



DeSoto County

Economic Development Advisory Committee

Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 19, 2026

8:30 AM

CALL TO ORDER

MINUTES APPROVAL

Minutes for January 29, 2026, meeting

Attachments: [EDAC January 29, 2026 Meeting Minutes FINAL](#)

REGULAR BUSINESS

Election of Vice Chair

Discussion of EDAC Applicant Justin Fussell

Attachments: Justin Fussell EDAC

Development Update

Beautification Efforts on Major Access Pathways into the County, City.

Presentation by Dr. David Stevenson

2nd Annual Economic Development Summit Presentation

Attachments: [2026 Business Summit Flyer- FINAL](#)
[2026 DeSoto Economic Development Summit Press Release](#)

Bots, Bolts and Boots Suncoast Remake Learning Days presentation

Attachments: [2026 Suncoast Remake Learning Days Bots, Bolts, Boots Press Release](#)
[Bots Flyer- Reprint](#)

YMCA Summer Camp at Turner Center Exhibit Hall

Attachments: [Y Presentation](#)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

STAFF COMMENTS

ADJOURN

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 forty-eight hours prior to the hearing.



DeSoto County

3/19/2026

Item #:

- Consent Agenda Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing
 Regular Business 8:30 am
 Public Hearing Minutes

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development
SUBMITTED BY: Sondra Guffey
PRESENTED BY: TBD

TITLE & DESCRIPTION:
Minutes for January 29, 2026, meeting

REQUESTED MOTION:
Approval

SUMMARY:
EDAC members will review the minutes from the January 29, 2026 meeting.

BACKGROUND:
The minutes from the January 29, 2026, EDAC meeting will be reviewed. Committee members will review and consider approving those minutes.

FUNDS:
Budget Amount: Click or tap here to enter text.
Actual Agenda Item: Click or tap here to enter text.
Cost: Click or tap here to enter text.
Account Number: Click or tap here to enter text.
Explanation: Click or tap here to enter text.



DeSoto County

Economic Development Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Thursday, January 29, 2026

8:30 AM

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Neuhofer called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Assistant County Administrator Justin Smith sat in on the meeting.

Mr. Neuhofer recognized Arcadia Assistant City Administrator Carl McQuay as being in attendance in place of Arcadia City Administrator Beth Carsten, and asked it be noted in the January meeting's minutes.

Present: Janet Harvin, Lynn Shelfer, Andrew Neuhofer, Addison Reesor and Akos Jankura

Absent: Asena Mott, Debbie Wertz and Beth Carsten

MINUTES APPROVAL

Minutes for November 13, 2025

EDAC members reviewed the minutes from the November 13, 2025, meeting. Ms. Harvin made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. Reesor seconded. All approved.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Development Update

Economic Development Director Sondra Guffey stated that the Board of County Commissioners had approved a biosolids processing facility called Osceola Organics at a recent BOCC meeting. The location is off State Road 70, west of town. The facility aims to use hurricane wood debris and biosolids to create fertilizer.

She referenced resident concerns involving odor, but added that Commissioners visited Osceola facility and nearby residents reported no noticeable smell. Commissioner approval included conditions, such as defined operating hours and ability to shut down for non-compliance.

Ms. Guffey discussed the County Commissioners recent approval of the phase one improvement plant for the Bridlewood development, which includes approximately 460 residential units. The development was originally approved in 2019 for a total of about 1,500 homes, as well as commercial and industrial components. The development will have its own wastewater treatment plan.

Mr. Reesor provided recent updates in downtown Arcadia, including Broken Spur's

purchase of Oak Street Deli, the "Pink Building" adding small tenants -- Dragon's Den Bookstore and Florida Farmhouse Coffee Shop expansion -- in former Cowboy Corner location, potential openings in the red brick building on Polk, ongoing building work, and the Historic Heard Opera House being under new management.

There was also discussion about Big T Tires opening, and RMZ Realty moving to a new location on the corner of State Roads 70 and 17.

