



CRIMINAL JUSTICE OVERSIGHT COUNCIL

69th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

Laura Smith
Barry Usher

HOUSE MEMBERS

SJ Howell
Amy Regier

PUBLIC MEMBERS

David Armstrong
Eldena Bear Don't Walk
Luke Berger
Charlie Brereton
Alan Doane
Mark Dunn
Jessica Flint
Shantelle Gaynor
Brandon Kelm
Koan Mercer
Jimmy Patelis
Eric Strauss
Amy Tenney
Scott Twito

COMMITTEE STAFF

Laura Sherley - Lead Staff
Abbie J.N. Cziok - Legal Staff
Ania Alduenda - Secretary

MINUTES LOG

March 11, 2026
Capitol Room 172 & Zoom
Helena, Montana

Minutes logs provide an annotation of the time elapsed between the beginning of a meeting and the time at which a topic is presented or discussed, a motion made, or a vote taken. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion in the video. The minutes log is only a guide to the video of the meeting. The official record of the meeting is the video. Minutes logs can be accessed at <https://committees.legmt.gov> and videos can be accessed at <https://media.legmt.gov>.

For more information, please contact:

The Legislative Services Division at 406-444-3064 for policy committees;
The Legislative Fiscal Division at 406-444-2986 for fiscal committees; or
The Legislative Audit Division at 406-444-3122 for the Legislative Audit Committee.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sen. Barry Usher, Presiding Officer (R)
Rep. SJ Howell (D)
Rep. Amy Regier (R) - via Zoom
Sen. Laura Smith (D)
Hon. Luke Berger, Vice Presiding Officer
David Armstrong, Public Member
Alan Doane, Public Member - via Zoom
Hon. Mark Dunn, Public Member
Jessica Flint, Public Member - via Zoom
Sheriff Brandon Kelm, Public Member - via Zoom
Dir. Koan Mercer, Public Member
Jimmy Patelis, Public Member
Dir. Eric Strauss, Public Member
Amy Tenney, Public Member
Scott Twito, Public Member
Chad Parker, Representing DPHHS

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Eldena Bear Don't Walk, Public Member
Shantelle Gaynor, Public Member

MONTANA LEGISLATIVE BRANCH MANAGEMENT: JERRY HOWE, LEGISLATIVE SERVICES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR • ANGUS MACIVER, LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR • AMY CARLSON, LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ANALYST • TODD EVERTS, LEGAL SERVICES DIRECTOR • DALE GOW, CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER • RACHEL WEISS, RESEARCH DIRECTOR • ANGIE CARTER, FINANCIAL OFFICE DIRECTOR • KELLY DASILVA HR DIRECTOR

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Laura Sherley, Lead Staff
Abbie J.N. Cziok, Legal Staff
Ania Alduenda, Secretary

AGENDA ([Attachment 1](#))

VISITORS' LIST ([Attachment 2](#))

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

09:00:22 Presiding Officer Barry Usher called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. The committee secretary took roll.

OPENING REMARKS

09:01:36 Presiding Officer Barry Usher

CRIMINAL JUSTICE DATA WAREHOUSE UPDATE

09:03:54 Kayla Bragg, Executive Director, Montana Board of Crime Control (MBCC)

09:04:08 Janice Fries, Director, Statistical Analysis Center, MBCC

[EXHIBIT 1](#)

09:04:19 Adam Carpenter, Chief Data Officer, Department of Administration (DOA)
(See Exhibit 1)

Public Comment

09:30:54 May Simmons, Lake County Resident

Council Discussion / Questions

09:33:24 Presiding Officer Barry Usher

09:33:45 McKinley Gunter, Criminal Justice Data Warehouse Architect, MBCC

09:34:44 Council Member Scott Twito
(See Exhibit 1)

09:35:09 Adam Carpenter, DOA

09:35:24 Presiding Officer Barry Usher

09:36:44 Adam Carpenter, DOA

09:36:59 Dir. Kayla Bragg, MBCC

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (COR)

Workgroup Update and Follow-up to Council Questions

09:40:01 Presiding Officer Barry Usher

09:40:41 Scott Eychner, Chief Executive Officer, Rehabilitation and Enterprise Division,
COR

[EXHIBIT 2](#)

[EXHIBIT 3](#)

[EXHIBIT 4](#)

[EXHIBIT 5](#)

[EXHIBIT 6](#)

[EXHIBIT 7](#)
[EXHIBIT 8](#)
[EXHIBIT 9](#)
[EXHIBIT 10](#)

