



DeSoto County

Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes - Final

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

3:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Commissioner JC Deriso

TURN OFF OR SILENCE ALL CELL PHONES

PRAYER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Langford gave the invocation.

INTRODUCTION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Dr. Bennett School District of DeSoto County Superintendent.

SET/AMEND

Item 17 was pulled from Agenda. Item 11a was added as and emergency item. Item 23 & Item 24 have been moved to the December 16, 2025 agenda.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

PUBLIC FORUM FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Ashley Brown Community Outreach Coordinator for Desoto County Schools briefed the Board on the various events taking place in the district. Brown encouraged everyone to stay connected by following the district's website and social media platforms for the latest updates on sports, events, and inspiring stories from across Desoto County Schools. Vincent A. Sica, Chief Executive Officer, and Daniel P. Hogan, Interim Chief Financial Officer of DeSoto Memorial Hospital, expressed their gratitude to the Commissioners for attending the board meeting. During the meeting, the board reviewed proposals concerning the potential sale, lease, merger, partnership, or joint venture of DeSoto Memorial Hospital. Sica and Hogan informed the Commissioners that the board had accepted a proposal and would be moving forward in partnership with Tampa General Hospital. Katelyn Mulinix, County Extension Director and 4-H Extension Agent II shared about the Arts and Agriculture Project that Desoto UF/IFAS

Extension DeSoto are collaborating on with the Florida Cultural Alliance and the State of Florida, Department of State. Together they are providing free art boxes to the public to link arts and agriculture in communities where there is not a local art alliance. This is a pilot program happening in DeSoto, Hardee, Glades, and Hendry Counties and has the potential to reach a total of 19 rural counties. The boxes will be available each month and can be picked up at the UF/IFAS Extension Office during normal business hours. The Arts and Agriculture Boxes are a turnkey art kit to be used by all ages. We are also working to collaborate with our community partners to provide the resource to other underserved groups in the community. Kendall Gill, Desoto County Extension Livestock Agent provided an update on the A Land Remembered Project that she originally shared with the BOCC. With the support of the community, Kendall was able to purchase copies of the book along with a bookmark recognizing the project sponsors and delivered them to three schools; West Elementary, Memorial Elementary, and Arcadia Christian Academy.

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: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

1. Agreement Amendment/Tiny Town Administrative Services

Attachments: [23-21-00RFP Agreement Amendment # 3](#)

2. MOU / Senior Friendship Centers

Attachments: [Desoto LIHEAP 10.1.25 to 9.30.26 UPDATED.pdf](#)

3. Agreement Amendment/Middle School I0167-Time Extension, Scope Revision, and Additional Funds Request

Attachments: [10167-A3-Ready for Signature](#)

4. Purchase of Western Star Dump Truck

Attachments: [Western Star Dump Truck Quote.pdf](#)

5. Agreement Amendment/ CDBG MT040 County Road 769 Bridge Repair time extension.

Attachments: [MT040 - A2](#)

6. Agreement Amendment / CDBG MT041 King and Baker Drainage Project time extension.

Attachments: [MT041-A2](#)

7. Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)

Attachments: [FY25 EMPG Desoto County Agreement G0630](#)

8. Minutes/BOCC Public Meeting 10-28-2025

Attachments: [10-28-2025 BOCC Meeting](#)

9. Revised Classification and Pay Plan.

Attachments: [Probation and Pretrial Services Supervisor](#)
[Probation and Pretrial Officer](#)
[Fire & Life Safety Inspector PT](#)
[Classification & Pay Plan 11-18-25](#)

PRESENTATION

10. Presentation/OSH Teacher & Staff Housing Development “The Reserve at Nocatee”

Attachments: [Desoto School Dist - Community Meeting Slides](#)