Presentation by Wilson Trilha of DCIP Group

Wilson Trilha discussed the DCIP Group data center and power generation redevelopment project. On N.E. Roan Street, DCIP has purchased a deactivated power plant, previously associated with Duke Energy, and surrounding land, to operate hyperscale data center.

He continued that DCIP has proposed a resilient, hyperscale, behind-the-meter data center powered by natural gas, aiming for 2026–2027 milestones, robust workforce training, and ancillary industrial growth without burdening the local grid.

The architecture allows for economic development without sacrificing grid reliability, public trust, and noise and traffic impact. Plans also detail a minimized environmental footprint.

Presentation by IBT Group Representative Priya Ahluwalia

Representatives of IBT Group detailed broadband strategies, funding and other efforts in DeSoto County. Representative Guido Dominguez stated that IBT's current deployment includes fully underground fiber aiming to connect over 4,500 locations in Arcadia and southeast Arcadia. The company has focused on infrastructure access and digital literacy and adoption programs, including classes on AI tools, social media, digital marketing, telehealth, and cybersecurity. Those classes are free for DeSoto residents at a variety of local venues.

Representative Priya Ahluwalia discussed the different workshops and programs IBT has provided and plans to offer for free for residents, as well as other methods to educate residents and local business owners.

Representatives stated that IBT remains committed to long-term fiber network operation and expansion with significant funding and partnerships, adding that coverage improvement and adoption are a priority; however, GIS collaboration needed.

Presentation by Taylor Jones, DeSoto County Chamber of Commerce

DeSoto County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Taylor Jones provided an update on Chamber activities and its 100-year anniversary. She said that over the years, the Chamber has evolved from a visitor-center model to streamlined marketing and networking. Some networking efforts include early bird breakfasts, noontime networks, evening exchanges, ribbon cuttings, and groundbreakings.

Ms. Jones also discussed Chamber signature events, such as the Tater Hill Fun Shoot, the Chamber Ball, Christmas Parade and Christmas Card Lane.

She added that the chamber is expanding networking and training offerings and launching an Alumni Hall of Fame with a public event on March 20.

EDAC Membership and Election of New Chair

Ms. Guffey provided an EDAC membership update, noting resignations of Jacqueline Wolcott, Eric Bautista, Mac Martin and the passing of Robert Womack.

Ms. Guffey noted that Ms. Jones was recommended for appointment by the Board of County Commissioners to join EDAC, adding that there is a need for additional members.

She added that Chair Wertz is stepping down from the Chair position due to being an elected official.

Ms. Harvin recommended Mr. Neuhofer as the new Chair. All approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

n/a

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Ms. Guffey was asked about land development regulations in the County.

She stated that County Commissioners approved a motion to hire Central Florida Regional Planning Council (grant-funded) to review the comprehensive plan, adding that the review will begin soon. The public will be notified of the meetings.

Committee members proposed inviting CFRPC to present progress at the next EDAC meeting.

Chair Neuhofer discussed a new toll highway corridor project proposed by the Florida Department of Transportation. He stated that FDOT held three public meetings highlighting plans to extend a new toll highway from east of town: Phase 1 from Highway 70 to Highway 66, and Phase 2 from 66 to 98.

Chair Neuhofer noted concerns over impacts to agricultural land, stating that more information needs to be circulated and public comments encouraged at future meetings, as well as a recommendation to the County Commission from the EDAC committee. Members may review FDOT materials, submit comments, and consider a formal recommendation to the County Commission.

STAFF COMMENTS

Staff distributed a flyer for the County's monthly newsletter, which includes staff's "What's Going Up" series, encouraging EDAC members to sign up for the newsletter.

Ms. Guffey discussed the 2nd Annual Economic Development Summit planned for March 26 at the Turner Agri-Civic Center. Sponsored by Florida Power and Light, the event includes Keynote Speak Shellie Phelps, featured speaker Peter Justen, as well as additional speakers and panels. Chamber, EDAC and community participation was encouraged.

