



DeSoto County

Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes - Final

Tuesday, June 23, 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 unanimously. Commissioner Schaefer made a motion to move agenda items 1-7 before the public forum for non-agenda items, seconded by Commissioner Gross. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

During public comment, dozens of residents addressed the proposed AI data center moratorium. The primary concerns centered on water consumption, groundwater impacts, freshwater availability, saltwater intrusion, noise, air quality, and potential health effects. Several speakers shared personal experiences with industrial noise and expressed concerns about impacts on children, seniors, and individuals with respiratory conditions. Pastor Hedrick informed the Board that he had formally offered his church as a neutral location to host a public town hall where residents, developers, and county officials could openly discuss the proposed project, noting that commissioners do not engage in dialogue during the public comment portion of meetings. Several speakers referenced recently enacted state legislation signed by Governor Ron DeSantis in May governing hyperscale data centers in Florida. They stated that the law is intended to prevent data center-related costs from being passed on to utility customers, preserve local government authority over data center approvals, and strengthen protections for Florida's water resources. Residents requested additional information regarding the project's potential impacts on regional water resources, including the Peace River watershed, environmental studies, wastewater management, coordination with neighboring counties, and safeguards for water supplies during droughts or emergencies. Many also raised broader concerns about the project's

long-term environmental and infrastructure impacts and urged the County to proceed cautiously. Several speakers questioned why the proposed facility would not be regulated under the County's Land Development Regulations applicable to power plants, given the developer's plans for on-site natural gas-powered generation. They requested clarification on the project's classification and whether the scale of power generation should trigger additional regulatory requirements. Questions were also raised regarding the project's projected economic benefits. Speakers requested greater transparency on the estimated annual revenue, how those figures were calculated, whether projected revenues would offset infrastructure and public service costs, and whether additional county expenditures, including specialized emergency response equipment, would be necessary. Multiple residents urged the Board to either impose a permanent moratorium or delay further consideration until additional studies, analyses, and public review were completed. Overall, speakers emphasized the importance of protecting DeSoto County's long-term water security, environmental resources, public safety, and quality of life while ensuring any future development is thoroughly evaluated and serves the best interests of county residents.

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. Resolution/Application for the Community Development Block Grant - Spring Lake Drainage Project.

Attachments: [ENABLING RESOLUTION SPRING LAKE DRAINAGE PROJECT](#)
[Ian_HMGMP_Application_Final](#)
[Hurricane Ian_HMGMP_Application_Budget_AWP_DOB](#)
Enactment No: 2026-050

2. Minutes/BOCC Public Meeting 04-28-2026 and 05-12-2026 and BOCC Workshop 05-12-2026

Attachments: [BOCC Meeting Minutes 04-28-2026](#)
[BOCC Meeting Minutes 05-12-2026 Comp Plan Workshop 2](#)
[BOCC Meeting Minutes 05-12-2026](#)

3. Special Needs Shelter / Agreement / South Florida State College

Attachments: [DeSoto County Special Needs Shelter 2026 - 2028](#)

4. Grant Agreement 26-04-07/Florida Department of Management Services - Rural County Grant Program

Attachments: [DeSoto_RuralGrantAgreement_26-04-07_CLEAN](#)

5. CFRPC contract to conduct Small Quantity Generators of Hazardous Waste Assessment Survey and Verification

Attachments: [CFRPC - DeSoto ILA SQG 3-21-26 draft \(tc\)](#)

REGULAR BUSINESS

6. Resolution/Budget Amendment Fiscal Year 2025/2026

Attachments: [Resolution](#)
 [Summary and Narrative](#)
 [2026-111 Opioid Fund](#)
 [2026-113 E911](#)
 [2026-114 Utilities Operations](#)

Brian Wagner presented a requested to adopt a Resolution relating to the budget amendments affecting the 2025/2026 adopted budget as provided in Budget Amendment 2026-111, 2026-113, 2026-114.

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

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross
 Enactment No: 2026-051

7. Resolution/Amend Building Department Fee Schedule

Attachments: [DESOTO COUNTY Res 06.23.2026 - updated fee schedule.docx](#)
 [Building Fee Schedule 2026 - Exhibit A.docx](#)

Lester Hornbake, presented a request to adopt the proposed resolution amending the Building Department fee schedule.