Bobby Bennett Superintendent DeSoto County School District is partnering with Sarasota-based One Stop Housing to build a 72-unit apartment complex for district staff, The Reserve at Nocatee, designed specifically for teachers and staff. Located across from Nocatee Elementary, the project aims to address the county’s shortage of affordable housing, which forces many employees to commute from outside the area. Rents will average about \$1,100 per month, including utilities-set at or below 30% of educators’ salaries. If teacher demand is met, units may also be offered to first responders and eventually the public. The \$8-9 million development will include retail space, a clubhouse, and a coffee shop, funded through debt and charitable donations, including support from the Barancik Foundation. Mark Vengroff of One Stop Housing addressed DeSoto County commissioners asking commissioners to amend the county's Comprehensive Plan to support more density on the site. One Stop Housing also requested more Equivalent Residential Units (ERU). Local governments use ERU's to bill for stormwater fees. County commissioners expressed support, noting the project could help recruit and retain teachers while providing much-needed housing for workers who earn too much for income-restricted units but not enough to afford homeownership.

11. Law Enforcement Assessment Program Recalculation for the Methodology of the Municipal Services Taxing Unit Study presentation.

Attachments: [desoto_county_law_enforcement_mstu_memo_20251015](#)
[desoto_law_enforcement_mstu_presentation_final](#)

Peter Napoli of Stantec Consulting Services outlined the calculation of an updated Law Enforcement Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) millage rate for DeSoto County, FL, to achieve full cost recovery for the County Sheriff’s FY 2026 budget. The current millage rate of 2.4399, unchanged since 2020, recovers only 67% of the sheriff’s eligible budget. The updated full cost recovery millage rate is calculated to be 3.6396, lower than the previous rate of 4.8791 due to increased taxable values outpacing budget growth. The FY 2026 law enforcement budget totals \$10.7 million, with 78.3% allocated to unincorporated

parcels, resulting in an eligible budget of \$8.8 million. The proposed rate would increase property taxes for a typical single-family household by \$112 annually. Stantec recommends adopting the full cost recovery rate and reevaluating the calculation every five years.

EMERGENCY ITEM

11a. Resolution/Burn Ban

Attachments: [Burn Ban Resolution 11-2025](#)
 [Ordinance 2017-07 - Emergency Drought Fire Hazard](#)

Mandy Hines request approval to adopt a Resolution implementing a local burn ban in accordance with Ordinance No. 2017-07 in DeSoto County. The burn ban makes it unlawful to burn in any capacity or discharge fireworks and other fire-starting novelties during a declared drought/burn ban period, unless authorization is obtained from FDACS or Division of Forestry. As of November 17, 2025, DeSoto County is at a “High” fire danger risk.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

Enactment No: 2025-104

REGULAR BUSINESS

12. Proclamation/Farm-City Week

Attachments: [Farm City Week 2025](#)

Mandy Hines read the Proclamation into record to proclaim the week of November 19-26, 2025, as Farm-City Week.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

13. Contract/Parks & Recreation Director.

Attachments: [Sean Campbell Resume & Letter of Interest](#)
 [Employment Contract - Sean Campbell](#)

Mandy Hines selected Sean Campbell to fill the position of Parks & Recreation Director and is seeking board approval.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

14. Womack Sanitation / Audit Determination

Mandy Hines presented a request sponsored by Commissioner Gross to cease or continue moving forward with an Audit of Womack Sanitation's books and records. Commissioners discussed the long history of the issue and noted that Womack consistently provides strong service, receives very few complaints, and often goes above the contractual requirements, such as collecting more than the two-bag limit without issue. Several commissioners expressed concern that an audit-estimated to cost between \$60,000 and \$90,000-would not produce meaningful or actionable findings because the franchise agreement does not set profit limits or define any measures that could be violated. Staff confirmed that even an agreed-upon or scaled-down audit would still be intrusive and that, since the contract does not establish maximum profit margins or similar benchmarks, the usefulness of the audit would be inherently subjective. Commissioners emphasized that Womack has not raised commercial roll-off rates since the start of the agreement, that the County's current twice-weekly service remains lower in cost than comparable city service, and that going out to bid would likely result in higher prices and reduced service quality from non-local providers. Before closing the item, commissioners asked about reinstating the CPI adjustment previously removed from the agreement. Valerie Vicente County Attorney explained that adding a CPI provision would require separate board direction and would return as a formal amendment at a future meeting. The board reached consensus to bring back a separate agenda item to consider restoring a CPI-based rate adjustment.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Schaefer, to approve to cease audit request. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

15. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair to take effect at the end of the Board meeting today.

