

**STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES**

President Hamameh called the meeting to order at 9:42 a.m. on Friday, January 23, 2026, in the Boardroom at the Michael Franck building in Lansing, Michigan.

Commissioners present:

David C. Anderson, Treasurer	Elizabeth A. Kitchen-Troop
Hon. Karl A. Barr	Suzanne C. Larsen, Secretary
Erika L. Bryant, President-Elect	Joshua A. Lerner
Aaron V. Burrell	James W. Low
Alena Clark	Ashley E. Lowe
Hon. Ponce Clay	Elizabeth L. Luckenbach
Patrick J. Crowley	Silvia A. Mansoor
Sherrie L. Detzler	Gerrow D. “Gerry” Mason
Robert A. Easterly	Thomas P. Murray, III
Jacob G. Eccleston	Nicholas M. Ohanesian
Nicole A. Evans	Hon. David A. Perkins
Lisa J. Hamameh, President	Douglas B. Shapiro
Claudnyse D. Holloman	Hon. Kristen D. Simmons
Thomas H. Howlett, Vice-President	Lisa W. Timmons

Commissioners absent:

Darnell Barton	James L. Liggins, Jr.
Hon. B. Chris Christenson	Gerard V. Mantese
Tanisha Davis	

Consent Agenda

The Board received the minutes from the November 21, 2025, Board meeting.
The Board received the minutes from the November 5, 2025, Executive Committee meeting.
The Board received the minutes from the December 10, 2025, Executive Committee meeting.
The Board received the recent activities of the president.
The Board received the recent activities of the executive director.
The Board received the FY 2026 financial reports through November 2025.
The Board received a memo regarding a request for MSUFCU Credit Card Limit Increase.
The Board received Client Protection Fund Claims.
The Board received Unauthorized Practice of Law Claims.
The Board received Military & Veterans Law Section Proposed Bylaw Revisions.

President Hamameh asked if any items needed to be removed from the consent agenda. There were none.

A motion was offered to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded and approved.

Report from Auditors

Treasurer Anderson introduced Greg Soule from Andrews Hooper Pavlik (AHP). Mr. Soule reviewed the FY 2025 Audit Report with the Board, which was also included in the materials provided to the Board.

Mr. Soule met with the Finance and Audit Committee in December to review the results of the audit. AHP conducted a clean and unmodified audit, which required no audit adjustments and had

no major issues. He extended his gratitude to the finance department at the State Bar who made the audit process smooth.

President and Executive Director's Report: Lisa Hamameh, President and Peter Cunningham, Executive Director

President's Report

President Hamameh highlighted many recent events, which included several holiday parties. She shared that she was warmly welcomed by all groups and all were thankful for her attendance.

President Hamameh shared that she attended the We the People Competition Finals in Lansing earlier this month. The event was great and well put together.

Board Vacancy Appointment

President Hamameh informed the Board that Danielle Walton recently changed jobs and is now working in Genesee County. As she is no longer working in Oakland County, she cannot continue to represent Oakland County as a Commissioner.

President Hamameh reported that the Executive Committee voted to recommend Moheeb H. Murray to be appointed to fill the remainder of the term vacated by former Commissioner Walton. She shared Mr. Murray's qualifications with the Board and reported that all the current District I Commissioners were consulted and voiced no opposition to Mr. Murray's appointment.

President Hamameh made a motion that the Board approve the appointment of Moheeb H. Murray to fill the current vacancy in District I. The motion was seconded. After a brief discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Supreme Court Commissions Update

Justice For All (JFA) Commission

Mr. Cunningham provided an update of the proposed licensed paralegal pilot program. He shared that, in consultation with the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System (IAALS), the Steering Committee has determined that these new licensees will be referred to as "legal practitioners."

The Steering Committee is expected to submit their final recommendations later this month for the Court's consideration, with potential adoption by the Court coming later this spring. The current goal is for the exams for the new legal practitioner licenses to be held in September of 2026. State Bar staff will be conducting the character & fitness review, and our IT department will build the online application. The new legal practitioners will go to a sub-Committee of the Board of Law Examiners, instead of SBM Character & Fitness Committees. To ensure that this pilot program is not funded by attorney license fees, the JFA Commission, through the State Court Administrative Office, will grant the State Bar funds to cover the State Bar's costs to build the application portal and compile the character and fitness files for applicants. The estimated cost for the initial phase is \$71,900.

Commission on Fairness and Public Trust

President-Elect Bryant shared that the DEI Commission has been renamed to the Commission on Fairness and Public Trust, per Administrative Order 2022-01. The strategic plan for the Commission has been updated, as well as the webpage, which can be found by accessing the Michigan Supreme

Court's website. The next meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2026. Additional updates are expected in late spring, which will likely include programming.

Staff Updates

Ms. Thrush introduced Mr. Brian Burgess, Director of Research and Analytics. Mr. Burgess has relocated and is now working full-time in Michigan. Mr. Cunningham introduced Amy Owens, Senior Executive Assistant, who began in December. Ms. Owens will be assistant Mr. Cunningham and the Board of Commissioners. Lastly, Mr. Cunningham introduced Ms. Felicia Thomas, Assistant Executive Director, who was hired to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Kathy Gardner. All three new employees are attending their first Board meeting today.

