



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, April 21, 2026

4. Requested Action:
Provide direction to staff to acquire or terminate the lease for the State of Florida for the Levy County Forestry Camp.

- 5. Cost & Funding Source:**
Cost Estimates listed below

6. Justification of Request:
On Tuesday, February 17, 2026, the BoCC directed staff to work with the Interim County Attorney to explore the County's options for both acquiring and terminating the lease for the State of Florida for the Levy County Forestry Camp. Michele Stevens from the Division of State Lands Bureau of Public Land Administration has provided the following options to the BoCC:

From: Stevens, Michele A <Michele.Stevens@FloridaDEP.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 8:29 AM
To: arinaudo@levydps.com; Mary-Ellen Harper <harper-mary-ellen@levycounty.org>; mharrell@levydps.com; Maintenance Director <partin-doug@levycounty.org>; Kari Bastow <bastow-kari@levycounty.org>; Thomas Strom <strom-thomas@levycounty.org>
Cc: Michaelson, Raelene <Raelene.Michaelson@FloridaDEP.gov>
Subject: RE: Levy County Work Camp/Public Safety - Lease 4701

Good morning, Alesha,

I can help address your questions below.

1. If the County is interested in releasing the lease, there is a process for that. I have attached an application that can be submitted for that request. The process includes noticing to all state agencies for interest. If a state agency is interested in the parcel, we can cancel your lease and enter into a new lease with another agency. If no agency interest, we will offer the property for sale by sealed bids. Levy County will be responsible for the lease until either released or sold. No fees associated with the release.
2. The above also pertains to paragraph 28 of the lease as well as natural termination of the lease.
3. If the County is interested in acquisition, and there is no interest from state agencies during the noticing process described above in number 1, an appraisal is completed for the value of the property. If the appraised value is under 500K, we can directly negotiate with the county. If value is over 500K, the county can participate in the bid process, highest bidder wins.

Hope this is helpful if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Best regards,



Michele Stevens, CGB, CPM
Division of State Lands
Bureau of Public Land
Administration
Office: 850-245-2739

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Estimated Cost of Option 1: Release the Lease

- There is no fee associated with releasing the lease.
- Section 28 of the lease, Surrender of Premises, provides that upon termination or expiration of the lease that..."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."

The cost, if any, to bring the property into compliance will not be known until a representative of the Division of State Lands conducts an onsite inspection. The property does have repair and maintenance needs. Attached is a quote from Gary Southard Construction to weather-tight the buildings at the Work Camp/Public Safety Complex. Estimated Cost: \$48,500.00 if the state deems that making the buildings weather-tight is bringing the building into compliance. The state could determine that additional repairs at an added expense are required, however they will not conduct an onsite inspection unless the BoCC moves to terminate the lease.

- Fiscal Year 2025 utilities for the proposed Public Safety Building at the Government Center were \$11,647.34. Fiscal Year 2025 utilities at the Levy County Forestry Camp were \$61,830.15. Relocating Public Safety to the Government Center would result in an estimated utility savings of \$50,182.51.
- Maintaining the Levy County Forestry Camp property is a large undertaking during the summer requiring an estimated 700 hours annually. The property at the Government Center is already being maintained. Relocating Public Safety to the Government Center would result in an estimated savings in salary of \$14,000. Alternatively, the hours attributed to maintaining the Levy County Forestry Camp can be reassigned for other BoCC work.
- 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 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.

- Levy County has been awarded a CBDG Disaster Recovery Grant from Florida Commerce for \$294,500 to renovate the building for use by Public Safety.



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Option 2: Natural Termination of the Lease

- Same prices as above except that costs will be continued annually through the expiration of the lease on December 14, 2062.

Option 3: Acquisition of the Property

The following is the valuation of the property as listed on the Levy County Property Appraiser's Web Site.

▣ Valuation

	2026 Preliminary Summary
Building Value	\$0
Extra Features Value	\$0
Market Land Value	\$206,720
Ag Land Value	\$206,720
Just (Market) Value	\$206,720
Assessed Value	\$206,720
Exempt Value	\$206,720
Taxable Value	\$0
Save Our Homes Benefit	\$0
Previous Year Value	\$206,720



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