



DeSoto County

Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes - Final

Tuesday, September 9, 2025

9:00 AM

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

Amanda Reuter gave the invocation.

INTRODUCTION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Sheriff Potter Desoto County Sheriffs Department , Debbie Wertz Supervisor of Elections and Susan Pooley Tax Collector were present.

SET/AMEND

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

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

PUBLIC FORUM FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Joseph Manori reiterated his ongoing efforts to rezone his property, aiming to reopen his for-profit camping facility, he emphasized would contribute to increased tourism revenue for DeSoto County.

CONSENT AGENDA-MOTION TO APPROVE

Approval of the Consent Agenda

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

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

1. 2025/2026 Annual Certified Budget for Mosquito Control

Attachments: [Annual Cert. Budget 2025 - 2026](#)

2. To approve the 2025/2026 Detailed Work Plan Budget Mosquito Control

Attachments: [Detailed Work Budget Plan 2025-2026](#)

3. Agreement Amendment / 2nd Renewal / Truist Bank

Attachments: [21-21-00RFP Amendment #2](#)

4. Declaration of Surplus Property

Attachments: [Surplus Declared 09-09-25](#)

REGULAR BUSINESS

5. Resolution/Budget Amendment Fiscal Year 2024/2025

Attachments: [Resolution](#)
 [Summary and Narrative](#)
 [2025-146 Tax Collector](#)
 [2025-147 Utilities Ops-Wastewater](#)

Brian Wagner presented a request to adopt a Resolution relating to budget amendments 2025-146 and 2025-147 amending and supplementing the budget for the fiscal year 2024/2025.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hickox, 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: 2025-086

6. Agreement/Purvis, Gray & Company, LLP

Attachments: [Audit Engagement Letter - DeSoto County.pdf](#)

Peter Danao presented a request To approve the letter of engagement with Purvis Gray & Company, LLP for their financial audit services of fiscal year 2024/2025.

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

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

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

Attachments: [AP Check Report - Warrants 08-12-25 to 08-25-25](#)

Peter Danao To approve accounts and warrants drawn according to Schedule(s) of Bills Payable August 12, 2025-August 25, 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: Deriso, Schaefer, Langford, and Gross

Recused: Hickox

8. Contract Award / Accurate Drilling Systems, Inc. / State Road 31 Force Main Replacement Project

Attachments: [25-17-00ITB Contract \(revised\)](#)
[25-17-00ITB Bid Tabulation](#)

Greg Harris presented a request Approve the Contract with Accurate Drilling Systems, Incorporated, for the State Road 31 Force Main Replacement Project.

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

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

9. Fiscal Year 2024/25 Annual Road Paving Project - Change Order #2

Attachments: [25-13-00ITB Change Order 2](#)

Michael Giardullo presented a request to approve a change order to pave West Farms Road and NW Wuthrich Avenue.

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

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

10. Resolution Excluding Certain Tax Notices 2025

Attachments: [Resolution 2025 - Excluding Certain Tax Notices](#)

Valerie Vicente, County Attorney presented a request to adopt a resolution excluding tax notices which are \$5.00 or less. Susan Pooley, Tax Collector also made the request stating the cost of collection would exceed a minimum ad valorem tax bill of \$5.00, she also requested that the Board authorize her not to mail tax notices for amounts of \$5.00 or less. as well as direct the Property Appraiser not to extend the tax roll for any parcel with a tax amount of \$5.00 or less.

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: 2025-087

11. Resolution Extending Tax Rolls 2025

Attachments: [Resolution 2025 - Extending Assessment Rolls](#)

Susan Pooley, Tax Collector made the request to adopt a resolution that completion of the tax roll be extended until completion of the Value Adjustment Board hearings.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hickox, 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: 2025-088

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

County Administrator Mandy Hines proudly announced that DeSoto County's Economic Development Director, Sondra Guffey, was selected from over 300 applicants to receive the prestigious Gold Flagler Award for the "Florida Wild" campaign a powerful initiative that

celebrates the county's distinctive natural beauty and rich heritage.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

County Attorney Valerie Vicente provided a status report on the cease and desist order issued to a local restaurant in August. Following the order, the property owner's attorney contacted the county, expressing a willingness to work toward compliance. However, the Code Enforcement hearing scheduled for August 28, 2025, was postponed due to a notice-related issue. Since that time, the owner has submitted a revised improvement plan, which is currently under county review. Despite these developments, the restaurant continues to operate without the required conditional use approval. Ms. Vicente requested direction from the Board on whether to await the rescheduled Code Enforcement hearing on September 23, 2025, or to initiate litigation seeking an injunction to compel closure. She noted that a new engineer has been working with the county since July and has made progress toward bringing the property into compliance. Board and staff discussion focused on the ongoing operation of the business despite repeated notices, and the potential need to pursue legal action to enforce closure until all necessary approvals are obtained. A consensus of the Board agreed to have the County Attorney initiate litigation against the restaurant. It was acknowledged that any litigation could be dismissed if the owner achieves full compliance before the case is resolved..

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

The Commissioners thanked the staff for all their hard work. They congratulated Sheriff Potter for his ongoing service and his impactful efforts to protect the community-particularly through his educational outreach to youth aimed at preventing crimes against children. The Board also reminded the public of the upcoming 9/11 remembrance ceremony to be held at the county courthouse. In addition, the Commissioners discussed the potential implications of the State of Florida's proposal to abolish property tax, noting how such a change could significantly affect county government operations and funding. Commissioner Deriso raised concerns regarding the Route 72 mulch facility, noting increased activity and deviations from the approved plans including FDOT access and operational limits. Staff will review and pursue corrective actions to ensure adherence with the boards approval.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business before the Board, Chairman Deriso adjourned the meeting at 11:54am

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.