The board conducted its annual vote for chair and vice chair, electing Commissioner Hickox as chair and Commissioner Langford as vice chair, followed by light conversation about upcoming responsibilities. They reviewed committee assignments and agreed to swap the primary and alternate roles for the HRTPO, pending input from the absent commissioner.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Schaefer, to approve the Election of Chair and Vice-Chair. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

16. Accounts and Warrants Drawn Per Schedule of Bills Payable.

Attachments: [AP Check Report - Warrants 10-28-25 to 11-06-25](#)

Peter Danao, Finance Director presented a request to approve accounts and warrants drawn according to Schedule(s) of Bills Payable October 28, 2025-November 06, 2025.

A motion was made by Commissioner Langford, seconded by Commissioner Gross, to

approve the accounts and warrants drawn. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

17. Proposal/The Grey Rock Group

Attachments: [Proposal, The Grey Rock Group.pdf](#)

This item was pulled.

18. Ordinance/Amending Chapter 2 "Administration," of the DeSoto County Code of Ordinances related to member terms, qualifications, and attendance for the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

Attachments: [Ordinance Amending Economic Development Advisory Committee \(updated 10.28\)](#)

Sondra Guffy presented a request to adopt the ordinance/ amendment for Chapter 2 of the DeSoto County Code of Ordinances relating to the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

Enactment No: 2025-017

19. Purchase of a 60kw Caterpillar Generator and Automatic Transfer Equipment through Sourcewell from Ring Power a CAT Dealer

Attachments: [Ring Power - Sourcewell piggyback](#)
[RPC Quote - DeSoto County FS2, JM25](#)
[PSQ_149700_20251021181725](#)

Cindy Talamantez, Purchasing Director presented a request to approve the the Purchase of Generator Equipment for Fire Station 2 and authorize the County Administrator to approve associated paperwork and Purchase orders.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

20. Change Order #3 Annual Paving

Attachments: [CO#3 ANNUAL PAVING](#)

Mike Guardullo, County Engineer presented a request to approve Change Order #3 to the Annual Paving Contract with Excavation Point to add additional roadways.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

21. Resolution/Budget Amendment Fiscal Year 2024/2025

Attachments: [Resolution](#)
[Summary and Narrative](#)
[2025-163 Budget Carryovers-11-18-2025](#)
[2025-164 Law Enforcement Trust \(Q4\)](#)
[2025-165 EOY](#)

Brian Wagner presented a request To adopt a Resolution relating to budget amendments 2025-163, 2025-164 and 2025-165 affecting the 2024/2025 adopted budget.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso
Enactment No: 2025-105

22. Resolution/Budget Amendment Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Attachments: [Resolution](#)
[Summary and Narrative](#)
[2026-9 General Fund Elected Officials](#)
[2026-13 Budget Carryovers-11-18-2025](#)
[2026-14 Opioid Fund](#)
[2026-15 Capital Road Projects](#)
[2026-16 Special Projects CDBG Generator](#)
[2026-18 Public Safety](#)
[2026-19 E911 11-18-2025](#)
[2026-20 Sheriff](#)

Brian Wagner presented a request to adopt a Resolution relating to budget amendments 2026-9, 2026-13, 2026-14, 2026-15, 2026-16, 2026-18, 2026-19 and 2026-20 affecting the 2025/2026 adopted budget.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso
Enactment No: 2025-106

23. Osceola/VCH Mediated Settlement Agreement (FLUEDRA)

Attachments: [FLUEDRA Mediated Agreement \(11.10.25\) clean](#)

This agreement was tabled to the Board of County Commissioners due back on 12/16/2025

24. Amended Resolution 2025-031, Approving Special Exception Use for Osceola/VCH pursuant to Mediated Settlement Agreement