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

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross
 Enactment No: 2026-052

8. Temporary Moratorium on Data Centers

Following public comment and further discussion, the Board voted to move forward with a proposed one-year moratorium on new data center applications and directed the County Attorney to prepare the necessary ordinance language. The County Attorney advised that the moratorium would not apply to projects already under review, including the pending rezoning application for the proposed approximately 800-acre gas-powered hyperscale data center complex currently undergoing the County's review process. Before the Board considers final adoption of the moratorium, the draft ordinance will be presented at two public hearings, providing additional opportunities for public input and discussion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Schaefer, to approve the County Attorney to draft an ordinance. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Langford, and Gross

Recused: Hickox

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mandy Hines, reminded the Board of up coming budget workshops.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**RECESS UNTIL 6:30 PM PUBLIC HEARING****PUBLIC HEARING****9. Ordinance / Dissolving the Oak Stone East Community Development District**

Attachments: [2026-05-07 Oak Stone East CDD Staff Report on Petition to Disso Final for BOCC](#)
[Ordinance #2019-3 = Establish Oak Stone East Community Development District](#)
[Petition to Dissove Oak Stone East CDD](#)
[Oak Stone East - Special Districts Online List, 4914-9963-7685-1](#)
[Proof of Pub - Termination](#)
[Tear sheet - Termination](#)
[2026-05-08 Ordinance to Dissolve Oakstone CDD Final for BOCC](#)

Misty Servia, presented a request regarding two related agenda items the Oakstone Community Development District (CDD): the dissolution of the existing Oakstone East CDD and the establishment of a new Oakstone CDD. Ms. Sevia explained that the existing Oakstone East CDD, established in 2019 and encompassing approximately 330 acres, had never become operational. According to the applicant, the district has not constructed infrastructure, issued bonds, levied assessments, incurred debt, or assumed any maintenance responsibilities. As a result, the applicant requested dissolution of the existing district pursuant to Florida Statutes. The proposed replacement Oakstone CDD would encompass approximately 343.8 acres and more accurately reflect the current development plans. The applicant explained that the revised boundaries were adjusted to create a cleaner district layout, accommodate future development plans, and align with relocated amenities. All development costs to date have been funded by the developer, with district financing expected to occur following formation of the new CDD through future bond issuance.

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: 2026-011

10. Ordinance / Establishing the Oak Stone Community Development District (USE-0231-2026)

Attachments: [2026-05-07 Oak Stone Staff Report Petition to Establish Oak Stone CDD Final for BOCC](#)
[Petition to Establish Oak Stone CDD](#)
[Proof of publication - Establish](#)
[Tear Sheet - Establish](#)
[2026-05-07 Ordinance for Oak Stone CDD Final 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: 2026-012

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.

11. Ordinance / Maria's Rentals / Rezone (RZNE-0046-2023)

Attachments: [2026-04-20 2026-04-17 RZNE 0046-2023 Maria's Rentals SR Fin for PC](#)
[Location Map](#)
[FLUM](#)
[ZONING MAP](#)
[Comp Plan Policies exhibit](#)
[Ordinance RZNE-0046-2023 Maria's Rentals Final for BOCC 6-23 -tc](#)

Misty Servia presented a request to rezone approximately 41 acres at 5906 SE Residential Way from an expired Planned Unit Development (PUD) to Residential Multi-Family 8 (RMF-8). The property, formerly part of the Power Auto development, contains 16 existing single-family homes built between the 1940s and 1960s. Ms. Servia explained that the original PUD expired after it was never developed according to the approved plan and portions of the property were sold in violation of the PUD conditions, leaving the existing homes unable to be occupied until the property is rezoned. Planning staff recommended RMF-8 because it is the zoning district most consistent with the property's Urban Center Mixed Use Future Land Use designation and accommodates the existing homes on a single parcel. Staff cautioned, however, that while the applicant intends only to rehabilitate the existing homes, the zoning would also permit a future development proposal of up to 205 multifamily units. Any proposal to increase the number of dwelling units would require a separate development plan and Board approval. Commissioners discussed the property's history, compatibility with surrounding development, utility infrastructure, and the need to repair aging water and wastewater systems before the homes can be occupied again. Staff explained that utility improvements and building permits would be required even if only the existing homes are rehabilitated. The applicant stated the homes will be renovated for H-2A agricultural worker housing, reducing the need for seasonal workers to commute daily from Fort Meade to local agricultural operations. The applicant advised that plans are already underway to repair the lift station, rehabilitate the homes, and maintain the property through dedicated maintenance and cleaning crews. Commissioners acknowledged the need for workforce housing and agreed that restoring the long-vacant property would improve the area. Several commissioners expressed concern that approving RMF-8 would permanently entitle the property to much higher residential density than currently exists. Commissioner Langford favored a new Planned Unit Development application because it could include project-specific conditions and provide greater long-term control over future development. Staff noted that