Ms. Guffey and Assistant County Administrator Justin Smith detailed their recent trip to Tallahassee for Rural County Days, adding that the DeSoto booth showcased the county with a

rural identity theme aligning with “The Land Remembered” book and future filming.

Mr. Smith stated that the booth was highly visited among around 39 counties. Joshua Citrus juices and rodeo centennial materials were also major draws. He added that the booth's authentic barn items, used as decorations, resonated with visitors. County giveaways, such as Florida Wild bucket hats and cowbells, were also popular.

ADJOURN

Chair Neuhofer made a call to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 a.m. Ms. Harvin made the motion to adjourn, Mr. Reesor seconded. All approved.

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 forty-eight hours prior to the hearing.



DeSoto County

3/19/2026

Item #:

- Consent Agenda Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing
 Regular Business 8:30 am
 Public Hearing Appointment

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development
SUBMITTED BY: Sondra Guffey
PRESENTED BY: TBD

TITLE & DESCRIPTION:

Election of Vice Chair

REQUESTED MOTION:

Elect a Vice Chair

SUMMARY:

Former Vice Chair Andy Neuhofer has been elected as the Economic Development Advisory Committee Chair. A Vice Chair election is needed.

BACKGROUND:

There have been changes and departures in the Economic Development Advisory Committee. Former Vice Chair Andy Neuhofer has since been appointed as Chair, creating the need for a new Vice Chair.

FUNDS:

Budget Amount: N/A

Actual Agenda Item: Click or tap here to enter text.

Cost: Click or tap here to enter text.

Account Number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Explanation: Click or tap here to enter text.



DeSoto County

3/19/2026

Item #:

- Consent Agenda Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing
 Regular Business 8:30 am
 Public Hearing Other

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development
SUBMITTED BY: Sondra Guffey
PRESENTED BY: Debbie Wertz

TITLE & DESCRIPTION:

Discussion of EDAC Applicant Justin Fussell

REQUESTED MOTION:

Approval

SUMMARY:

Crews Bank representative Justin Fussell has applied to join the Economic Development Advisory Committee. This is a discussion regarding his application to join EDAC.

BACKGROUND:

DeSoto County Economic Development staff has advertised for additional members for the Economic Development Advisory Committee. Crews Bank representative Justin Fussell has applied for a seat on the committee. This is a discussion and potential approval for Mr. Fussell to join EDAC.

FUNDS:

Budget Amount: Click or tap here to enter text.

Actual Agenda Item: Click or tap here to enter text.

Cost: Click or tap here to enter text.

Account Number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Explanation: Click or tap here to enter text.



Justin Fussell

Area President, DeSoto and Hardee Counties

A proud seventh-generation Arcadian, Justin Fussell brings deep local roots and a strong commitment to community leadership in his role as Area President for DeSoto and Hardee Counties at Crews Bank & Trust.

Justin began his academic journey at Santa Fe College in Gainesville, earning an Associate of Arts degree before continuing to the University of Florida's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. There, he earned a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education and Communication,

specializing in communications and leadership development. He also completed minors in management and sales in agribusiness, and leadership. While at UF, Justin was an active brother of Alpha Gamma Rho, a social-professional fraternity dedicated to the advancement of agriculture and related fields. He was also inducted into Alpha Tau Alpha, a nationally recognized honorary organization for agricultural education professionals.

Professionally, Justin has built a strong foundation in commercial lending and marketing, combining financial expertise with a passion for helping local businesses thrive.

Justin's dedication to community service is evident through his extensive involvement in local organizations. He is a past president of the DeSoto County Chamber of Commerce and continues to serve on its board, contributing to both the Membership and Annual Meeting Committees. A graduate of Leadership DeSoto, he served six years on its steering committee, including four years as Chair. He also plays an active role in the Randy Bateman Memorial Fund Fundraiser Committee, supporting scholarships for students pursuing careers in the power generation industry.

