

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

President Hamameh called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. on Friday, March 6, 2026, in the Boardroom at the Michael Franck building in Lansing, Michigan.

Commissioners present:

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| Hon. Karl A. Barr | Suzanne C. Larsen, Secretary |
| Darnell Barton | Joshua A. Lerner |
| Erika L. Bryant, President-Elect | James L. Liggins, Jr. |
| Aaron V. Burrell | James W. Low |
| Alena Clark | Ashley E. Lowe |
| Patrick J. Crowley | Elizabeth L. Luckenbach |
| Tanisha Davis | Silvia A. Mansoor |
| Sherrie L. Detzler | Gerard V. Mantese |
| Robert A. Easterly | Moheeb H. Murray |
| Jacob G. Eccleston | Thomas P. Murray, III |
| Nicole A. Evans | Nicholas M. Ohanesian |
| Lisa J. Hamameh, President | Hon. David A. Perkins |
| Claudnyse D. Holloman | Douglas B. Shapiro |
| Thomas H. Howlett, Vice-President | Hon. Kristen D. Simmons |
| Elizabeth A. Kitchen-Troop | Lisa W. Timmons |

Commissioners absent:

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| David C. Anderson, Treasurer | Hon. Ponce Clay |
| Hon. B. Chris Christenson | Gerrow D. "Gerry" Mason |

Consent Agenda

The Board received the minutes from the January 23, 2026, Board meeting.
The Board received the minutes from the January 7, 2026, Executive Committee meeting.
The Board received the recent activities of the president.
The Board received the recent activities of the executive director.

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.

Oath of Office

President Hamameh administered the oath of office to new Commissioner, Moheeb Murray.

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

President's Report

President Hamameh highlighted recent activities, including:

- Attendance at the National Conference of Bar Presidents in Texas, along with President-Elect Bryant and Mr. Cunningham.
- Participation in a Professionalism in Action event held at Wayne State University Law School, noting strong SBM representation at the event.

- Attendance at the Michigan Asian Pacific American Lunar New Year Dinner in Farmington Hills.

President Hamameh also observed that the first half of the SBM presidency tends to be slower and expressed anticipation for increased engagement in the coming months.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Cunningham provided an update of the Justice For All's proposed legal practitioner pilot program. The first round of exams, previously expected in the fall of 2026, has been postponed until April 2027. In addition, The Justice For All Commission has approved funding to cover the State Bar's startup costs, ensuring that funds from attorney license fees are not used for the pilot program.

Mr. Cunningham indicated that registrations for several upcoming Bar functions have recently opened, including:

- Brunch for Bars (April)
- Michigan Legal Milestone dedication (April)
- 50-year Golden Celebration (May)
- Great Lakes Legal Conference (June)

Robin Eagleson, Director of Lawyer Services, reported that SBM has partnered with Spotlight Media to relaunch the Bar's monthly podcast after a six-month hiatus. The first episode of the MI Lawyer Podcast will feature Chief Justice Megan Cavanaugh and is expected to launch in April.

Mr. Cunningham shared that the Bar's website will be offline on March 19 for server updates and security enhancements, with completion expected within one day (possibly extending into March 20). The outage will primarily impact eCommerce functions, including license renewal and payments. There is a communication plan in place to inform members of the scheduled outage.

The license renewal season concluded last week with the suspension of members who had not yet completed the renewal process. The number of licensed attorneys is down by about 200 members from the same point in 2025, but more new attorneys have joined the bar in the past year than in the previous year.

Staff Updates

Ms. Felicia Thomas, Assistant Executive Director, introduced Kennedy Blakemore, who will work primarily with the Unauthorized Practice of Law Department as a legal assistant. Ms. Blakemore recently graduated from Michigan State with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. She intends on applying to law school.

Mr. Cunningham acknowledged the passing of Nancy Brown in late January. Most recently, Nancy served as an interim IT Director as well as a senior management advisor. She started working at the State Bar in 1976 and would have celebrated her 50th anniversary later this year. Nancy was integral in the Bar. She was a visionary and was involved in almost every department over the past 50 years working on projects or ideas. Nancy dedicated her life and work to the State Bar and will be dearly missed.

There are multiple vacancies that the State Bar is looking to fill. Recent staff departures have created vacancies for the following positions: Editor of the Michigan Bar Journal, UPL Counsel, and

Director of Outreach. Additionally, Human Resources Director, Jeanette Socia, has announced that she will be retiring in July.

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

Chair Evans reminded the Board of the next RA meeting which will take place on Saturday, April 25, 2026, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Lansing.

The deadline for nominations and awards is Saturday, March 14, 2026. Currently, there are three nominations for the Unsung Hero Award and zero nominations for the Michael Franck Award.

Ms. Evans anticipates as many as five proposals to be on the agenda for the April meeting.

