



DeSoto County

Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 8, 2025

6:30 PM

Tentative Budget Hearing

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

PRESENTATION

1. PowerPoint presentation on the 2025-2026 Budget

Attachments: [Tentative Budget Hearing \(09-08-2025\) FINAL FY25-26 \(09-04-2025\)](#)

Brian Wagner presented the county's tentative budget for FY25 totals \$178.3 million, including \$37.8 million in grants. The general fund is \$66.7 million, with allocations covering the BOCC, capital, contingencies, transfers, and constitutional officers. The Sheriff's Office accounts for the largest portion (86.5%) of the constitutional officer funding. Key financial changes include reducing the ad valorem millage rate from 7.6143 to 6.8675, lowering revenues by about \$2 million. To offset this, the law enforcement MSTU increases from 2.4399 to 2.9406, reflecting nearly a \$2 million rise in the Sheriff's budget, while fire/EMS rates rise 15%. Capital projects include animal control, code enforcement, IT, parks, and EMS equipment, plus major transportation paving and bridge projects. Special projects add a public safety training tower (\$1.2M), and enterprise funds (landfill and utilities) include significant capital and reserve allocations. The proposed millage of 9.4508 represents a 0.35% reduction from the rollback rate. Overall, the budget balances tax reductions with increased funding for law enforcement, fire/EMS, infrastructure, and capital improvements.

PUBLIC HEARING

Several community members and their representatives expressed concerns over the proposed tax assessment increases, citing that such changes could impose financial hardship on property owners-many of whom are retired and living on fixed incomes. Others raised questions about discrepancies in their TRIM notices.

CONSENT AGENDA-MOTION TO APPROVE**Approval of the Consent Agenda**

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

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

- 2. Resolution/Golden Melody Lighting District Special Assessment Rate 2025-2026**
Attachments: [Golden Melody Rate Resolution 2025](#)
Enactment No: 2025-072
- 3. Resolution/Harlem Heights Lighting District Special Assessment Rate 2025-2026**
Attachments: [Harlem Heights Rate Resolution 2025](#)
Enactment No: 2025-073
- 4. Resolution/Kings Crossing Lightning District Special Assessment Rate 2025-2026**
Attachments: [Kings Crossing Rate Resolution 2025](#)
Enactment No: 2025-074
- 5. Resolution/Lake Suzy Lighting District Special Assessment Rate 2025-2026**
Attachments: [Lake Suzy Rate Resolution 2025](#)
Enactment No: 2025-075
- 6. Resolution/Ogden Acres Lighting District Special Assessment Rate 2025-2026**
Attachments: [Ogden Acres Rate Resolution 2025](#)
Enactment No: 2025-076
- 7. Resolution/Peace River Lighting District Special Assessment Rate 2025-2026**
Attachments: [Peace River Rate Resolution 2025](#)
Enactment No: 2025-077
- 8. Resolution/Spring Lake Lighting District Special Assessment Rates 2025-2026**
Attachments: [Spring Lake Rate Resolution 2025](#)
Enactment No: 2025-078
- 9. Resolution/Sunny Breeze Lighting District Special Assessment Rates 2025-2026**
Attachments: [Sunny Breeze Rate Resolution 2025](#)
Enactment No: 2025-079
- 10. Resolution/Solid Waste Disposal (Landfill) Benefit Unit Special Assessment Rate 2025-2026**
Attachments: [Resolution Solid Waste Disposal](#)
Enactment No: 2025-080

REGULAR BUSINESS

11. Assessment Rate Resolution/Fire Protection Services

Attachments: [amended and restated FAR 8-12-25 draft](#)

Mandy Hines presented a request to approve the rate Resolution for the Fire Protection Services Tax Assessment. After discussions during budget workshops the board selected the option that generates 15% more revenue, which is based on property class not a flat 15% increase per person, which will raise about \$2,344,729 and is offset by a millage reduction that lowers the public safety transfer. There was further discussion from the board to address the concerns of constituents.

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

Aye: Deriso, Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross
Enactment No: 2025-081

12. Assessment Rate Resolution/Emergency Medical Services

Attachments: [AmendedandRestatedFAR EMS Tax 8-12-25 draft](#)

Mandy Hines presented a request to approve the rate Resolution for the Emergency Medical Services Tax Assessment. She stated just as with the Fire Protection Services The rates reflect the revenue neutral as the base, and increases the amount recovered through the assessment 15%.

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: 2025-082

13. Resolution/Residential Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Rate 2025/2026

Attachments: [Resolution 2025-2026 Solid Waste Assessment](#)

Mandy Hines presented a request to adopt the Resolution setting the Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Residential Rate for Fiscal Year 2025/2026 at \$239.30 per unit representing a 6% increase on the hauling portion of the rate. Aubrey Schurlknight with Womack Sanitation gave a presentation requesting approval of increase. There was further discussion centered around the pending audit.

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

Aye: Schaefer, Hickox, Langford, and Gross
Nay: Deriso
Enactment No: 2025-083

14. Resolution 2025-2026 Tentative Millage Rates

Attachments: [Tentative Millage Resolution 2025-2026 9-08-2025](#)

Brian Wagner presented a request to adopt the resolution for the tentative levying of AD Valorem taxes for Desoto County for fiscal year 2025/2026.

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

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

Enactment No: 2025-084

15. Resolution 2025-2026 Tentative Budget

Attachments: [Tenative Budget Resolution 2025-2026 09-08-2025](#)

Brian Wagner presented a request to adopt the resolution for the tentative budget for Desoto County for fiscal year 2025/2026.

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: 2025-085

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business before the Board, Chairman Deriso adjourned the meeting at 7:30PM

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA

MANDY HINES
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

J.C. DERISO
CHAIRMAN

16. Supplemental Documents 09-08-2025 Public Meeting

Attachments: [Supplemental Documents 09-08-2025](#)
[7-22-25 Womack Sanitation](#)
[09-08-2025 BOCC 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.