

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

President McGill called the meeting to order at 9:18 a.m. on Friday, September 19, 2025, in the Dennison Room of the Detroit Marriott Troy.

Commissioners present:

David C. Anderson, Secretary
Erika L. Bryant, Vice President
Aaron V. Burrell
Hon. B. Chris Christenson
Tanya N. Cripps-Serra
Patrick J. Crowley
Sherrie L. Detzler
Robert A. Easterly
Nicole A. Evans
Lisa J. Hamameh, President-Elect
Claudnyse D. Holloman
Thomas H. Howlett, Treasurer
Suzanne C. Larsen
Joshua A. Lerner

James L. Liggins, Jr.
James W. Low
Ashley E. Lowe
Elizabeth L. Luckenbach
Silvia A. Mansoor
Gerard V. Mantese
Gerrow D. "Gerry" Mason
Joseph P. McGill, President
Thomas P. Murray, III
Nicholas M. Ohanesian
John W. Reiser III
Douglas B. Shapiro
Hon. Kristen D. Simmons
Danielle Walton

Commissioners absent:

Alena Clark
Hon. Ponce Clay
Jacob G. Eccleston

Elizabeth A. Kitchen-Troop
Takura N. Nyamfukudza
Hon. David A. Perkins

Consent Agenda

The Board received the minutes from the July 25, 2025, Board meeting.
The Board received the minutes from the May 22, 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 Model Jury Instructions.
The Board received the FY 2025 financial reports through July 2025.

President McGill 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.

President and Executive Director's Report: Joe McGill, President and Peter Cunningham, Executive Director.

President's Report

President McGill summarized the work of the Board of Commissioners over the past year and expressed his gratitude for of all the hard work and efforts of the Board and SBM staff.

A motion was offered and supported to recommend Ms. Ryan M. Kelly for appointment to the ICLE Executive Committee to serve a four-year term beginning on October 1, 2025. The motion passed.

A motion was offered and supported to re-appoint Ms. Stanette J. Amy and Mr. Zachary W. Fallstich to the MILS Board of Trustees to serve a three-year term beginning on October 1, 2025. The motion passed.

Supreme Court Commissions Updates

Justice For All (JFA) Commission

Mr. Cunningham reported that the JFA Commission met earlier this month and received brief updates on the progress of the JFA initiatives, including the way-finding project and the triage and referral workgroup. Detailed updates were provided regarding the expansion of self-help centers across the state, as well as a report on the project to update and modernize court forms to make them easier for everyone to understand and complete.

The JFA received an update on the proposed Paralegal Licensure Pilot Program. The workgroup intends to present its recommendations to the Court by the end of this year. If the recommendations are adopted by the Court, the goal is that applicants could begin applying for the new licenses by April 2026 with the first round of tests for the licensees to be offered in the fall of 2026. Mr. Cunningham shared that SBM staff will begin building the character and fitness portal for the pilot program this fall so that applicants will be able to begin applying in April.

DEI Commission

Mr. Cunningham reported that the DEI Commission also met earlier this month and received several updates from its three workgroups. The work of these groups includes a statewide study to identify and share best practices for attracting and retaining talent, building pipelines to help individuals who are interested in working in the court systems, and demystifying the path to becoming a judge.

Commission on Well-Being in the Law (WBIL)

Mr. Cunningham reported that the Commission on Well-Being in the Law met in early August. The incentivizing well-being workgroup is considering a proposal to the Court regarding a secured leave rule for attorneys. This rule was approved by the Representative Assembly and submitted to the Court in 2019, but the Court declined to publish the rule for comment. The workgroup plans to work with additional stakeholders to build greater support for the proposal before presenting the rule to the Court for reconsideration.

Justice Kyra Bolden was named chair of the WBIL Commission earlier this year when Justice Megan Cavanagh was named Chief Justice earlier this year.

Mr. Cunningham reported that the nationwide study of lawyer well-being in the law conducted earlier this year by the Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs had over 35,000 participants, which is the largest study ever conducted of attorneys. Data from Michigan attorneys is expected to be shared with SBM sometime next year.

Staff Introductions

Mr. Scott Atkinson introduced Ms. Christina Clark, who recently started as Communications Specialist. Ms. Clark joins us from Our Media where she was an expert in digital strategy and social media.

License Renewal

Mr. Cunningham shared that this year's renewal season was launched last week. There were a few unforeseen challenges, which caused a one-day delay in the launch, but the number of attorneys who have already completed the license renewal process is consistent with last year. Mr. Cunningham thanked the various departments at the State Bar who are involved with the preparation of renewal season each year.

Bar Journal for Emeritus Members

Mr. Cunningham provided an update on the Bar Journal for emeritus members that was voted upon during the July meeting. There are currently 50 emeritus members who have subscribed. Emeritus members may still enroll in the subscription program for the \$25 fee.

Cannabis Law Section Finances

Mr. Cunningham informed the Commissioners that the Cannabis Law Section could encounter a potential issue regarding their finances. The section has an upcoming event for which registration numbers are falling significantly short of contractual obligations, and the section does not have the funds to cover the shortfall. In addition to redoubling efforts to increase attendance at the event, the section is working with ICLE and the hotel to negotiate a lower bill. The hope is that with these efforts and new dues from license renewal, the section will have enough funds to cover the expenses. If the section does not have adequate funds, SBM will cover the expenses until the section can pay the full amount with interest. The final accounting for the event will probably not be known until January, but an update will be provided at the November Board meeting.