Attachments: [Amended and Restated Resolution 2025-031\(A\) \(draft 11.11\)](#)

This item was tabled to the Board of County Commissioners due back on 12/16/2025

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mandy Hines, County Administrator explained their was request from a high-school teacher seeking a fee waiver to use the Turner Center for a CTE senior ceremony. She noted that current policy only permits free use for prom and graduation, and that granting additional waivers could set a difficult precedent. Commissioners discussed the challenges of offering exceptions due to costs and fairness to other groups.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

The Board of County Commissioners extends heartfelt appreciation to all staff for their continued dedication and hard work, and their commitment to serving our community makes a meaningful difference every day. The Board wishes everyone a safe, joyful, and happy Thanksgiving.

RECESS UNTIL 6:30 PM PUBLIC HEARING**QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING**

Valerie Vicente County Attorney explained county procedures for Quasi-Judicial and Ex Parte Communication. Commissioners all then gave a brief list of constituents they have had correspondence with via phone, e-mail or in person as well and time and dates of any site visits. The Clerk administered the Oath to all who wished to speak at the hearing.

**25. Resolution / Mt. Ephraim Baptist Church, Inc. / Special Exception
(USE-0193-2024)**

Attachments: [2025-10-14 Mt Ephraim Baptist Church USE 0193 2024 DRAFT 5](#)
[with mms edits \(cao\)](#)
[Location Map-Mt. Ephraim](#)
[FLUM](#)
[ZONING MAP](#)
[02 Revised Site Plan](#)
[2025-10-14 Resolution Mt Ephraim Baptist Church USE-0193-202](#)
[with mms edits \(cao\)](#)

Misty Servia presented a request for the adoption of a resolution approving a special exception use to allow for the expansion of a place of worship on an 8.31-acre property located on SW CR 661. The property is zoned Agricultural- 10 (A-10) and located in the Rural/Agricultural Future Land Use Category.

Ms.Servia conducted a comprehensive review of the applicable criteria and recommended conditions for approval. Staff findings concluded that the application is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, complies with all Land Development Regulations, and meets all other applicable requirements. The applicants representative was available for questions.

A motion was made by Commissioner Langford, seconded by Commissioner Gross, to

adopt this Resolution. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

Enactment No: 2025-107

26. Ordinance / JBCC Veterans Blvd. LLC (Veterans Storage) Rezone - RZNE-0067-2025

Attachments: [2025-10-14 RZNE-0067-2025 Veteran Storage Ord for PC](#)
 [Location Map](#)
 [FLUM](#)
 [Zoning](#)
 [Site Plan - Signed 05.13.25 5](#)
 [2025-10-14 RZNE-0067-2025 Veterans Storage SR for PC](#)

Misty Servia presented a request to rezone a ±2.32-acre parcel located at the northeast corner of N Orlando Blvd and Veterans Blvd in southwest DeSoto County. The applicant, JBCC Veterans Blvd, LLC, is seeking approval for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning district to allow for the construction of a three-story, 81,666-square-foot self-storage facility with a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.81, as outlined in the Concept Development Plan. Although the parcel lies within DeSoto County, it is uniquely positioned at the intersection of three jurisdictions: it borders the City of North Port in Sarasota County to the west and Charlotte County to the south, and is notably the only parcel in DeSoto County located west of Interstate 75. Ms. Servia reviewed the relevant land use category and the DeSoto County Comprehensive Plan to ensure consistency with county regulations. The site is currently undeveloped and is surrounded by Interstate 75 to the north and east, vacant residential land to the west, and vacant commercial property across Veterans Blvd to the south in Charlotte County. It is situated near existing water and wastewater infrastructure provided by Charlotte County Utilities, which runs along the south side of Veterans Blvd—a four-lane divided arterial roadway. The proposed development will connect to these public utility systems within the Charlotte County Utility Franchise Area. Charlotte County has already granted Final Site Plan approval for the utility and roadway improvements associated with the project, and the applicant has coordinated with Charlotte County to ensure access and utility services, as the necessary infrastructure lies within that jurisdiction. In accordance with Land Development Regulations (LDR) Section 20-1627, applicants requesting bonus density or intensity must provide competent substantial evidence demonstrating both eligibility and the extent of the bonus requested. Ms. Servia conducted a thorough review of the applicable criteria and recommended conditions for approval. County staff concluded that the application is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, complies with all Land Development Regulations, and meets all other applicable requirements. The applicant's representative was present to answer questions, and the board engaged in further discussion following the presentation.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