Justin is a passionate supporter of youth agricultural programs, regularly mentoring 4-H and FFA students with their beef projects. He volunteers at Arcadia Rodeo events and advises the Rodeo Association on grants, finance, and advertising. He is also a devoted member of Mt. Ephraim Baptist Church.

Outside of work, Justin enjoys spending quality time with family and friends, traveling, and giving back through volunteer efforts that strengthen the community he proudly calls home.

Contact: [863-993-1500](tel:863-993-1500)

jfussell@crews.bank



DeSoto County

3/19/2026

- Consent Agenda Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing
 Regular Business 8:30 am
 Public Hearing Other

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development
SUBMITTED BY: Sondra Guffey
PRESENTED BY: Sondra Guffey

TITLE & DESCRIPTION:
Development Update

REQUESTED MOTION:
n/a

SUMMARY:
County and city representatives, along with local business owners will discuss development updates around town.

BACKGROUND:
This update is at the request of the EDAC members.

FUNDS:
Budget Amount: Click or tap here to enter text.
Actual Agenda Item: Click or tap here to enter text.
Cost: Click or tap here to enter text.
Account Number: Click or tap here to enter text.
Explanation: Click or tap here to enter text.



DeSoto County

3/19/2026

-
- Consent Agenda Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing
 Regular Business 8:30 am
 Public Hearing Other

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development
SUBMITTED BY: Sondra Guffey
PRESENTED BY: Sondra Guffey

TITLE & DESCRIPTION:

Beautification Efforts on Major Access Pathways into the County, City.

REQUESTED MOTION:

n/a

SUMMARY:

DeSoto County Staff has been tasked with a new project regarding beautification of the major pathways and roadways in and out of the county. This is a discussion about how this effort can be proactive and focused.

BACKGROUND:

In the continued attempt to promote DeSoto County, County staff has been tasked with creating beautification projects to clean and maintain the major roadways that lead in to the County and the City of Arcadia.

FUNDS:

Budget Amount: Click or tap here to enter text.

Actual Agenda Item: Click or tap here to enter text.

Cost: Click or tap here to enter text.

Account Number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Explanation: Click or tap here to enter text.



DeSoto County

3/19/2026

-
- Consent Agenda Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing
 Regular Business 8:30 am
 Public Hearing Presentation

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development
SUBMITTED BY: Sondra Guffey
PRESENTED BY: David Stevenson

TITLE & DESCRIPTION:

Presentation by Dr. David Stevenson

REQUESTED MOTION:

n/a

SUMMARY:

Dr. Stevenson owns a large portion of land across from the Publix shopping center and has multiple corporations, including restaurants, hotels, etc., have reached out to him about development.

BACKGROUND:

Dr. Stevenson has stated that he has had issues with development of his property due to roadwork delays involving an alternative extension of SE Highway 31. He wants to express his thoughts on this issue.

FUNDS:

Budget Amount: Click or tap here to enter text.

Actual Agenda Item: Click or tap here to enter text.

Cost: Click or tap here to enter text.

Account Number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Explanation: Click or tap here to enter text.



DeSoto County

3/19/2026

Item #:

- Consent Agenda Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing
 Regular Business 8:30 am
 Public Hearing Presentation

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development
SUBMITTED BY: Sondra Guffey
PRESENTED BY: Sondra Guffey and Daniel Sutphin

TITLE & DESCRIPTION:

2nd Annual Economic Development Summit Presentation

REQUESTED MOTION:

N/A

SUMMARY:

DeSoto Economic Development staff will host its 2nd Annual Economic Development Summit. The presentation will highlight details planned for the summit.

BACKGROUND:

DeSoto Economic Development staff will host its 2nd Annual Economic Development Summit, focusing on “Change That Counts.” The summit is March 26th at the Turner Agri-Civic Center.

FUNDS:

Budget Amount: **TBD**

Actual Agenda Item: Click or tap here to enter text.

Cost: Click or tap here to enter text.

Account Number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Explanation: Click or tap here to enter text.



