



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
Executive Action Summary

Budget & Finance - Attachment 4

**APPROVED**  
**JUNE 12, 2026**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Committee Name:** Budget & Finance

**Date:** June 12, 2026

**Agenda Item:** Sale of Property – 20689 Marcellus Highway, Decatur, Michigan – Newton House

Information

Review

Action

**Resolution:**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University hereby authorizes the Administration to sell the real property located at 20689 Marcellus Highway, Decatur, MI, upon such terms and conditions as may be acceptable to the President or the President’s designee.

**Recommendation:**

The Trustee Committee on Budget & Finance recommends that the Board of Trustees authorize the sale of real property at 20689 Marcellus Highway, Decatur, Michigan, commonly known as the Newton House.

**Prior Action by BOT:** Not applicable.

**Responsible Officers:**

Kenneth J. McFarlane, Associate President for Strategic Infrastructure Planning and Facilities

Barbara Kranz, Assistant Provost and Executive Director, Institutional Space Planning and Management

**Summary:**

The property located at 20689 Marcellus Highway in Decatur, Michigan, was gifted to the university in 1942 as part of the larger 580-acre Fred Russ Experimental Forest for use by Forestry/AgBioResearch. The disposition is limited to the Newton House, the university will retain the Fred Russ Experimental Forest as integral to the research of Forestry/AgBioResearch. Since January 1980, MSU has leased the property to the Cass County Historical Society (CCHS) for operation of the Newton House at a nominal rate of \$1.00 per year.

AgBioResearch has not established a connection between the Newton House and the university's core missions of education, research, or outreach. The Office of General Counsel has determined there are no legal restrictions preventing the sale of the property.

**Background Information:**

The Cass County Historical Society (CCHS) is currently responsible for all operations and maintenance of Newton House. The facility has a deferred maintenance backlog that CCHS is seeking to address through grant funding, which requires ownership of the property. CCHS has requested approval to purchase the property to make the organization eligible for grant funding opportunities.

**Source of Funds:**

Proceeds of the sale would benefit the Russ Forest endowment accounts identified by the donor at the time the property was gifted to the university.

**Resource Impact:**

Selling Newton House allows the university to disinvest in a property that is not aligned with its core mission of education and research and eliminate any associated deferred maintenance.

## Newton House

20689 Marcellus Highway, Decatur, MI



June 12, 2026