- 09:40:56 Morgan Davis, Compliance Specialist, Evidence Based Practices Compliance Unit, COR
09:41:19 Sean Goeddel, Bureau Chief, Probation and Parole, COR
09:41:29 Greg Schneider, Bureau Chief, Research and Analysis Bureau, COR

Public Comment

- 09:52:31 May Simmons, Lake County Resident

Council Discussion / Questions

- 09:55:51 Council Member Jimmy Patelis
(See Exhibit 3 and Exhibit 7)
09:57:28 Scott Eychner, COR
09:59:18 Council Member Scott Twito
(See Exhibit 7)
09:59:46 Scott Eychner, COR
09:59:53 Greg Schneider, COR
10:00:47 Council Member David Armstrong
10:01:06 Scott Eychner, COR
10:02:39 Dir. Koan Mercer
10:03:17 Scott Eychner, COR
10:04:22 Council Member Scott Twito
10:04:44 Scott Eychner, COR
10:06:14 Sean Goeddel, COR
10:10:34 Vice Presiding Officer Luke Berger
10:11:19 Scott Eychner, COR
10:11:48 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
10:11:58 Council Member Jimmy Patelis
10:13:43 Scott Eychner, COR
10:13:51 Council Member David Armstrong
10:14:54 Council Member Scott Twito
10:15:03 Dir. Eric Strauss
10:15:39 Presiding Officer Barry Usher

FINES AND FEES IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Overview of Legal Financial Obligation Notification System and Collection Model

- 10:17:48 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
10:18:19 Hon. Jessie Connolly, Justice of the Peace, Sweet Grass County

Public Comment

10:34:01 Benjamin Lacayo
10:38:16 May Simmons, Lake County Resident

Council Discussion / Questions

10:41:28 Council Member David Armstrong
10:42:59 Hon. Jessie Connolly, Sweet Grass County
10:44:30 Hon. Mark Dunn
10:47:14 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
10:47:27 Hon. Jessie Connolly, Sweet Grass County
10:48:26 Council Member David Armstrong
10:50:51 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
10:51:01 Hon. Jessie Connolly, Sweet Grass County

MONTANA COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS ASSOCIATION

10:51:14 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
10:51:36 Amy Tenney, Member, MCCA & Chief Executive Officer, Boyd Andrew
Community Services
[EXHIBIT 11](#)
[EXHIBIT 12](#)
[EXHIBIT 13](#)
11:00:03 David Armstrong, Member, MCCA & Chief Executive Officer, Alternatives Inc.

Public Comment

11:20:55 Benjamin Lacayo
11:26:34 May Simmons, Lake County Resident

Council Discussion / Questions

11:29:09 Sen. Laura Smith
11:29:29 David Armstrong, MCCA
11:29:43 Amy Tenney, MCCA
11:32:11 Presiding Officer Barry Usher

11:33:40 **Recessed**
13:03:57 **Reconvened**

FEDERAL VS. STATE DEFINITION OF BODILY INJURY

Review of Letter Sent to Montana Congressional Delegation and Discussion on Next Steps

13:03:58 Council Member David Armstrong did not return to the meeting after the recess.
13:03:59 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
13:04:24 Abbie J.N. Cziok, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 14](#)
13:13:04 Council Member Scott Twito
[EXHIBIT 15](#)

Public Comment

- 13:16:53 Beth Brenneman, Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
13:17:47 May Simmons, Lake County Resident

Council Discussion / Questions

- 13:19:51 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
13:20:12 Vice Presiding Officer Luke Berger
13:22:12 Council Member Scott Twito
13:25:18 Rep. SJ Howell
13:27:17 Dir. Koan Mercer
13:27:56 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
13:28:08 Chad Parker, Chief Legal Counsel, Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)
13:28:48 Council Member Scott Twito
13:30:21 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
13:32:44 Sen. Laura Smith
13:33:14 Council Member Jimmy Patelis
13:33:33 Rep. SJ Howell
13:33:57 Dir. Eric Strauss
13:34:11 Sen. Laura Smith
13:34:23 Presiding Officer Barry Usher

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Responding to Human Trafficking Survivors - Experiences, Needs, and System Engagement

- 13:34:39 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
13:35:14 Beth Brenneman, Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCADSV)
13:36:31 Sha Fjeld, Advocate Team Lead, Haven
[EXHIBIT 16](#)
[EXHIBIT 17](#)
[EXHIBIT 18](#)

Public Comment

- 14:28:42 Benjamin Lacayo
14:32:00 May Simmons, Lake County Resident

Council Discussion / Questions

- 14:35:15 Sen. Laura Smith
14:35:36 Sha Fjeld, Haven
14:36:09 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
14:36:55 Beth Brenneman, MCADSV
14:39:22 Sha Fjeld, Haven

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS

Update on the Behavioral Health for Future Generations Commission

- 14:39:26 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
- 14:40:29 Meghan Peel, Behavioral Health Disorders and Disabilities Division
Administrator, Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)
[EXHIBIT 19](#)

Rural Health Transformation Program

- 14:55:24 Brett Carter, Strategy and Transformation Officer, DPHHS
(See Exhibit 19)
- 15:00:17 Presiding Officer Barry Usher left the meeting and Vice Presiding Officer Luke Berger assumed the position of Presiding Officer.