pursuing a PUD would require withdrawing the current application, paying additional fees, and restarting the review process, despite the applicant having followed staff's recommendation in pursuing RMF-8. Commissioner Gross made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Schaefer. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, and Langford

Nay: Gross

Enactment No: 2026-013

12. Ordinance / RD Welch / Rezone (RZNE0080-2026)

Attachments: [2026-04-28 Staff Report RZNE-0080-2026 for PC](#)
 [Location Map](#)
 [FLU Map](#)
 [Zoning Map](#)
 [2026-04-28 Ordinance RZNE-0080-2026 for PC](#)
 [Ordinance - Welch - RZNE-0080-2026 - final - unsigned](#)

Laura McClelland presented a request from R.D. Welch Company to rezone approximately 5.07 acres on Southwest Reese Street from A-5 (Agriculture) to RSF-2 (Residential Single Family 2). Staff found the request consistent with the property's Low Density Residential future land use designation and compatible with nearby residential development. Several residents opposed the rezoning, citing concerns about flooding, drainage, wetlands, wildlife impacts especially to the gopher tortoise, septic systems near the river, increased density, and the loss of the area's rural character. Neighbors also expressed concerns that the rezoning could allow multiple homes on the property and negatively affect surrounding properties. Ms. McClelland explained that the request was only for a zoning change and that issues such as drainage, environmental impacts, utilities, and site design would be evaluated during any future development review. The applicant stated his intention was to develop larger residential lots rather than maximize density. Commissioner Schaefer made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Deriso. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Aye: Hickox, Langford, and Gross

Nay: Deriso, and Schaefer

Enactment No: 2026-014

13. Resolution / Craig's RV Park Inc. (Hahn Towers Inc.) / Special Exception (USE-0215-2025)

Attachments: [2026-05-15 USE-0215-2024 Cell Tower \(Craig's RV Park\) SR Fin for PC](#)
[FLUM](#)
[Zoning Map](#)
[Exhibit D Special Exception Concept Plan](#)
[Exhibit E RESOLUTION 2023-01-VARIANCE CRAIG'S RV Resolution 2026-002 REPEALING BOA Resolution 2023-01](#)
[Exhibit F LOR Map 71](#)
[Exhibit G Planning Director Waiver](#)
[2026-05-15 USE-0215-2025 Craigs RV Resolution Final for PC](#)

Misty Servia presented a request for a special exception request from Hahn Towers, Inc. to construct a 195-foot telecommunications monopole tower on an 8.28-acre parcel located between Northeast Highway 17 and Northeast Cubitis Avenue. The property, while smaller than the current minimum lot size requirement, qualifies as a non-conforming lot of record and was eligible for consideration after the repeal of a previously approved variance earlier in the meeting. County staff found the proposal consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations, subject to several conditions including construction of an access drive and turnaround for emergency vehicles, recording of access and utility easements, submission of a lighting plan, and completion of required development approvals. The proposed tower would be located on previously disturbed land, outside of wetland areas, and would meet all setback requirements. The applicant explained that the tower is needed to address significant cellular coverage gaps in the Brownville and Highway 17 corridor, improve call reliability, expand data service, and enhance emergency 911 communications for residents, travelers, and first responders. The tower is designed as a monopole to minimize visual impacts and accommodate multiple wireless carriers in the future. Commissioner Gross made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Schaefer. The motion carried unanimously.

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

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

Enactment No: 2026-053

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business before the Board, Chairman Hickox adjourned the meeting at 9:03PM

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA

MANDY HINES
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

STEVE HICKOX
CHAIRMAN

BOARD DOCUMENTS 07-23-2026 PUBLIC MEETING

Attachments:

BOCC Speaker Cards 06-23-2026

Supplemental Documents 06-23-2026

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.