

Stark County Board Of Developmental Disabilities May 26, 2026, Board Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

A meeting of the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities was held on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at 2950 Whipple Avenue NW, Canton, Ohio. President Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang called the Board Meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Roll Call

Board Members:	<u>Present:</u> President Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang Recording Secretary Cindi Sutter Kathy Catazaro Perry Maria Heege Crystal Waters	<u>Absent:</u> Vice President Jennifer Moff (Excused) Carmelita Smith (Absent)
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In Memoriam

A moment of silence was observed in memory of individuals served by the agency who passed away since the last meeting:

Kristi Vogt, 54, passed away on April 21, 2026. Kristi was involved in Special Olympics, where she won a gold medal in swimming. She also received services from the SSA Department. Joseph Cooper, 71, passed away on April 23, 2026. He received services from the SSA Department. Dakota Daniels, 20, passed away on April 25, 2026. Hereceived services from the SSA Department. Michael Barnes, 57, passed away on April 29, 2026. He received services from the SSA Department. Lavern Miller, 63, passed away on May 2, 2026. She received services from the SSA Department.

Minutes of the Previous Board Meeting

President Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang requested a motion to approve the minutes from the April 28, 2026, Board Meeting. Maria Heege moved for approval and Kathy Catazaro Perry seconded the motion. The Board duly adopted the minutes.

Recognition of Retirees

Connie Poulton introduced retirees Dona Roush and Carolyn Wyatt. Transportation Manager Lowell Byrd recognized both employees for their years of service and dedication to the agency, students, and families served. He noted that Carolyn Wyatt began employment with the agency in 2000 and Dona Roush in 2002, representing a combined 50 years of service. Mr. Byrd thanked both retirees for their commitment and wished them well in retirement.

Public Speaks

None.

President's Report

Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang recognized and thanked the agency's school teams for their dedication, flexibility, and commitment throughout the school year, particularly during the transition of Southgate students to Eastgate and Whipple-Dale. She expressed appreciation to staff at both buildings for their hospitality and support throughout the transition process.

Dr. Falvo Lang stated that staff remained focused on the students served and emphasized that the success of the year reflected the care and commitment demonstrated by employees each day. She also shared her excitement for the upcoming graduation ceremony and reflected on her daughter Olivia's Southgate graduation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, Dr. Falvo Lang referenced House Bill 939, which proposes state funding for 50 percent of Early Intervention services. She thanked State Representative Salvo for helping lead the effort and noted the importance of continued advocacy for the developmental disabilities system.

This concluded the President's Report.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Bill Green provided an update regarding the "Funding the Future" initiatives previously discussed during Board training. He explained that statewide workgroups continue refining the ten concepts developed to address long-term sustainability within Ohio's county board system.

Mr. Green discussed House Bill 939, which would provide state funding for 50 percent of Early Intervention services. He noted that the proposal would free local dollars for additional home and community-based services if adopted, though the legislation faces a lengthy process due to the estimated \$44 million annual cost to the state. Mr. Green also reviewed ongoing discussions related to shared services among county boards through Councils of Governments. He explained that statewide collaboration efforts currently generate approximately \$20 million in savings, stated that county boards continue exploring additional opportunities for regional partnerships, and shared staffing models. Additional discussion focused on statewide proposals regarding Medicaid waiver match responsibilities and the possibility of capping local county board contributions toward waiver services. Mr. Green explained that such proposals are intended to create greater financial predictability and sustainability for county boards.

Mr. Green further reported that the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities has approached several county boards currently experiencing fiscal distress regarding regionalized waiver administration models. He noted concerns throughout the statewide system regarding the preservation of local governance and administrative authority over services. Mr. Green also shared information regarding future surveys that will seek feedback from board members, families, providers, and individuals served regarding financial sustainability, statewide consistency, regional collaboration, and the future role of county boards.

Finally, Mr. Green discussed the Ohioans Against Property Taxes initiative, and the potential impact of the elimination of property taxes could have on public services throughout Ohio. He explained that organizations across the state have formed a coalition to educate the public regarding the importance of property tax funding for schools, county boards, emergency services, libraries, parks, and other community services.

This concluded the Superintendent's Report.

Committee/Department/Other Reports

1. Finance Committee – Minutes in Board packet
Tentative Next Meeting: June 15, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.
2. Personnel Committee – Minutes in Board packet
Tentative Next Meeting: June 18, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.
3. Ethics Council – No Meeting in March
Next Meeting: June 23, 2026, at 5:45 p.m.

Old/New Business

None.

First Reading of Board Policies

Connie Poulton, Director of Human Resources, presented the following policies for first reading:

- Policy 4.14 Layoff of Management Employees – Reviewed
- Policy 4.19 Use of Social Media – Reviewed
- Policy 4.42 Visitors – Reviewed
- Policy 4.53 Criminal Offense – Reviewed

Financials and Board Resolutions**Resolution 05-21-26: Operating Fund #071**

A. Two Payrolls for April:	\$1,387,194.01
B. Bills for Payment in April:	<u>\$1,345,389.85</u>
TOTAL:	\$2,732,583.86

Maria Heege moved for approval. Kathy Catazaro Perry seconded.