Public Comment

- 15:05:26 Vice Presiding Officer Luke Berger
- 15:05:49 May Simmons, Lake County Resident
- 15:09:49 Presiding Officer Barry Usher rejoined the meeting and resumed the position of Presiding Officer.

Council Discussion / Questions

- 15:10:04 Dir. Koan Mercer
- 15:10:18 Brett Carter, DPHHS
- 15:12:10 Rep. SJ Howell
- 15:13:07 Brett Carter, DPHHS
- 15:14:47 Meghan Peel, DPHHS
- 15:18:06 Council Member Scott Twito
- 15:18:49 Brett Carter, DPHHS
- 15:19:19 Council Member Jimmy Patelis
- 15:19:54 Brett Carter, DPHHS
- 15:20:34 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
- 15:21:51 Brett Carter, DPHHS
- 15:27:44 Chad Parker, Chief Legal Counsel, DPHHS

COUNCIL LEGISLATION

Provisional Draft 1 (CJOC-PD1) – Repeal Sunset Date on the Crime Victims Compensation Account

- 15:28:09 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
- 15:28:44 Laura Sherley, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 20](#)

Council Discussion / Questions

- 15:30:31 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
- 15:30:46 Laura Sherley, LSD
- 15:31:40 Sen. Laura Smith

Motion

15:31:52 Sen. Laura Smith moved to adopt Provisional Draft 1 (CJOC-PD1) as a council bill.

Discussion on the Motion

15:32:18 Dir. Eric Strauss
15:32:42 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
15:33:17 Sen. Laura Smith rescinded the motion.

Council Discussion / Questions

15:33:31 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
15:33:41 Dir. Eric Strauss

Provisional Draft 2 (CJOC-PD2) – Revise the Definition of Sick Leave to Include Mental Wellness Care

15:34:08 Laura Sherley, LSD
[EXHIBIT 21](#)

Council Discussion / Questions

15:36:31 Dir. Koan Mercer
15:37:23 Dir. Eric Strauss
15:37:46 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
15:38:01 Rep. SJ Howell
[EXHIBIT 22](#)
15:40:15 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
15:41:14 Dir. Koan Mercer

Public Comment

15:42:04 Susanne Anders, Supervisor, Montana Office of Victim Services
15:42:28 Derek Mahlum, Bureau Chief, Division of Criminal Investigations, Department of Justice
15:42:43 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
15:43:33 May Simmons, Lake County Resident
15:44:18 Presiding Officer Barry Usher

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY TOPIC WITHIN CJOC JURISDICTION

15:44:45 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
15:45:17 Amanda McKnight, Founder, 406 Revolutionized
[EXHIBIT 23](#)
15:47:43 Jolene Bush
15:53:02 Cindy Cooney, 406 Revolutionized
15:56:04 Benjamin Lacayo
15:57:39 May Simmons, Lake County Resident

COUNCIL WORK SESSION

16:02:12 Laura Sherley, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 24](#)
[EXHIBIT 25](#)
[EXHIBIT 26](#)

16:03:12 Presiding Officer Barry Usher

Council Discussion / Questions

16:05:50 Sen. Laura Smith
16:06:02 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
16:08:11 Council Member Scott Twito
16:08:32 Sen. Laura Smith
16:08:49 Dir. Koan Mercer

Next Meeting Date: May 8, 2026

16:09:21 Laura Sherley, LSD

Direction to Staff

16:11:24 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
16:15:16 Council Member Amy Tenney
16:15:58 Dir. Eric Strauss
16:17:48 Presiding Officer Barry Usher
16:18:13 Dir. Koan Mercer
16:18:52 Laura Sherley, LSD
16:19:44 Dir. Eric Strauss
16:20:19 Dir. Koan Mercer
16:20:38 Presiding Officer Barry Usher

Public Comment

16:22:01 Strausie Hart
16:25:42 Presiding Officer Barry Usher

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 16:26:01