

STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

President Hamameh called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. on Friday, July 24, 2026, in the Boardroom at the Michael Franck building in Lansing, Michigan.

Commissioners present:

David C. Anderson, Treasurer
Darnell Barton
Erika L. Bryant, President-Elect
Aaron V. Burrell
Alena Clark
Hon. Ponce Clay
Patrick J. Crowley
Tanisha Davis
Sherree L. Detzler
Robert A. Easterly
Jacob G. Eccleston
Nicole A. Evans
Lisa J. Hamameh, President
Claudnyse D. Holloman
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
Silva A. Mansoor
Gerard V. Mantese
Moheeb H. Murray
Thomas P. Murray, III
Gerrow D. "Gerry" Mason
Nicholas M. Ohanesian
Hon. David A. Perkins
Douglas B. Shapiro
Hon. Kristen D. Simmons
Lisa W. Timmons

Commissioners absent:

Hon. Karl A. Barr

Hon. B. Chris Christenson

Consent Agenda

The Board received the minutes from the June 12, 2026, Board meeting.
The Board received the minutes from the May 20, 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 May 2026.
The Board received the Client Protection Fund Claims.
The Board received the Unauthorized Practice of Law Claims.
The Board received the Institute for Continuing Legal Education (ICLE) recommendation.
The Board received the Model Jury Instructions.

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.

Board Secretary Election

President Hamameh informed the Board of the four candidates who submitted their names for consideration for the position of Secretary for the 2026-2027 Board of Commissioners: Commissioners Burrell, Lerner, Low and Mantese. President Hamameh asked if there were any nominations from the floor; hearing none, a motion was offered and approved to close the nominations.

Commissioners Burrell, Lerner, Low and Mantese addressed the board, per policy. Following the five-minute presentation by each candidate, President Hamameh opened the floor for questions for the candidates.

Upon completion of the question-and-answer, President Hamameh appointed Commissioners Clark, Clay and Detzler to serve as tellers. A motion was offered and approved to vote by secret written ballot with the voting to be announced and recorded as the winner only, without the vote total and the vote total will be known only to President Hamameh, the tellers and to only disclose the number of votes received to the candidates upon the candidate's request. Ballots were then distributed.

President Hamameh announced that President-Elect Bryant would succeed her as President of the state Bar of Michigan for the 2026-2027 bar year.

President Hamameh announced that Vice President Howlett would succeed President-Elect Bryant as the President-Elect of the State Bar of Michigan for the 2026-2027 bar year.

A motion was offered and approved to nominate Treasurer Anderson as Vice President of the State Bar of Michigan for the 2026-2027 bar year.

A motion was offered and approved to nominate Secretary Larsen as Treasurer of the State Bar of Michigan for the 2026-2027 bar year.

President Hamameh announced that Commissioner Burrell was elected as Secretary of the State Bar of Michigan for the 2026-2027 bar year.

A motion was offered and approved to destroy the ballots of the election.

Upcoming Events

President Hamameh shared the link to the SBM Events Calendar and highlighted the Young Lawyers event occurring on July 25.

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 recognized Nicole Evans for graduating from the 55th ICM Fellows program with a ceremony at the U.S. Supreme Court.

Executive Director's Report

Michigan Supreme Court Commissions Updates

Justice For All Commission

Mr. Cunningham provided an update on the proposed Legal Practitioner Pilot Program. The State Court Administrative Office has agreed to provide the State Bar \$83,000 to build the character and fitness portal for applicants, and an additional \$600 per applicant to complete the character and fitness investigations for applicants to the pilot program. The contract is being finalized and once it is final, it will probably require a budget amendment. SBM staff have already begun building the portal in anticipation of the Court approving the pilot program early next year.

BOC Retreat Update

Mr. Cunningham noted that the BOC retreat is scheduled for November 19-20 at the Grand Traverse Resort in Acme, Michigan. The retreat will begin with a half day on Thursday afternoon and a full day on Friday until 5pm with a BOC meeting included. Additional details will follow with meetings invites to be updated accordingly once the agenda has been confirmed.

Staff Updates

Mr. Cunningham provided several staff updates starting with Lucille Willis who retired last month after 27 years with the Bar. Lucille was one of the founding editors of the eJournal.