Enactment No: 2025-018

27. Resolution / JBCC Veterans Blvd. LLC (Veterans Storage) SITE-0125-2023

Attachments: [2025-11-07 SITE-0125-2023 Veteran's Storage IP for BOCC](#)
[Location Map](#)
[FLUM](#)
[Zoning](#)
[Plan Dated 10-13-25 - BOCC](#)
[2025-11-07 Resolution SITE 0125-2023 Veterans Storage IP for BOCC](#)

Misty Servia presented a request for approval for a proposed Improvement Plan for a self-storage facility in DeSoto County. The project site, located at the northeast corner of N Orlando Boulevard and Veterans Boulevard, covers 2.32 acres and is zoned as a Planned Unit Development (PUD). JBCC Veterans Blvd. LLC seeks approval to construct an 81,666-square-foot, three-story facility with a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.81. This request is tied to a concurrent PUD rezoning application, which must be approved before the Improvement Plan can move forward. The Comprehensive Plan designates the site as Low Density Residential, permitting a base FAR of 0.4 and a maximum of 1.0 for mini-warehouse uses under certain conditions. The applicant requests a bonus FAR, justified by the availability of nearby utilities and the inclusion of 37% open space, which exceeds the required 25%. A deviation from the usable open space requirement is also requested and supported by staff, given the nature of the facility. Transportation and infrastructure considerations include site access via Veterans Boulevard, with no traffic study required due to the low traffic impact expected from the use. There was discussion focused on access. The applicant clarified that although the existing driveway on Veterans Boulevard will remain, the previously proposed right-turn lane will not be constructed because Charlotte County determined it was not warranted for a low-traffic storage use. A second access point will be added from the north end of the building to North Orlando, creating two ways in and out of the site. Some commissioners expressed safety concerns about removing the turn lane due to traffic speeds on Veterans, but staff explained that roadway authority rests with Charlotte County and that DeSoto staff will coordinate with them before issuing the Notice to Proceed. The applicant confirmed that vehicles-including larger trucks-will still have sufficient room to safely turn into the site and that a Knox box will be placed at the gated entrance for emergency access. The project has already received final site plan approval from Charlotte County, ensuring utility connections and roadway improvements are in place. Solid waste will be managed through onsite dumpsters, and stormwater systems will comply with county regulations. There was further discussion centered on loading areas and Condition 8, which originally required all loading zones to be uncovered. Staff explained that the plan on record showed two loading areas, but the applicant wished to add a third loading zone on the north side where overhead doors are located. Because that additional loading area and the associated removal of curbing were not shown in the reviewed plan, they had not been evaluated by engineering or fire safety. Staff

recommended allowing these changes to be reviewed during the final step-issuance of the Notice to Proceed-where the county engineer and public safety can determine whether the third loading zone meets standards and does not compromise emergency access. The board agreed that if a covered loading area is allowed, it must provide at least 16 feet of clearance between the pavement and the bottom of the canopy, consistent with the fire chief's requirement. Staff recommends approval of the Improvement Plan, contingent upon the Board's approval of the PUD rezoning. Conditions include submission of state permits, revisions to the plan reflecting Board requirements, and installation of landscaping and infrastructure prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. The deviation for open space is recommended as consistent with the intent of the PUD district.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Absent: Deriso

Enactment No: 2025-108

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business before the Board, Chairman Deriso adjourned the meeting at 7:33pm.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA

MANDY HINES
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

J.C. DERISO
CHAIRMAN

Board Documents 11-18-2025 BOCC PUBLIC MEETING

Attachments: 11-18-2025 BOCC Public Speaker Cards

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.