DESOTO COUNTY

www.GoDeSotoFL.com



Exhibitor space available!
\$50, includes a display table and two tickets.

CHANGE THAT COUNTS

DESOTO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2026



The Future & DeSoto County:

- New development on the horizon
- Entrepreneurship in the new economy
- AI and healthcare

MARCH 26, 2026

8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

INCLUDES BREAKFAST & LUNCH

* **TURNER CENTER ARENA**
2250 NE ROAN STREET
ARCADIA, FL 34266

FPL Presents:

Shellie Phelps

Biggest Fish Consulting
bigfishart4you.com



Keynote Speaker
sponsored by FPL



Peter Justen, Founder & CEO

AmeriTrust Solutions

AmeriTrustSolutions.com

REGISTER NOW

SCAN ME!



TINYURL.COM/DESOTOSUMMIT2026



More Information

Call (863)444-2396 or email s.guffey@desotobocc.com





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 5, 2026

MORE INFORMATION, Contact:
Sondra Guffey, 863-444-2396
s.guffey@desotobocc.com

2026 DeSoto Economic Development Summit to showcase ‘Change that Counts’

Open summit will focus on future development in DeSoto, downtown rejuvenation, entrepreneurship, AI and healthcare.

DeSoto County, Fla—DeSoto County will bring community leaders, business owners, and residents together this spring to explore practical ideas shaping the county’s future at the 2nd Annual DeSoto Economic Development Summit.

Held Thursday, March 26, from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., the summit will focus on this year’s theme, “*Change that Counts*,” highlighting downtown revitalization, entrepreneurship, artificial intelligence in health care, and opportunities for sustainable growth in DeSoto County.

The summit includes local and national speakers and panels, networking opportunities and hands-on interaction. Find out about the DeSoto County planning and development process, the state of our utilities system, new businesses on the horizon, and the historic rural renaissance.

Keynote speaker, Shellie Phelps of Biggest Fish Consulting, is sponsored by Florida Power & Light, who recognizes the power of community innovation. Phelps is a force in the realm of neighborhood revitalization and economic development. She has taken her success in revitalizing Wetumpka, Alabama, to the rural communities of Florida.

Phelps has become a recognized authority on fostering creative community growth through collaboration. Her presentations inspire and empower audiences with insights into the transformative power of partnership, the role of the arts, and authentic branding in revitalizing small towns and creating stronger, more vibrant communities.

Because artificial intelligence (AI) is a primary factor in business, the economy, education and healthcare, the County reached out to Peter Justen, founder & CEO of AmeriTrust Solutions, to present at the event. AmeriTrust provides technology that modernizes benefit programs for state and federal governments, helping agencies reduce costs, accelerate approvals. The company is particularly focused on rural healthcare provider.

Justen, a “serial entrepreneur,” recently received the Health innovation Leadership Award at the 15th Annual World Leaders Summit.

The summit, held at the Turner Agri-Civic Center, 2250 N.E. Roan Street, in Arcadia, includes breakfast and lunch. The charge for attendees is \$10 at the door. Exhibitor cost is \$50 and includes a display table and two tickets. Attendees and exhibitors can register at [Tinyurl.com/Desotosummit2026](https://tinyurl.com/Desotosummit2026).

The DeSoto Economic Development Summit is open to residents, business owners, entrepreneurs, educators, and community leaders who want to be part of shaping the county's future. Registration for attendees, exhibitors, and sponsors is now open at www.GoDeSotoFL.com. Those interested in participating are encouraged to register early and join the conversation about the changes that will help DeSoto County grow and thrive.

