service and Conveyance Agreement between TMV Properties, Inc. and McAlpine (Briarwood) Inc. for developer Maronda Homes LLC of Florida for the McAlpine project granting 49 ERUs of Phase 1 Water and Wastewater ERUs upon approval of the Agreement and payment of Phase 1 Water and Wastewater Capital Charges.

A motion was made by Commissioner Deriso, seconded by Commissioner Schaefer, that this Agreement be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

8. Preserve Utility Easement - Preserve Phase 3

Attachments: [Utility Service & Conveyance Agreement for Preserve Desoto Two LLC](#)
[23691 PUE Sketch & Description_Ph3 S&S](#)
[23691 2026-04-20 Utility Easement Phase 3_Executed](#)

Greg Harris Utilities Director presented a request to accept the Utility Easement for the Preserve Phase 3 Project, and authorize recording of same.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Langford, that this agreement be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

9. Resolution/Budget Amendment Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Attachments: [Resolution](#)
[Summary and Narrative](#)
[2026-79 Capital Road Grant Projects](#)
[2026-80 General Fund Non Depart.](#)
[2026-82 Law Enforcement Trust \(Q2\)](#)
[2026-83 Special Projects](#)

Brian Wagner presented a request to adopt a Resolution relating to the attached budget amendments affecting the 2025/2026 adopted budget, as provided in Budget Amendment 2026-79, 2026-80, 2026-82 and 2026-83.

A motion was made by Commissioner Langford, seconded by Commissioner Deriso, to adopt this Resolution. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Enactment No: 2026-036

10. Resolution/Opioid Litigation Settlements

Attachments: [Resolution Authorizing County Admin Execute Opioid Settlements](#)
[Action Required Six Remnant Defendants Opioid](#)

Peggy Waters presented a request to adopt a resolution to authorize the County Administrator to Execute Participation and Release forms and related documents for current and future opioid litigation settlements.

A motion was made by Commissioner Langford, seconded by Commissioner Schaefer, that this Resolution be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Enactment No: 2026-037

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Valerie Vicente, County Attorney gave a brief update on Reardon litigation.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

The Board expressed its appreciation to staff for their continued dedication and hard work. Commissioners also reflected on the recent events in Washington, D.C., noting the deep divisions evident across the country. They emphasized the importance of restoring a culture in which differing viewpoints can be shared and debated respectfully, without hostility or violence.

RECESS UNTIL 6:30 PM PUBLIC HEARING

PUBLIC HEARING

11. Ordinance / Comprehensive Plan Amendment Adoption / Affordable

Housing-Density (COMP-0015-2025)

Attachments: [2026-05-13 COMP-0015-2025 Affordable Housing Density SR for BOCC Adoption](#)
[Exhibit D Supportive Data and Analysis Report](#)
[DC Comment Letter 4-13-26](#)
[2026-05-13 COMP-0015-2025 Affordable Housing Density Ord for BOCC](#)

Misty Servia presented a request to adopt the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations to allow bonus density incentives for affordable and workforce housing. Ms. Servia explained the changes would help address local housing shortages, particularly for teachers, first responders, and other workers, while requiring long-term affordability agreements and continued board review of future developments. Several commissioners expressed support for the need of workforce housing but raised concerns about approving broad text amendments that could increase density countywide and “paint the county into a corner.” They preferred reviewing projects individually through the existing PUD or rezoning process rather than changing the rules in advance. During public comment constituents opposed the amendment, citing concerns about the impact of low income housing such as crime, traffic, infrastructure strain, neighborhood impacts, and the long-term consequences of higher-density development. After discussion, Commissioner Deriso made a motion to approve but failed for lack of a second. The board then unanimously voted to table the item until the second meeting in May 2026 (May 26, 2026) to allow more time for questions, review, and possible revisions.

A motion was made by Commissioner Langford, seconded by Commissioner Schaefer, to table this Ordinance ,.due back on 5/26/2026. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross
Enactment No: 2026-008

12. Ordinance / Land Development Regulation Amendment / Affordable Housing-Density (LDR-0013-2026)

Attachments: [2026-04-16 LDR Affordable Housing SR for BOCC](#)
[2026-05-13 Ord Affordable Housing Ord for BOCC](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Langford, seconded by Commissioner Schaefer, to table this Ordinance ,.due back on 5/26/2026. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross
Enactment No: 2026-009

13. Ordinance / Comprehensive Plan Amendment / Essential Services (COMP-0017-2025)

Attachments: [2026-04-06 CPA Essential Services SR for BOCC](#)
[DC Comment Letter 4-13-26](#)
[2026-04-06 ORDINANCE CPA Essential Services for BOCC](#)

Misty Servia presented a request to adopt the proposed amendments to the

Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations focused on “essential services” (Agenda items 13 and 14). The intent of the changes is to improve efficiency in providing critical infrastructure and public services while also aligning inconsistencies between the Comprehensive Plan and the LDRs. Ms. Servia explained that the City of Arcadia Airport helped prompt the update, but the scope was broadened to better support infrastructure needs across the county. The amendments expand and clarify the definition of essential services to include government-owned utilities, communications systems, public safety facilities, municipal public-use airports, penal facilities, and solid waste disposal operations. A key change is that most essential services would now be allowed in any zoning district, streamlining the approval process for necessary public infrastructure. However, higher-impact uses such as penal facilities, landfills, large power plants, and similar facilities would remain more restricted, limited to specific zoning districts and requiring special exception approval due to their intensity. The changes also make clear that these streamlined provisions apply only to government-owned facilities at the federal, state, county, or municipal level, along with certain regional water authority infrastructure, while excluding privately owned or quasi-governmental facilities. Depending on the type of project, approvals would range from simple permitting to more detailed improvement plans or special exceptions for higher-impact uses. The proposal had already been reviewed by the Planning Commission and transmitted to the State of Florida, which had no objections. During the final adoption hearing, the board briefly clarified the distinction between government-owned and privately owned facilities, confirmed eligibility limits.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to adopt this Ordinance. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Enactment No: 2026-005

