

STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

President Hamameh called the meeting to order at 8:38 a.m. on Friday, June 12, 2026, in the Grand Pavilion Room at the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, Michigan.

Commissioners present:

David C. Anderson, Treasurer
Hon. Karl A. Barr
Darnell Barton
Erika L. Bryant, President-Elect
Aaron V. Burrell
Hon. B. Chris Christenson
Alena Clark
Hon. Ponce Clay
Patrick J. Crowley
Tanisha Davis
Sherrie L. Detzler
Robert A. Easterly
Jacob G. Eccleston
Nicole A. Evans
Lisa J. Hamameh, President
Thomas H. Howlett, Vice-President

Elizabeth A. Kitchen-Troop
Suzanne C. Larsen, Secretary
Joshua A. Lerner
James L. Liggins, Jr.
James W. Low
Ashley E. Lowe
Elizabeth L. Luckenbach
Silvia A. Mansoor
Gerard V. Mantese
Moheeb H. Murray
Thomas P. Murray, Jr.
Gerrow D. "Gerry" Mason
Nicholas M. Ohanesian
Hon. David A. Perkins
Hon. Kristen D. Simmons
Lisa W. Timmons

Commissioners absent:

Claudnyse D. Holloman

Douglas B. Shapiro

Consent Agenda

The Board received the minutes from the April 24, 2026, Board meeting.
The Board received the minutes from the February 11, 2026, Executive Committee meeting.
The Board received the minutes from the April 13, 2026, 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 April 2026.
The Board received the Strategic Planning and Engagement Section Bylaw Amendments.

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

A motion was offered and approved to accept the consent agenda.

Upcoming Events

President Hamameh shared the link to the SBM Events Calendar and highlighted several upcoming events.

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

President's Report

President Hamameh highlighted recent activities since the last Board meeting and noted that outlying counties really appreciate attendance from the commissioners. President Hamamah asked if commissioners are invited that they do their best to attend.

Executive Director's Report

Michigan Supreme Court Commissions Updates

Justice For All Commission

Mr. Cunningham provided an update on the Legal Practitioner Pilot Program, noting its anticipated impact on the FY2027 budget. He reported that the court-appointed steering committee is finalizing its recommendations for a proposed pilot program, with implementation anticipated in 2027, pending Supreme Court approval. SBM staff continue to work with SCAO and the Justice for All Commission on development of the Character and Fitness portal and expansion of SBM's regulatory responsibilities. Current recommendations contemplate legal practitioners as affiliate members of the State Bar of Michigan, allowing the Board to set a license fee for legal practitioners up to the amount attorneys are charged.

2026 SBM Officer Election Update

President Hamameh provided an update on the officer election and announced the five candidate submissions: Aaron V. Burrell, Gerard V. Mantese, James W. Low and Joshua A. Lerner, Gerry Mason. President Hamameh noted that Gerry Mason is tentatively on the slate but will only be eligible if he is reappointed as a Commissioner by the Supreme Court prior to the July officer election.

2026 SBM Election Update

Amy Owens, Sr. Executive Assistant, provided an update on the SBM elections indicating out of 41,236 ballots sent out, 5,243 have been returned which is a 12.71% return rate.

Staff Updates

Director Cunningham introduced Katie Stanley, Director of Outreach and Engagement.

Closed Session

A motion was offered and approved that the Board enter a closed discussion to consider a proposed contract with Adna Technologies. The Board went into closed session at 8:58 a.m. The Board returned to open session at 9:22 a.m. A motion was offered and approved to approve the proposed contract with Adna Technologies.

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

Chair Evans reported that the first meeting of the Representative Assembly was held on April 25th in Lansing where the RA approved four proposals.

Chair Evans also congratulated Commissioner James L. Liggins for being selected to receive the Michael Franck Award from the Representative Assembly.