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DeSoto County

3/19/2026

-
- Consent Agenda Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing
 Regular Business 8:30 am
 Public Hearing Presentation

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development
SUBMITTED BY: Sondra Guffey
PRESENTED BY: Sondra Guffey and Daniel Sutphin

TITLE & DESCRIPTION:

Bots, Bolts and Boots Suncoast Remake Learning Days presentation

REQUESTED MOTION:

n/a

SUMMARY:

DeSoto County Economic Development Department will host “Bots, Bolts & Boots Career Discovery: Skip the Degree, Not the Dream,” event as part of the 2026 Suncoast Remake Learning Days. The event will be held on Thursday, April 30, from 3:30-7 p.m. at the Turner Agri-Civic Center.

BACKGROUND:

The event will be an interactive, hands-on experience for guests of all ages, engaging them to explore high-demand, high-skilled career opportunities. Attendees will have a chance to talk with industry professionals, local employers and more. Businesses are encouraged to participate-at no charge.

FUNDS:

Budget Amount: **Exact amount to be determined by grant**

Actual Agenda Item: Click or tap here to enter text.

Cost: Click or tap here to enter text.

Account Number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Explanation: **Grant funded by The Patterson Foundation**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 26, 2026

MORE INFORMATION, Contact:
Sondra Guffey, 863-444-2396
s.guffey@desotobocc.com

DeSoto Economic Development presents Career Event, 'Bots, Bolts & Boots Career Discovery: Skip the Degree, Not the Dream'

The interactive and fun event lets guests of all ages explore high-demand, high-skill careers that offer great pay in challenging fields.

DeSoto County, Fla— DeSoto County Economic Development Department will host “Bots, Bolts & Boots Career Discovery: Skip the Degree, Not the Dream” as part of the 2026 Suncoast Remake Learning Days.

This interactive, hands-on event invites guests of all ages to explore high-demand, high-skill careers that offer excellent wages and rewarding work---many of which do not require a four-year degree. Attendees will engage directly with industry professionals, local employers, and real-world tools and technology across multiple fields.

“If you’re dreaming of a career that’s high-wage, skilled and doesn’t necessarily require a college, this free event is for you, featuring hands-on displays and interaction with people in the field,” said Economic Development Director Sondra Guffey. “Connecting our community with opportunities like these is essential to building a strong and sustainable workforce for the future.”

The event takes place Thursday, April 30 from 3:30 to 7 p.m. at the Turner Agri-Civic Center, 2250 NE Roan Street, Arcadia, FL. It is an open-house format.

Guests can discover new career pathways, spark their passions, enjoy free refreshments, and enter to win prizes. Bots, Bolts and Boots is free for attendees and exhibitors. Both are asked to register at TinyURL.com/bots-bolts-boots. For more information, call 863-993-4807, or go to www.GoDeSotoFL.com.

Suncoast Remake Learning Days is a 15-day, hands-on learning festival, underwritten by The Patterson Foundation, across Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota counties—focused on youth from birth through 12th grade and their families. The festival runs from Saturday, April 18 through Saturday May 2. For more information about Suncoast Remake Learning Days, call 941-952-1413 or go to www.gradelevelreadingsuncoast.net.

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DESOTO

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



BOTS, BOLTS & BOOTS

Career Discovery:

Skip the Degree, not the dream. Discover your passion and find a path to a fulfilling career, while having fun.

THURSDAY, APRIL 30 | 3:30-7PM
TURNER AGRI CIVIC CENTER

If you're dreaming of a career that's high-wage, skilled and doesn't necessarily require a college degree, this is for you! Hands-on displays, interaction with people in the field, prizes and FREE food.

FREE for Attendees.
FREE for Exhibitors.

Just sign up here ...

More info: 863-993-4807

GoDeSotoFL.com



SCAN HERE

SIGN UP NOW

TinyURL.com/bots-bolts-boots



TURNER AGRI CIVIC CENTER
2250 NE ROAN STREET,
ARCADIA, FL, 34266





DeSoto County

3/19/2026

Item #:

- Consent Agenda Quasi-Judicial Public Hearing
 Regular Business 8:30 am
 Public Hearing Other

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development
SUBMITTED BY: Sondra Guffey
PRESENTED BY: Sondra Guffey

TITLE & DESCRIPTION:

YMCA Summer Camp at Turner Center Exhibit Hall

REQUESTED MOTION:

n/a

SUMMARY:

The local YMCA will host a weekly camp in summer 2026 at the Turner Agri-Civic Center Exhibit Hall.

