



LANSING POLICE DEPARTMENT

120 W. MICHIGAN AVENUE, LANSING MI 48933

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Andy Schor, Mayor

Board of Police Commissioners Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

Lansing Police Department – HQ 2nd FL Conf. Room
120 W Michigan Ave, Lansing, MI 48933

The Board of Police Commissioners met in regular session and the meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Jones.

Present at Rollcall: Commission Members: Bitely, Brewster, Cotton, Jones, Milton, Watkins

Also present: Chief Backus, Sergeant Zolnai, Elizabeth O’Leary, Julie Browne, and Jacqueline Lutz

Public Attendees: 3

Rollcall was taken and quorum was present.

Commissioner Farhat called in absent. Motion to excuse by Commissioner Brewster. Commissioner Bitely seconded. By Vote: Yeas: 6 Nays: 0

Commissioner Farhan arrived at 5:33 PM after roll call and vote on items was taken.

Pledge of Allegiance: Lead by Commissioner Jones

Public Comment on Agenda Items: Commissioner Jones stated that they received additional correspondence from Alison Peeler

Additions To the Agenda: None.

Approval Of Agenda: Chair Jones moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Bitely made the motion to approve with Commissioner Milton seconding the motion.

By Vote: Yeas: 6
Nays: 0

Consent Agenda: Chair Jones moved for approval of agenda items:

- a) Approval of Meeting Minutes: December 16, 2025.
- b) Approval of December Departmental Reports.

Chair Jones moved to approve the minutes and department reports. Commissioners Brewster made the motion.

By Vote:
Yeas: 6
Nays: 0

EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION: Sergeant James Zolnai, Hiring and Recruitment

- Ways and where to recruit.
- Sponsorships open for recruits.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT – Chief Backus

- From the Chiefs Office: Welcome new executive assistant, crime stats (down over 2% in crimes, 36% reduction in homicides, 35% reduction in nonfatal shootings, 100% clearance in homicides over the

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last 2 years), partnerships with the community. Thanks to those who attended the MLK dinner, promotions upcoming, and internal annual training

- Youth crime: biggest partner in this is the school district

LEGAL UPDATE – Deputy City Attorney Lisa Hagen-Lawrence

- None

HUMAN RESOURCES – Director Elizabeth O’Leary

- Excited for the new recruitment with Sergeant Zolnai.
- 4 in the hiring process
- 8 recruits in the Academy currently
- 20 vacancies

COMMISSION INVESTIGATOR REPORT:

- Julie Browne, new Commission Investigator

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None as of today.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Budget – No report as of December
- Government/Community Liaison Committee – No report.
- Awards and Incentives Committee – Meetings on the 28th, receiving documentation in the next week or so
- Ad Hoc Committee – No report
- Citizen Complaint Oversight Committee – Tentatively meeting on Thursday. 7 open, 5 closed, 1 sent to the Chief
- Recruitment and Hiring – No additional report.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS – (Informational)

- Farhat – None
- Watkins – Reserve until next month
- Cotton – No additional comments
- Omar – No additional comments
- Milton – Happy New Year and welcome aboard to the new faces
- Brewster – Welcome
- Jones – Wish everyone a happy new year and to advance the priorities of 2026, and changes to common.
- Bitely – Always like going first

PUBLIC COMMENT: Two Public Comments

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Jones requested to adjourn the meeting at 6:14 pm. Commissioner Bitely made a motion with Commissioner Brewster seconding the motion.

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