There is an expungement clinic being held today at Cooley Law School. There is also an upcoming Road to Restoration Clinic for driver's license restoration. There will be members from the Attorney General's Office, a Secretary of State mobile unit, and attorneys available to assist members of the public.

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

Commissioner Eccleston provided the report for the Young Lawyers Section.

Last month, YLS held an event for all law schools where someone from Character & Fitness of the State Bar and someone from the Board of Law Examiners conduct a question & answer session with law students. It was well attended and well received.

On March 27, the Young Lawyers will hold their annual Summit at the Henry Ford Museum. Mr. Eccleston encouraged Commissioners to spread the message about this event. It is open to all lawyers and law students.

On Saturday, May 16, the annual BOC/YLS competition will take place at High Caliber in Okemos. The ZooLAWgical event will take place at the Detroit Zoom on Saturday, July 25, 2026.

Lastly, this year's NTAC event will take place November 6-8 in Detroit. There is always a need for volunteers to serve as judges for this event. Mr. Eccleston asked that Commissioners try to attend at least one session. There are already 12 teams signed up from across the country.

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. 2019-40 – Proposed Adoption of Administrative Order No. 2026-X, Proposed Recission of Administrative Order No. 2012-7, and Proposed Amendments of MCR 2.407 and 8.110**

Proposed Administrative Order No. 2026-X would clarify when, from where, and how a judicial officer may participate remotely. A related proposed amendment of MCR 2.407 would strike a reference to Administrative Order No. 2012-7 being suspended, and that administrative order would be rescinded. The proposed amendment of MCR 8.110 would authorize chief judges to require a judge's in-person or remote presence to perform work.

A motion was offered and seconded to support ADM File No. 2019-40 and underscore SBM's previous position that attorneys and parties should not be required to appear in person if the judicial officer is participating remotely in a proceeding. The motion was approved.

A motion was offered and seconded to authorize the Negligence Law Section to advocate its inconsistent position on ADM File No. 2019-40. The motion was approved.

2. ADM File No. 2024-08: Proposed Amendment of MCJC Canon 3

The proposed amendment of Canon 3 would clarify a judge's responsibility to not knowingly allow unauthorized broadcasting, televising, recording, or taking of photographs in or out of the courtroom during sessions of court or recesses between sessions.

A motion was offered and seconded to support ADM File 2024-08. The motion was approved.

Legislation

1. Executive Budget for the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission for the 2027-2028 Fiscal Year

Executive Budget for the Judiciary for the 2027-2028 Fiscal Year

A motion was offered and seconded that Executive Budgets for the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission and for the Judiciary for FY 2027-2028 are necessarily related to both the functioning of the courts and the availability of legal services and therefore *Keller*-permissible. The motion was approved.

A motion was offered and seconded to support the Executive Budget for the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission for Fiscal Year 2027. The motion was approved.

A motion was offered and seconded to support the Executive Budget for the Judiciary for Fiscal Year 2027. The motion was approved.

Other

1. MDOC Policy Directive 05.03.118(QQ)(8)

A motion was offered and seconded that MDOC Policy Directive 05.03.118(QQ)(8) is reasonably related to the availability of legal services and therefore *Keller*-permissible. The motion was approved.

A motion was offered and seconded to oppose the amendment to PD 05.03.118(QQ)(8) that prohibits incarcerated individuals from receiving hard cover books. The motion was approved.

Strategic Planning and Engagement Committee (SPEC): Thomas H. Howlett, Chairperson Marjory Raymer, Director of Communications, provided an update on the website rebuild. There were 37 proposals received, and they have narrowed the field down to two finalists. After talking with references and conducting follow-up meetings with the finalists, the next step will be to enter contract negotiations. The goal is to bring a final contract for consideration at the April Board meeting after the website subcommittee and the full SPEC Committee make recommendations.

Ms. Eagleson provided an update on the 2026 Board retreat. Based on results of the survey of the BOC, the dates of this year's retreat will be November 19-20. A location for the retreat has not been selected yet, but several hotels in the Traverse City region are under consideration.

Finance and Audit: David C. Anderson, Chairperson

In Mr. Anderson's absence, Mr. Cunningham reported that the Cannabis Law Section owes SBM \$11,089.24, as approved at the January Board meeting. Following discussions with section leadership, the following conditions were recommended:

- Full repayment, with interest, by November 1, 2026.
- Prior SBM approval for all section expenses until financial stability is restored, with monthly financial monitoring.
- Board review of section viability in FY 2027.

A motion was offered, seconded, and approved to adopt the recommendations.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PROFESSION

Comments or questions from Commissioners

None.

Comments or questions from the public

None.

Closed Session

A motion was offered and seconded that the Board enter into a closed discussion to consider attorney/client privileged communications. The motion was approved. The Board went into closed session at 11:12 a.m. The Board returned to open session at 1:13 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.