Mr. Cunningham announced that SBM has hired a fractional Chief Informational Officer (CIO) to help implement the recommendations in last year's audit of SBM's IT services.

SBM Program Presentation – Lawyer Services

Ms. Robin Eagleson, Director of Lawyer Services, reviewed the work of the Lawyer Services team and the SBM staff members who make this team. Ms. Eagleson described the numerous programs that the Lawyer Services department handles, such as the call center, planning and executing events, and preferred partner programs.

Closed Session

A motion was offered and seconded that the Board enter into a closed discussion to receive and discuss privileged attorney-client communication. The motion was approved.

The Board went into closed session at 11:16 a.m.

The Board returned to open session at 1:10 p.m.

Representative Assembly (RA) Report: Nicole A. Evans, Chairperson

Chair Evans shared that the RA is working hard to fill vacancies around the state. There were 38 vacancies, and 18 vacancies have been filled. The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April 25, 2026, in Lansing. Chair Evans provided a reminder that the comment period for Administrative Order 2024, Rule 7 regarding how vacancies are addressed ends February 1, 2026.

Young Lawyers Section (YLS) Report: Jacob Eccleston, Chairperson

Commissioner Eccleston provided the report for the Young Lawyers Section. Mr. Eccleston shared that the section will host their Annual Summit event on March 27, 2026. Several Commissioners will be speaking at this event where the section will present their annual awards. Additional information will be placed on social media.

The Annual BOC/YLS retreat will take place on May 16, 2026, at High Kaliber in Okemos. The annual ZooLAWgical event will be held at the Detroit Zoo on July 25, 2026.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEES

Public Policy: Erika L. Bryant, Chairperson

President-Elect Bryant provided the report for the Public Policy committee.

Court Rules

1. ADM File No. 2025-03: Proposed Amendments of MCR 1.111

The proposed amendment of MCR 1.111 would expand free foreign language interpretation services to civil cases as suggested by several commenters on the Court's initial proposal in this ADM file, which was adopted by the Court with some revisions. The initial proposal only contemplated free interpretation services in criminal cases. The Court is now interested in receiving additional comments regarding its proposal to expand free interpretation services to civil cases. Please note that subrule (F)(5), which would be struck under this proposal, reflects the version of subrule (F)(5) adopted by the Court in its initial proposal that becomes effective on January 1, 2026.

A motion was offered and seconded to support ADM File No. 2025-03. The motion was approved.

2. ADM File No. 2022-31: Proposed Amendment of MCR 2.106

The proposed amendment of MCR 2.106 would update the definition of "newspaper" for notice by publication. See MCL 691.1051.

A motion was offered and seconded to support ADM File 2022-31. The motion was approved.

3. ADM File No. 2022-34: Proposed Amendment of MCR 3.992

The proposed amendment of MCR 3.992 would require courts to consider a motion for postjudgment relief when the underlying order was entered following a referee's recommendation and before the time for filing for judicial review under MCR 3.991 has elapsed. See MCR 3.991(A)(3).

A motion was offered and seconded to support ADM File 2022-34 and recommend that the Court give consideration to the concerns raised by the Children's Law Section. The motion was approved.

4. ADM File No. 2023-09: Proposed Amendment of MCR 6.106

The proposed amendment of MCR 6.106 would align the rule with MCL 780.66(6), which addresses the return of deposited percent bonds.

A motion was offered and seconded to support ADM File 2023-09 with the amendments proposed by the Criminal Jurisprudence & Practice Committee. The motion was approved.

5. ADM File No. 2024-10: Proposed Amendment of MCR 6.429

The proposed amendment of MCR 6.429 would reorganize and update the rule to clarify that a court must afford parties an opportunity to object to its sua sponte correction of a Judgment of Sentence and that the parties must raise any objections when that opportunity is provided.

A motion was offered and seconded to support ADM File 2024-10 with further amendments to MCR 6.429(A) to read: An objection to the corrected sentence may, but need not, be presented to the court at the time that the court provides an opportunity to be heard. The motion was approved.

6. **ADM File No. 2024-02: Proposed Amendment of MCR 7.215**

The proposed amendment of MCR 7.215 would clarify that in cases where the Court of Appeals remands a case to the trial court, the Court of Appeals will review the decisions made on remand, and in criminal and termination of parental rights cases, the parties are afforded the right to supplemental briefing.

A motion was offered and seconded to support ADM File 2024-02 with the following amendments:

- (1) Amend MCR 7.215(H)(2)(b) to read: “file with the Court of Appeals all orders entered on remand within seven days of ~~entry by the trial court~~ receipt by the party.”
- (2) Amend MCR 7.215(H)(2)(c) to read: “ensure the transcripts of all proceedings on remand are filed in the trial court and the Court of Appeals within ~~24~~ seven days of the receipt of the transcript by the party after completion of the proceedings.”
- (3) Amend the proposed third paragraph of MCR 7.215(H)(2) to allow all appellants to file supplemental briefs.

The motion was approved.

