

MONTANA SUPREME COURT PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 7, 2026, 1:15 p.m.

Joseph P. Mazurek Justice Building

215 North Sanders, Helena

Attorney's Lounge, 4th Floor | Also Available via Zoom Conference

FILED

JUL 14 2026

Bowen Greenwood
Clerk of Supreme Court
State of Montana

Chief Justice Swanson called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. In attendance were Justices Baker, Bidegaray, McKinnon, Rice, and Shea. Justice Gustafson attended via Zoom. Also in attendance on Zoom were Dia Lang, Charles Reed, Ian Anderson, Nooga Werly, and Patrick Smith. Also in attendance in person were Jak Hamilton, Marguerite Henning, and Jeanine Blaner.

Item 1: Approval of Revised Minutes from the May 5, 2026 Public Meeting

- Chief Justice Swanson called the meeting to order, discussed the people in attendance, and called for public comment on issues not on the agenda. Hearing no public comment, the Chief Justice then turned to the minutes from the public meeting on June 23, 2026. Chief Justice introduced the matter, noting the initial draft of the minutes received edits. Justice Baker moved for approval of the minutes. Justice Shea seconded the motion. The Chief Justice then called for any discussion on the minutes, stating that he understood that item seven would be finalized in the next public meeting.
- The Justices unanimously approved the minutes.

Item 2: Appointments to the Commission on Practice

- Chief Justice Swanson introduced the matter, noting that in the prior public meeting two of the three open appointments had been made. Ward E. "Mick" Taleff and Pat Leikam were reappointed to the Commission. The Chief Justice then stated that he had reached out to two individuals to inquire if they were willing to serve on the Commission, both individuals declined. Justice Baker stated that she contacted Beth McLaughlin to inquire if she had any interest in serving on the Commission, to which McLaughlin responded in the affirmative. Justice Baker then nominated Beth McLaughlin for appointment on the Commission. Justice McKinnon seconded the motion. The Chief Justice called for any discussion. The Justices discussed that McLaughlin was originally from Butte, Montana.
- The Chief Justice voted against the appointment. The other Justices voted in favor of the appointment. The movement passed six to one, and the Chief Justice stated that an order would soon follow.
- After again calling for public comment and hearing none, the chief closed the meeting at 1:21 p.m.