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

Mr. Eccleston thanked the BOC officers who attended the YLS vs BOC challenge and reported on recent events, including a Mother's Day legal resource event and a financial security seminar.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEES

Public Policy: Erika L. Bryant, President-Elect

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

Legislation

1. **HB 5281** (Harris) Financial institutions: other; third-party litigation funding transparency; provide for. Creates new act.

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

A motion was offered and approved with one opposition to oppose the legislation HB 5281 as drafted.

2. **Mandatory Minimums Legislation**

HB 5831 (Steele) Crimes: terrorism; penalties for acts of terrorism; modify. Amends sec. 543f of 1931 PA 328 (MCL 750.543f).

HB 5907 (St. Germaine) Criminal procedure: sentencing; mandatory sentencing for certain crimes in the vehicle code; require. Amends secs. 601b, 602a, 617 & 625 of 1949 PA 300 (MCL 257.601b et seq.).

HB 5908 (Hoadley) Criminal procedure: sentencing; mandatory sentencing for certain crimes in the riots act; require. Amends sec. 4 of 1968 PA 302 (MCL 752.544).

HB 5909 (Wozniak) Criminal procedure: sentencing; mandatory sentencing for certain crimes in the Medicaid false claim act; require. Amends sec. 6 of 1977 PA 72 (MCL 400.606).

HB 5910 (Wozniak) Criminal procedure: sentencing; mandatory sentencing for certain crimes in the social welfare act; require. Amends sec. 60 of 1939 PA 280 (MCL 400.60).

HB 5911 (Bruck) Criminal procedure: sentencing; mandatory sentencing for certain crimes in the identity theft act; require. Amends sec. 9 of 2004 PA 452 (MCL 445.69).

HB 5912 (Johnsen) Criminal procedure: sentencing; mandatory sentencing for certain crimes regarding contraband in jails; require. Amends secs. 2, 2a, 3 & 5 of 1981 PA 7 (MCL 801.262 et seq.).

HB 5913 (Johnsen) Criminal procedure: sentencing; mandatory sentencing for certain crimes regarding contraband in prisons; require. Amends secs. 1, 3, 3a & 5 of 1909 PA 17 (MCL 800.281 et seq.).

HB 5914 (Schuette) Criminal procedure: sentencing; mandatory sentencing for certain crimes in the public health code; require. Amends (See bill)

HB 5915 (Kuhn) Criminal procedure: sentencing; mandatory sentencing for certain crimes in the sex offender registration act; require. Amends sec. 9 of 1994 PA 295 (MCL 28.729).

HB 5916 (Kuhn) Criminal procedure: sentencing; mandatory sentencing for certain crimes in the revised judiciary act; require. Amends sec. 2950 of 1961 PA 236 (MCL 600.2950).

HB 5917 (Pavlov) Criminal procedure: sentencing; mandatory sentencing for certain crimes; require. Amends & repeals (See bill).

HB 5918 (Pavlov) Criminal procedure: sentencing guidelines; sentencing guidelines for certain crimes; update. Amends (See bill).

A motion was offered and approved that the legislation is *Keller*-permissible.

A motion was offered and approved with one abstention to oppose the legislation to the extent that the bills would limit judicial discretion by imposing a mandatory minimum sentence of incarceration.

3. **SB 909** (Chang) Civil procedure: remedies; wrongful imprisonment compensation act; modify evidence requirements. Amends secs. 2, 4, 5 & 7 of 2016 PA 343 (MCL 691.1752 et seq.).

A motion was offered and approved that the legislation is *Keller*-permissible.

A motion was offered and approved to support SB 909.

Strategic Planning and Engagement Committee (SPEC): Thomas H. Howlett, Vice President

Bar Journal Recommendations

Commissioner Lerner provided an analysis of the Michigan Bar Journal's operations and strategic value. He noted that the Net Promoter Score for the Michigan Bar Journal is zero, the increasing costs associated with mailing a print magazine, and the increasing preference among attorneys for digital communications. (Only 27% of new attorneys opt for print.) Based on this analysis, the Strategic Planning and Engagement Committee is making the following recommendations:

- Reduce frequency from 11 issues to 8 issues per year starting in January 2027 with one issue per year being mailed to all members.
- Require members to annually opt-in to receive the print version.
- Send the email/online version of the Michigan Bar Journal to all members.
- Pursue online publication for Supreme Court notices to free up space for additional editorial content in each issue.
- Transition the Bar Journal Committee to an Editorial Board to focus their mission on improving the content featured in the Michigan Bar Journal.