Convene Launch

Mr. Cunningham shared that the software program, Convene, was launched and is being used for Board communication. Commissioners can access materials on their phone, tablet, or computer from virtually anywhere. Its use is expected to improve communication via messages, access to the document library, and the member directory. SBM staff will continue to send emails until all issues with Convene have been resolved and Commissioners are comfortable with the program. Mr. Howlett suggested adding Board materials from previous years to the document library.

Non-Licensing Fee Revenue

Mr. Cunningham reminded the Board that in July 2024 the Board passed a resolution encouraging the staff to continue to work to increase non-license fee revenue. He reported that since July 2024, SBM staff has increased non-license fee revenue by nearly \$150,000. The increase is due to efforts in the Lawyer Services, Communications, and Interim Administrator departments. In Lawyer Services, Robinjit Eagleson has dramatically increased revenue from both existing and new partner programs. The Communications team, led by Marjory Raymer, has increased advertising sales and began selling the printed membership directory. And the Interim Administrator Program, under the direction of April Alleman, has brought in more revenue than budgeted as an increasing number of attorneys are opting to join the SBM's program.

Representative Assembly (RA) Report: John W. Reiser, III, Chairperson

Chair Reiser shared that the next meeting is scheduled for later today (Friday, September 19, 2025) at Detroit Marriott in Troy and will be held in hybrid format.

Chair Reiser shared that Janet Welch will receive the Michael Franck Award and Kamau Sandiford will receive the Unsung Hero Award at this afternoon's meeting.

There will be a contested election for the position of clerk between Tanisha Davis from the 6th Circuit and Marla Linderman Richelew from the 3rd Circuit.

There are three proposals up for consideration at September's meeting. One proposal will include the 11 recommendations from the three sub-work groups of the Legal Deserts Workgroup. There were two listening sessions this week in which RA members have been able to learn more about these recommendations. The Professional Ethics Committee is presenting two additional proposals regarding MRPC 1.10(a), imputed disqualification, and 4.4(b), respecting the rights of third parties.

Young Lawyers Section (YLS) Report: Silvia A. Mansoor, Chairperson
Commissioner Mansoor provided the report for the Young Lawyers Section. Ms. Mansoor shared that the YLS recently beat the BOC in a friendly competition of bocce ball. Fun was had by all.

Commissioner Mansoor shared that the section recently hosted a webinar on the Nuts and Bolts of Appellate Practice, with 111 attendees. The etiquette event is being rescheduled to a date in November. This event is being co-sponsored with the Negligence Law Section and the American Board of Trial Advocates.

The National Trial Advocacy Competition (NTAC) is coming up in late October.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEES

Public Policy: Lisa J. Hamameh, Chairperson
President-Elect Hamameh provided the report for the Public Policy committee. President-Elect Hamameh shared her extreme gratitude to SBM staff and members of the Public Policy committee for their hard work and dedication to the work they have done this year.

Court Rule

1. ADM File No. 2021-29: Proposed Amendment of MCR 6.201

The proposed amendment of MCR 6.201 would require, before providing a police report or interrogation record to the defendant, redaction of personal identifying information and information otherwise protected under the rule.

A motion was offered and seconded to support ADM File No. 2021-29 with the amendment, "that witness addresses and phone numbers will not be provided to the defendant without good cause shown to the Court." The motion failed.

A motion was offered and seconded to support the amended language to ADM File No. 2021-29 as provided by the Court and as approved by Criminal Jurisprudence & Practice Committee and the Access to Justice Policy Committee. The motion was approved.

Strategic Planning and Engagement Committee (SPEC): Erika L. Bryant, Chairperson
Vice-President Bryant extended her sincere gratitude to the SBM Staff for all their hard work over the past year, as well as the members of SPEC.

Partnership Programs

Ms. Eagleson shared the negotiated revisions to the Smokeball preferred partner program that have occurred since the last Board meeting. Recent revisions to the contract would include a free trust accounting program subscription to every member of the Bar.

A motion was offered and seconded to support this proposal. The motion was approved unanimously.

Finance and Audit: Thomas H. Howlett, Chairperson

Financial Report

Treasurer Howlett gave thanks to the hard-working SBM staff and all members of the committee for always showing up prepared and ready to work.

Treasurer Howlett shared that the Bar will finish the current year favorable to budget, with revenues up and expenses down due to the wonderful budgeting of SBM staff. However, the budget for the upcoming Bar year projects a slight deficit due to increasing expenses and declining revenues.

The Committee is leaving a few suggestions for next year's group to consider, one of which would be whether the group will return to Mackinac Island for the GLLC next June. This item may come to the Board in November for consideration.

Professional Standards: David C. Anderson, Chairperson

Secretary Anderson thanked the staff liaisons for their work this Bar year, as well as the committee members.

Outgoing Commissioners

Commissioner Mansoor read a resolution, written by Jacob Eccleston, honoring Tanya N. Cripps-Serra on her retirement from the Board of Commissioners and presented her with a gift of appreciation for her service.

Commissioner Evans read a resolution honoring John W. Reiser, III, on his retirement from the Board of Commissioners and presented him with a gift of appreciation for his service.

Recognition of President Joe McGill

Ms. Hamameh provided remarks for the 90th President of the State Bar of Michigan, Joseph P. McGill.

Mr. McGill was presented with a plaque and a memory book in appreciation for his service.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PROFESSION

Comments or questions from Commissioners

None.

Comments or questions from the public

None.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.