



Levy County Board of County Commissioners Agenda Item Summary Form

- 1. Name and Title:** Mary-Ellen Harper, County Manager
- 2. Department:** Board of County Commissioners
- 3. Meeting Date:** Tuesday, February 17, 2026

4. Requested Action:

Direct staff to work with the Interim County Attorney to explore the County's options to terminate the lease at the Levy County Forestry Camp and bring back a recommendation to the board.

5. Cost & Funding Source:

State to inspect and determine cost to terminate lease.

6. Justification of Request:

Levy County entered into a 50-year lease with the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida for the Levy County Forestry Camp, to be used by the Department of Public Safety. The lease is scheduled to expire on December 14, 2062, unless terminated earlier in accordance with the lease provisions.

Section 28 of the lease, **Surrender of Premises**, provides that upon termination or expiration of the lease, the County must surrender the leased premises to the State. If the County determines that continued use of all or any portion of the leased premises is no longer needed, the County is required to provide written notice to the Lessor and the Bureau of Public Land Administration, Division of State Lands, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, at least six months prior to the proposed release. The notice must include a legal description of the property, the lease number, and an explanation of the proposed release. Any release is valid only upon approval by the Lessor through execution of a formal release instrument.

Upon termination, expiration, or approved release, all improvements—including physical structures and modifications—become the property of the Lessor unless the Lessor directs the County, in writing, to remove some or all improvements at the County's expense. Prior to surrender, a representative of the Division of State Lands must conduct an on-site inspection, and all building keys must be turned over to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. If improvements fail to meet required conditions, the County is responsible for all costs necessary to bring the property into compliance.

This proposal recommends terminating the lease for the Forestry Camp and relocating the Department of Public Safety administrative offices to the Government Center campus. The relocation aligns with the Board of County Commissioners' broader strategy to maximize the use of county-owned facilities, reduce operating costs, and deliver services in a more efficient, coordinated, and customer-friendly manner.

Walker Architects has submitted a summary of recommended renovations to accommodate Public Safety operations at the Government Center. The proposed work includes renovation of an approximately 2,500-square-foot facility located at 310 School Street. The assessment outlines existing building conditions, required upgrades, and a comprehensive budget framework intended to support



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leadership-level decision-making. The objective is to ensure the County invests prudently in a safe, durable, and code-compliant facility that fully supports Public Safety administrative functions.

Walker Architects provided an estimated project cost range of \$500,000 to \$725,000. County staff are actively pursuing grant funding opportunities and evaluating cost-reduction options to minimize the County's financial impact.

This request is for the BoCC to direct staff to work with the Interim County Attorney to explore the County's options to terminate the lease and bring back a recommendation to the board..