Mr. Cunningham also announced that Jeanette Socia, Director of Human Resources, is retiring and today is her last day. Jeanette's replacement is Denise Boucke who started with the State Bar on May 26 and has been able to work alongside Jeanette for the past six weeks.

Lastly, Mr. Cunningham announced that a memorial service for Nancy Brown is scheduled for Thursday, August 20, from 2:00-3:00pm in the SBM building. A plaque recognizing Nancy's contributions to the Bar will be placed in the library and a nameplate for Nancy will be added to the flower garden in front of the building where employees who have passed away while working at the bar are recognized.

NSF AI Readiness Grant Collaboration

Mr. Cunningham also reported on a possible collaboration with Michigan State University College of Law on artificial intelligence (AI) readiness for the legal profession. Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, and Michigan Tech submitted a grant proposal for the National Science Foundation to create a statewide AI Readiness Hub. If awarded, this grant would establish a state-wide hub for Michigan to support AI readiness, education, adoption and deployment across Michigan. The proposal is to create an AI readiness hub for the state of Michigan to help the legal profession become AI Ready. After SBM leadership met with Jennifer Carter-Johnson from the MSU College of Law, the State Bar submitted a nonbinding letter of support expressing its interest in participating in the initiative. Professor Carter-Johnson indicated that even if the grant is not awarded, there may be opportunities for the State Bar to collaborate with the MSU College of Law on ethical and professional guidance regarding attorney use of AI and AI readiness training for lawyers and law students.

Certificate of Good Standing

Mr. Cunningham announced the new fully automated certificate of good standing electronic ordering system has been launched. The system will allow attorneys to obtain a PDF of their certificate instantly, which will require no staff time to produce.

Payments/Credit Card Update

Mr. Cunningham shared the State Bar has launched its new American Express credit card through Mercantile Bank. This was tied to our preferred partner program and means we will also start accepting American Express for license renewal/payment processing which is something members have been requesting.

SBM Presentation – Public Policy

Nathan Triplett, Director of Governmental Relations, presented to the Board about the SBM public policy program and focused on the Bar's successful advocacy for recently enacted juvenile justice legislation.

Discussion: Challenges & Opportunities for the Profession and Justice System: CLEAR Report

Mr. Cunningham presented a brief overview of the Committee on Legal Education and Admissions Reform (CLEAR) Report that Chief Justice Cavanaugh contributed to, writing an article in the June Bar Journal and spoke about in a session on Mackinaw Island at the Great Lakes Legal Conference. At its core, the report asks one simple question, "how do we better prepare lawyers to serve the public?". Chief Justice plans to bring the conversation more to Michigan while she continues to serve on the committee. An updated report is expected to come out in December.

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

Chair Evans reported that the Representative Assembly is continuing to fill their vacancies and are also preparing for the next meeting in September where there is currently one proposal submitted for consideration.

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

Commissioner Eccleston reported on several upcoming events including the ZooLAWgical event on July 25 at the Detroit Zoo. Mr. Eccleston also reminded the Commissioners of the National Trial Advocacy Competition scheduled for November 6-8 where they are in need of 80+ volunteers including sitting judges.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEES

Public Policy: Erika L. Bryant, President-Elect

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

Court Rules

1. **ADM File No. 2026-10: Addition of MCR 2.114 and Amendment of MCR 7.209**

The addition of MCR 2.114 provides a process for special motions under the Uniform Public Expression Protection Act (MCL 691.1853 et seq.), and the amendment of MCR 7.209 clarifies the availability and applicability of the stay during an appeal as contemplated by this new Act.

A motion was offered and approved to support ADM File No. 2026-10.

2. **ADM File No. 2024-15: Proposed Addition of MCR 6.426 and Proposed Amendments of MCR 7.216 and 7.315**

The proposed addition of MCR 6.426 and proposed amendments of MCR 7.216 and 7.315 would ensure that self-represented criminal defendants are advised of the right to counsel in remand proceedings from the appellate courts and would facilitate appointment of such counsel.

A motion was offered and approved to support ADM File No. 2024-15.

3. **ADM File No. 2024-34: Proposed Amendment of MCR 7.316**

The proposed amendment of MCR 7.316 would allow the Court to accept late applications for leave to appeal or cross-appeal in limited circumstances.

A motion was offered and approved to support ADM File No. 2024-34 with an amendment allowing 14 days to file a late application for leave to appeal.