7. **ADM File No. 2024-30/2024-39: Proposed Amendment of MCR 7.306**

The proposed amendment of MCR 7.306 would clarify some previously-adopted amendments and would allow new original actions relating to recounts or proposed recounts of the ballots cast in a presidential election to be filed in this Court as a means of reducing any judicial-related barriers that may interfere with the outcome of such a recount or proposed recount.

Recommendation was made to take no position on ADM File 2024-30/2024-39.

8. **ADM File No. 2025-37: Proposed Amendment of MCR 7.312**

The proposed amendment of MCR 7.312 would establish rule-based briefing deadlines in leave granted and MOAA cases where it appears necessary to appoint counsel for the indigent defendant.

A motion was offered and seconded to support ADM File 2025-37. The motion was approved.

9. **ADM File No. 2022-49 - Proposed Amendments of MCR 8.120 and BLE Rule 5**

The proposed amendment of MCR 8.120 would allow law students and recent law graduates to: (1) staff certain legal programs that provide assistance to indigent persons in civil matters under the supervision by a member of the state bar, and (2) appear on behalf of indigent persons in all Michigan courts. The proposal would also expand the definition of a “recent law graduate” from one year to 15 months. The proposed amendment of BLE Rule 5 would expand the qualifications for a special certificate of qualification to practice law.

A motion was offered and seconded to support ADM File 2022-49 with two amendments:

- (1) striking “Individuals Already Barred” from the title of MCR 8.120; and
- (2) amending the definition of “recent law graduate” from a person who graduated from an ABA-accredited law school within the last 15 months to within the last 18 months

The motion was approved.

10. **ADM File No. 2024-19 - Proposed Amendments of MCR 9.108 and 9.110**

The proposed amendments of MCR 9.108 and 9.110 would address mid-term member vacancies and would eliminate the 2-full term officer limit for the Attorney Grievance Commission and the Attorney Discipline Board.

Recommendation was made to take no position on ADM File 2024-19.

11. **Legal Services Corporation Non-Fee Generating Cases Letter**

A motion was offered and seconded that this letter is *Keller*-permissible. The motion was approved.

A motion was offered and seconded to support renewing the terms as proposed in the memo included with the Board materials. The motion was approved.

Legislation

1. **HB 5452** Criminal procedure; sentencing; sunset on certain costs that may be imposed upon criminal conviction; modify.

A motion was offered and seconded that this legislation is *Keller*-permissible. The motion was approved.

An electronic vote will be conducted by the Board on January 30, 2026.

Strategic Planning and Engagement Committee (SPEC): Thomas H. Howlett, Chairperson Vice-President Howlett presented two preferred partner programs: File Vine is a case management software program, and Incogni allows a user to search for personal data on the Internet and then helps to remove the data from the web.

A motion was offered and seconded to support the preferred partner programs as presented in the Board materials. The motion was approved.

Vice President Howlett provided an update on the Great Lakes Legal Conference (GLLC), which has been held on Mackinac Island at The Grand Hotel for the past 20 years. He shared that the workgroup has met many times over the past year to discuss the future of the conference. Commissioner Lowe explained that the workgroup reviewed the three components of the GLLC and how each could look in the future.

Mr. Howlett made a motion, which was seconded, that included:

1. The creation of a Board retreat in the Fall of 2026
2. Consideration of BLF options (which would likely include a one-day summit, but details are unknown at this time.)
3. Cancellation of the contract with the Grand Hotel (before the 2026 event begins)

The motion was approved.

Mr. Cunningham stated that Commissioners should look for an email from Ms. Owens which will include a survey of potential dates for the fall.

Marjory Raymer, Director of Communications, summarized the recent work of rebuilding the website. The deadline for proposals was earlier this month. SBM received bids from 35 vendors from across the country. SPEC has completed the triage phase of the project and there are currently 12 proposals being reviewed more thoroughly. The proposals range from \$57,000 to \$470,000, with an average of around \$370,000. The committee anticipates bringing a budget amendment for consideration to the Board in April along with a possible contract for approval.

Finance and Audit: David C. Anderson, Chairperson

Financial Report

Treasurer Anderson shared that revenue and expenses are favorable to budget at this time. The number of Emeritus members continues to decline, and the number of new members is ahead of last year.

Treasurer Anderson provided an update on the Cannabis Law Section. The Section has requested a loan of \$11,089.24 to satisfy their current debt. This will cover their outstanding debt to the venue of their annual section meeting, as well as \$1,250 in administrator fees.

A motion was made and seconded to loan the Section this amount. The motion was approved.

Mr. Cunningham, Treasurer Anderson, and Mr. Day, Director of Outreach, will be meeting with leaders of the section about the section's ability to repay.

Professional Standards: Suzanne C. Larsen, Chairperson

Secretary Larsen thanked the Commissioners for approving the Consent Agenda for CPF and UPL. She also encouraged members to review the materials more closely and bring up any questions.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PROFESSION

Comments or questions from Commissioners

Commissioner Ohanesian offered a template for others to write/support the Representative Assembly reforms and rule amendments which are open for comments.

Comments or questions from the public

None.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.