

DRAFT

**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 18, 2025
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE DIRECTORS OF THE
MICHIGAN STATE BAR FOUNDATION (MSBF)**

CALL TO ORDER

President Craig H. Lubben called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

**DIRECTORS PRESENT AND
QUORUM**

The following Board members were present:

Craig H. Lubben, President
Julie I. Fershtman, Vice President
Richard K. Rappleye, Treasurer
Thomas R. Behm
Hon. Megan K. Cavanagh
Thomas W. Cranmer
Steve G. Howell
Karen Leppanen Miller
Hon. William B. Murphy
Jonathan E. Osgood
Michael L. Pitt
Robert F. Riley
Hon. Victoria A. Roberts
Richard A. Soble
Nicole Wotlinski

Staff present were:

Jennifer Bentley, Executive Director
Traci Kuiper, Chief Financial Officer
Liz Sempssrott, Executive Assistant

MINUTES

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 11, 2025 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AS PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED.

FINANCE AUDIT COMMITTEE

Treasurer Richard Rappleye reported that the Finance Audit Committee reviewed the unaudited quarterly fiscal reports for the period ending 6/30/2025.

Mr. Rappleye provided an overview of the proposed budget and indicated that the FAC had reviewed the funding options for the annual grants. He reported that the current fiscal year is expected to end with a better net result than originally budgeted. Regarding the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year, he explained that the recommendation is to increase grant awards and increase the grant stabilization fund. He referred to the explanations of the budget line items attached to the proposed budget. In addition, he reported that, working with David Brown from Mercer, MSBF staff and the FAC, reviewed and updated the investment policy. Mr. Rappleye asked for a motion from the Board to accept the 2025-2026

proposed budget and LS Annual Grants amounts, along with approving the updated investment policy.

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND CARRIED TO ACCEPT THE JUNE 30, 2025 UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MSBF 2025-2026 ANNUAL BUDGET, INCLUDING AN INCREASE IN ANNUAL IOLTA GRANTS.

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND CARRIED TO APPROVE THE IOLTA GRANT STABILIZATION/EMERGENCY ISSUES FUND RESERVE.

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND CARRIED TO APPROVE THE INVESTMENT POLICY MODIFICATIONS.

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MSBF FIXED ASSET POLICY.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Craig Lubben provided the Executive Committee report.

In June 2025, the MSBF Board approved distributions totaling \$3,124,760 for Eviction Diversion Program (EDP) funding in 2025 to seven legal aid organizations.

Following that approval, staff identified that one application was inadvertently omitted from the recommendation due to internal staff transitions.

The omitted application was submitted by Legal Services of Eastern Michigan, requesting \$306,801 for the July 1 – December 31, 2025 period. If approved, the revised total for 2025 EDP funding would be \$3,431,561, which is less than the \$4M previously approved by the Board for 2025 EDP expenditures.

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND CARRIED TO APPROVE AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2025 EDP GRANT AWARDS TO INCLUDE \$306,801 FOR LEGAL SERVICES OF EASTERN MICHIGAN.

The 2026 Budget includes \$6 million for EDP grants. MSBF collected applications and reviewed case filings in each region, prior case numbers for eviction grants and poverty percentages.

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND CARRIED TO APPROVE AWARDING 2026 EDP GRANTS FROM JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31ST, 2026 AS

FOI FOLLOWS:

Organization	Approved
Lakeshore Legal Aid	\$2,814,755
Michigan Advocacy Program	\$520,500
Michigan Legal Services	\$531,600
Counsel and Advocacy Law Line (CALL)	\$173,645
Legal Aid of Western Michigan	\$1,100,000
Legal Services of Northern Michigan	\$250,000
Legal Services of Eastern Michigan	\$609,500
Total	\$6,000,000

REPORTS

Jennifer Bentley updated the Board on a few highlights of the past fiscal year that were provided in her written report and in the written update on the annual strategic goals that were completed in FY2024.

Ms. Bentley gave a brief update on staff transitions. Liz Sempsrott was hired as the Executive Assistant and Mary Gladstone-Highland is the Director of Grants. MSBF is currently interviewing for a Major Gifts Officer and Development Director.

IOLTA revenue continues to increase. With the new interest rate reduction, we will be meeting with the banks to make sure that they will still be paying the same fees. The ATJ campaign is about to launch a committee to consider major gifts from individuals.

Ms. Bentley thanked the Board members for all their support and leadership and MSBF staff for working together and building a strong team.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Board of Directors Nominating Committee included Hon. Victoria A. Roberts, Dick Rappleye and Nicole Wotlinski. The committee made a motion for approval of the Officers and Board of Directors as follows:

MOVED SUPPORT AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ELECT THE FOLLOWING PERSONS FOR ONE-YEAR TERMS ENDING IN SEPTEMBER 2026 FOR THE OFFICER POSITIONS INDICATED:

Craig Lubben – President
Hon. Victoria Roberts – Vice President
Richard Rappleye – Treasurer

Thomas Behm – Secretary
Jennifer Bentley – Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ELECT THE FOLLOWING PERSON FOR A ONE-YEAR TERM ENDING IN SEPTEMBER 2026 TO THE MSBF BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Heidi Alcock

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND CARRIED TO ELECT THE FOLLOWING PERSONS FOR THREE-YEAR TERMS ENDING IN SEPTEMBER 2028 TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Jason Klingensmith
Lee Reimann
Robert Riley
Jeffery Stuckey

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS

Craig Lubben thanked Julie Fershtman, Jon Osgood, Karen Leppanen Miller and Ronda Tate Truvillion for their service on the MSBF Board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Staff was excused while the Directors held an executive session. 3:56 pm

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:45 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

Thomas R. Behm
Secretary

MSBF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS VIA EMAILSINCE THE LAST BOARD MEETING

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND CARRIED TO APPROVE AN UPDATED CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY.

MOVED, SUPPORTED AND CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MODIFICATION TO THE PREVIOUSLY AWARDED EXPUNGEMENT GRANT AMOUNTS AND PROVIDE BOTH LAKESHORE LEGAL AID AND LEGAL AID AND DEFENDER

ASSOCIATION WITH ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO COVER ANY REIMBURSED COSTS RELATED TO EXPUNGEMENT SERVICES.