4. **ADM File No. 2025-30: Proposed Adoption of Administrative Order No. 2026-X**

The proposed administrative order would approve a pilot project to study the effectiveness of an informal domestic relations docket.

A motion was offered and approved to oppose ADM File No. 2025-30 noting that Vice President Tom Howlett and Judge David Perkins opposed the motion.

Legislation

1. **HB 6028** (McFall) Courts: veteran's court; veterans treatment court; modify. Amends secs. 1200, 1201, 1203, 1205, 1206 & 1209 of 1961 PA 236 (MCL 600.1200 et seq.).

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

A motion was offered and approved to support HB 6028.

2. **HB 6081** (Kuhn) Criminal procedure: preliminary examination; certain rules and procedures for conducting a preliminary examination; revise. Amends sec. 11b, ch. VI of 1927 PA 175 (MCL 766.11b) & adds sec. 11c to ch. VI.

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

A motion was offered and approved to oppose HB 6081 noting one abstention from Commissioner Claudyse Holloman.

3. **HB 6092** (Hope) Criminal procedure: DNA; postconviction DNA testing; modify. Amends sec. 16, ch. X of 1927 PA 175 (MCL 770.16).

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

A motion was offered and approved to support HB 6092.

4. **HB 6110** (MacDonell) Civil procedure: civil actions; violation of constitutionally or legally provided civil rights; provide a cause of action for. Creates new act.

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

A motion was offered and approved to support HB 6110 noting one abstention from Commissioner James Liggins.

5. **Trial Court Funding**

SB 1089 (Chang) Courts: funding; trial court funding; provide for. Amends secs. 880d, 8727 & 8827 of 1961 PA 236 (MCL 600.880d et seq.); adds secs. 1495, 1496 & 1497 & repeals secs. 8729 & 8829 of 1961 PA 236 (MCL 600.8729 & 600.8829).

SB 1090 (Damoose) Courts: funding; trial court funding; provide for. Amends sec. 13, ch. II, secs. 1k & 5, ch. IX & secs. 1, 3, 3c & 3e, ch. XI of 1927 PA 175 (MCL 762.13 et seq.).

SB 1091 (Cavanagh) Courts: funding; trial court funding; provide for. Amends sec. 907 of 1949 PA 300 (MCL 257.907) & repeals sec. 908 of 1949 PA 300 (MCL 257.908).

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

A motion was offered and approved to support SB 1089, SB 1090 and SB 1091 with an additional amendment adding a fourth factor to the proposed indigency determination: an individual determined to be indigent under the MIDC standard for the purpose of appointing counsel in a criminal matter should be presumed indigent for the purpose of assessments issued at sentencing.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Section Proposals

1. **Request to Change the Mediator Standards of Conduct regarding disclosure and to amend the Court Rules regarding disqualification.**

Request to change captions on divorce forms.

Request to amend Form MC 274 – Order for Mediation.

Request to revise Mediation Training Standards.

Proposal to Revise Domestic Violence Screening Protocol and Standards of Conduct for Mediators related to consideration of mental health.

The Board determined that the State Bar's position on these proposals, if any, was a question for the Representative Assembly.

Strategic Planning and Engagement Committee (SPEC): Thomas H. Howlett, Vice President
Vice President Howlett had no items to report.

Finance and Audit: David C. Anderson, Treasurer

Treasurer Anderson thanked all staff and Commissioners for attending the June 25, 2026, budget meeting.

FY 2027 Budget

Mr. Cunningham presented the FY 2027 budget.

A motion was offered and approved to accept the FY 2027 budget.

Professional Standards: Suzanne C. Larsen, Secretary

Secretary Larsen had no items to report.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PROFESSION

Comments or questions from Commissioners

Commissioner Mason reminded the Board that it was the final day to register for the American Indian Law Section annual meeting at the Soaring Eagle Casino on August 13-14.

Vice President Howlett provided kudos to the MiLawyer podcast and encouraged all to listen as Commissioner Ashley Lowe was featured in the most recent episode.

President-Elect Bryant asked all Commissioners to please consider sending a quick note to Representative Assembly member Kimberly Ann Ward as she campaigns in Nashville for NBA President-Elect.

Comments or questions from the public

None.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:53 p.m.