A motion was offered and approved to adopt the five recommendations presented to the board.

Liberty Bell Award

Tom Howlett presented the Hispanic Center of West Michigan as the nominee for the Liberty Bell award.

A motion was offered and approved to accept the Hispanic Center of West Michigan for the Liberty bell award for 2026.

Partner Programs

Ms. Robin Eagleson, Director of Lawyer Services, presented on two new partner programs:

Lexara is a multifaceted legal services company that provides comprehensive client intake solutions and AI consulting services for law firms. The discount for State Bar of Michigan members is 20% off the standard subscription rate for Lexara Engage. SBM will earn a royalty payment equal to 15% of gross revenue generated through the partnership arrangement.

A motion was offered and approved to accept Lexara as a partner program.

Smith.ai is a 24/7 virtual receptionist and business communications platform that combines AI-Driven technology with live, North America-based agents. The platform manages inbound and outbound calls, website chat and SMS communications, while offering services such as lead screening, appointment scheduling and payment collection as well as live receptionist support. The discount for the State Bar of Michigan members is \$100 off the first month of service. Royalty to SBM is a 10% lifetime commission with a potential increase to 15% once \$10,000 in revenue has been reached.

A motion was offered and approved to accept Smith.ai as a partner program.

2026-2027 Committee Jurisdiction Resolution

Vice President Howlett presented the proposed committee jurisdictions for the 2026-2027 bar year, highlighting two changes from the current committee jurisdictions. Most notably the current Michigan Bar Journal Committee is being discontinued and being replaced by the Michigan Bar Journal Editorial Board.

A motion was offered and approved to adopt the 2026-2027 committee resolution.

Finance and Audit: David C. Anderson, Treasurer

Treasurer Anderson reviewed the financial results through the reporting period, noting we are favorable to budget.

Treasurer Anderson reminded the Commissioners of the budget meeting scheduled for June 25 via Zoom and invited all Commissioners to attend.

FY 2027 Preliminary Budget Summary

Peter Cunningham presented the FY 2027 preliminary budget summary providing a reminder that the final budget would be presented to the Board at the July 24 BOC meeting.

Professional Standards: Suzanne C. Larsen, Secretary

Secretary Larsen indicated she had no new items to report as the committee had not met since the last BOC meeting.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PROFESSION

Comments or questions from Commissioners

Commissioner Mason invited Commissioners to the American Indian Law Section's Annual Conference on August 13 and 14 in Mt. Pleasant.

Commissioner Clark invited everyone to attend a virtual trans awareness panel on June 25, from 6:00-7:30pm that the LGBTQ+ Law Section is hosting.

President-Elect Erika Bryant thanked everyone who nominated a colleague or someone they knew for an SBM award and encouraged everyone to submit nominations for next year as well.

Commissioner Timmons invited all to attend the Annual President's Dinner, hosted jointly by the Wolverine Bar Association, the Association of Black Judges of Michigan, the Black Women Lawyers of Michigan and the Wolverine Bar Foundation, on June 25 at Greektown Casino in Detroit.

Commissioner Barton updated the Commissioners on the Journey for Attorney program indicating that a pitch deck promoting the program would be coming soon. Mr. Barton also noted they would be conducting interviews on the porch this evening for an upcoming YLS podcast. Lastly, Mr. Barton stated that NTAC would be coming in November and asked that the BOC members sign up and participate as judges.

Commissioner Mantese provided a reminder that on March 31, an executive order was issued that would change how people can send in mail-in ballots and noted this presents a significant threat to our democracy. Public comments are due on July 2.

Comments or questions from the public

None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.