BACKGROUND:

YMCA of Southwest Florida is hosting a weekly summer camp called the “Best Summer Ever,” in Arcadia, FL, at the Turner Agri-Civic Center, 2250 NE Roan Street. Campers are provided with breakfast and lunch. The camp runs from June to August.

FUNDS:

Budget Amount: Click or tap here to enter text.

Actual Agenda Item: Click or tap here to enter text.

Cost: Click or tap here to enter text.

Account Number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Explanation: Click or tap here to enter text.



YMCA of Southwest Florida

Creating Experiences

Camp Impact:

- 96% of campers make a new friend
- 90% feel better about themselves
- 74% try a new activity they initially feared



Affordability for Families

YMCA is establishing temporary licensing with Early Learning Coalition, allowing families to apply their benefits to summer camp. Parent copay cost through ELC ranges from \$5 - \$30 per week.

WE DON'T TURN ANYONE AWAY DUE TO THEIR INABILITY TO PAY

As a 501c(3) we proudly offer Financial Assistance through fundraising and other donors. Our Scholarship approval is quick and can alleviate stresses of affordability, starting at 10%. In 2025 our assistance provided was \$1.1 million.



Economic Growth

YMCA recruits and hires locally. Seeking individuals with a passion for kids, education, sports and creativity.

Our Summer Role Models will receive paid trainings and CPR. Positions include:

Site Director

Senior Counselor

Junior Counselor

Check-In & Check-Out Specialist

Bus Driver



Summer Feeding Program

Campers are provided with breakfast and lunch every day.

YMCA Camp locations also partner to become a Summer Feeding Spot for anyone in the community ages 18 and under.



Summer Literacy

- Curriculum helps to prevent :“summer slide”. Fighting the 20% literacy decline.
- Patterson Foundation: This Book Is Cool summer reading campaign (K-3)
- DEAR: Drop Everything And Read (All)
- Summer partnership with West Elementary



Camp Overview

YMCA offers full day camp for the 10 weeks of summer. Each week offers a different theme filled with spirit days, matching activities, guest speaker opportunities and more.

Camp Hours: Monday thru Friday 630am - 6pm

Core Camp Hours: 8:30am - 4:30pm

Before Care: 630am-830am

Aftercare: 4:30pm-6pm



Best Summer Ever Arcadia!

Fun & Engagement All Summer Long:

- Weekly camp themes & spirit days
- Family socials

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10
6/1-6/5	6/8-6/12	6/15-6/19	6/22-6/26	6/29-7/3	7/6-7/10	7/13-7/17	7/20-7/24	7/27-7/31	8/3-8/7
Cowboys vs Aliens	Bug Bonanza	Time Travelers	Paws ad Whiskers	Red, Y-ite and Blue	Vacation Gone Wrong	Camp Glitch	Camplympics	Color Clash	Unbirthday Party

Campers Experience:

- Art
- Science
- STEAM
- Theater
- Sports
- Guest Speakers
- Field Trips



Working Together



DeSoto
COUNTY FL

Parks n Rec Summer Camp with the YMCA.

- Weekly Field Trips to a County Park
- Sport Days (volleyball, tennis, basketball and skating)
- Field Day with Charlotte County Camps

Future Together

YMCA with the Parks n Rec can team up to provide programming to DeSoto County.

- Youth Sports
- Adult Sports
- Family Events
- Camp Field Trips



THANK YOU!



Andrea Cappuccilli
Associate Executive Director
Punta Gorda & Arcadia
acappuccilli@ymcaswfl.org



Allison Buzick
Executive Director
Punta Gorda
abuzick@ymcaswfl.org



Brian Nason
Chief Impact Officer
YMCA of Southwest Florida
bnason@ymcaswfl.org