14. Ordinance / Land Development Regulation Amendment / Essential Services (LDR-0012-2025)

Attachments: [2026-04-06 Essential Services LDR Amend SR for BOCC](#)
[2026-04-06 Ord Essential Services Amend LDR for BOCC](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to adopt this Ordinance. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Enactment No: 2026-006

QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING

Valerie Vicente, County Attorney reviewed Quasi-Judicial procedures and Ex Parte communication rules, followed by Commissioners disclosing any constituent contact or site visits. The Clerk administered the Oath to all speakers.

15. Resolution / Arcadia Self Storage / Development Plan (SITE-0154-2024)

Attachments: [2026-04-06 Staff Report SITE-0154-2024 Arcadia Self Storage for BOCC](#)
 [Location Map](#)
 [ZONING MAP](#)
 [FLUM](#)
 [Development Plan BOCC](#)
 [2026-04-06 Resolution SITE-0154-2024 Arcadia Self Storage](#)

Misty Servia presented a request to approve a development plan for a proposed self-storage facility by Storage Experts of Florida LLC and Red Bay Realty LLC. The project consists of three buildings totaling approximately 71,666 square feet on a 4.42-acre vacant parcel located at 11503 SW County Road 769, with a future land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed Use and zoning of Commercial General. A small portion of the site contains wetlands within a conservation overlay district, which will be preserved as part of the development. Ms. Servia confirmed that the proposal is generally consistent with applicable requirements, though a question was raised regarding whether fencing is required when commercial properties abut a residential area. Ms. Servia indicated that fencing is not mandated by code, but agreed to verify and report back. The applicant's engineer, James Hurston, introduced the project team and noted that the staff presentation had accurately covered the technical aspects of the request. Board discussion focused heavily on site access, traffic safety, and compatibility with nearby homes. Concerns about vehicles backing up onto the adjacent highway were addressed by explaining that the entrance, previously constructed by the Florida Department of Transportation, allows vehicles to pull fully off the roadway before reaching a secure gate located at the site. The internal layout provides a one-way circulation pattern with a separate exit, preventing congestion. Additional features, such as a covered canopy between buildings, were described as minor, code-compliant elements intended for weather protection during loading and unloading. The most significant discussion centered on buffering and neighborhood impacts along the east side of the property, where several residences are located. Although a chain-link security fence was initially proposed, board members expressed concern about visibility, headlights, and overall privacy, particularly given that the facility is expected to operate with 24-hour access. The applicant agreed to enhance the design to be more neighborly, and the board ultimately required a six-foot solid, opaque PVC fence along the entire east boundary to block views and light. The existing Type B landscape buffer, located outside the fence line, will provide additional screening. Lighting was also addressed, with the applicant committing to full cutoff fixtures to ensure no off-site light spill, and this was included as a condition of approval. After confirming there would be no outdoor storage and that all operations would remain within enclosed units, the Commissioner Gross made a motion to close the public hearing seconded by Commissioner Schaefer the vote carried unanimously. After some discussion, the Board incorporated recommendations along with the added requirements for the opaque fence and lighting controls, ensuring the project remains compatible with surrounding residential properties while meeting safety and operational standards.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Langford, that this Resolution be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross
Enactment No: 2026-038

16. Resolution / City of Arcadia Airport / Development Plan (SITE-0115-2023)

Attachments: [2026-03-17 City Arcadia Airport DP SR Final Clean Location Map](#)
[FLUM](#)
[Zoning Map](#)
[Airport Master Plan](#)
[2026-03-19 Resolution SITE-0115-2023 City of Arcadia Airport DP Final for BOCC](#)

Misty Servia presented a request for approval of a development plan (airport master plan) for the City of Arcadia Municipal Airport, which spans about 120 acres and functions as an essential service facility. Ms. Servia explained that the plan serves as both a current snapshot of airport infrastructure and a framework for future improvements, including hangars, taxiway rehabilitation, and fuel system upgrades, though only the existing conditions and certain approved elements were under consideration at this stage. City representatives clarified that the airport master plan is a long-standing, FAA- and FDOT-approved “living document” used to secure grant funding and guide phased development. They noted that several previously listed improvements, such as T-hangars, security gates, and obstruction removal, have already been completed, while other projects like the Jet A fuel farm and taxiway upgrades are actively underway. They also highlighted recent infrastructure improvements, including a new water main and fire hydrants that enhance fire protection capacity. A distinctive feature of the airport is its year-round camping program, including two small cabins and additional lodging options that attract pilots nationally and internationally. These amenities, along with existing facilities, contribute to steady activity and community engagement at the airport. Commissioner Gross made a motion to close the public meeting, seconded by Commissioner Langford. The Motion carried unanimously. After discussion and positive comments from commissioners regarding the airport’s management and growth, the Board unanimously approved the resolution with conditions, formally adopting the development plan.

A motion was made by Commissioner Schaefer, seconded by Commissioner Gross, to adopt this Resolution. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross
Enactment No: 2026-039

BOCC Public Meeting 04-28-2026 Supplemental Documents

Attachments: BOCC Public Meeting 04-28-2026 Speaker Cards
Form 8B Voting Conflict

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business before the Board, Chairman Hickox adjourned the meeting at 8:16PM

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA

MANDY HINES
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

STEVE HICKOX
CHAIRMAN

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.