Discussion:

Leigh Donatella, CFO/Business Manager, presented the April 2026 financial report. She reported total revenues for April of approximately \$3.6M, including \$254,821 in local revenues, \$397,783 in state revenues, and \$2.9M in federal revenues.

Total expenditures for April were approximately \$2.7M, consisting of two payrolls totaling \$1.4M, benefit expenses of \$886,520, and other operating expenses of approximately \$458,870.

Ms. Donatella reported year-to-date revenues of approximately \$7.7M and year-to-date expenditures of approximately \$19.2M, representing approximately 25 percent of the annual budget. She noted that the Board had approximately \$38.5M remaining in available budget authority and approximately \$4.9M in unencumbered cash at the end of April.

The Board reviewed payroll and non-payroll expenditures and duly adopted Resolution 05-21-26.

Resolution 05-22-26: Resolution to Recommend to the Board of County Commissioners the Sale of West Stark Center

Maria Heege moved for approval. Crystal Waters seconded.

Discussion:

Administration recommended declaring the West Stark Center property no longer necessary to support agency services and functions and recommended notifying the Stark County Board of Commissioners to begin the process for disposition of the property. The property includes a 32,072-square-foot facility situated on approximately 7.89 acres. The facility has been leased to a private provider since adult services were privatized in 2018, and the current lease expires June 30, 2027. An independent appraisal completed in January 2026 valued the property at approximately \$2.78M.

The Board duly adopted.

Resolution 05-23-26: Resolution to Approve the SCEPTA Labor Agreement

Kathy Catazaro Perry moved for approval. Maria Heege seconded.

Discussion:

Connie Poulton presented the proposed three-year labor agreement with SCEPTA effective June 1, 2026, through May 31, 2029. Ms. Poulton reported that the agreement was ratified by union membership on May 20, 2026.

The agreement includes wage increases of 3.5 percent in year one, 3 percent in year two, and 3 percent in year three. Ms. Poulton also explained that employee health insurance contributions will increase from 12 percent to 13 percent and that longevity pay categories will increase by \$0.10 per category.

The Board duly adopted.

Resolution 05-24-26: Resolution to Approve Rolling the Paid Lunch Equivalent into Non-Represented Employees' Hourly Rate

Maria Heege moved for approval. Crystal Waters seconded.

Discussion:

Connie Poulton explained that the resolution impacts SSAs, Provider Compliance staff, Investigative Agents, and PAS employees. Eligible employees will have the option to incorporate the value of the paid lunch equivalent into their base hourly rate based upon historical data reflecting approximately 93 paid lunch hours annually, equating to approximately \$1.13 per hour.

Employees will have one year to elect whether to incorporate the amount into their base wage or continue participating in the paid lunch program. Newly hired employees after June 1, 2026, will automatically receive the adjusted base rate and will no longer participate in the paid lunch equivalent program.

The Board duly adopted.

Resolution 05-25-26: Resolution to Approve the Replacement of the Focus 200 Panel at Southgate

Cindi Sutter moved for approval. Kathy Catazaro Perry seconded.

Discussion:

Administration recommended replacement of the Focus 200 security system panel at Rebecca Stallman Southgate School at a cost not to exceed \$28,644.98. Tim Beard explained that the original system was installed when the building opened and replacement parts are no longer available. The project includes upgraded security panels, sensors, and related equipment.

The Board duly adopted.

Resolution 05-26-26: Resolution to Approve the Purchase of an Uninterrupted Power Supply

Maria Heege moved for approval. Kathy Catazaro Perry seconded.

Discussion:

Brandon Haney explained that the agency's current uninterrupted power supply system in the data center is approximately 15 years old and replacement parts are no longer available. The proposed replacement system will provide battery backup protection for servers and critical technology infrastructure in the event of power outages or voltage fluctuations. The cost will not exceed \$40,752.

The Board duly adopted.

Resolution 05-27-26: Resolution to Approve the 2026 Computer Refresh

Maria Heege moved for approval. Crystal Waters seconded.

Discussion:

Brandon Haney presented a recommendation to purchase 52 replacement laptops as part of the agency's annual computer refresh program. The devices will primarily replace out-of-warranty SSA and administrative equipment. The cost will not exceed approximately \$127,000.

The Board duly adopted.

Second Reading of Board Policies Presented for Adoption

Connie Poulton, Director of Human Resources, provided the Board with an overview of the policies slated for second reading:

- Policy 1.03 Meetings of the Board – Reviewed
- Policy 4.24 Delays, Early Dismissals, and Closing Announcements – Revised
- Policy 4.50 Cell Phones, Smart Phones, Tablets and Personal Devices – Reviewed
- Policy 4.58 Fitness for Duty – Reviewed
- Policy 5.26 School Age Excess Costs – Revised

Resolution 05-28-26: Board Policies for Second Reading

Maria Heege moved for approval. Crystal Waters seconded. The Board duly adopted.

Adjournment

Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang requested a motion to adjourn. Maria Heege moved to adjourn and Crystal Waters seconded. The Board Meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.