



NOACA Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes
August 27, 2025
NOACA Offices
1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio

Present: Please see the attached attendance record.

President Chris Ronayne, Chair of the Executive Committee, convened the meeting at 11:43 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Trustee Jeff Brandon made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 9, 2025. Commissioner Morris W. Beverage III seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of June 18, 2025. Mr. Andy Haupt seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Commissioner Jeff Riddell made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 11, 2025. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

No public comments were made at this meeting.

President's Report

President Ronayne reported that he had spoken with Mayor Matt Castelli and Ms. Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells, Chair and Vice Chair of the HR, Personnel, and Organizational Development Subcommittee respectively. He expressed appreciation for their work on the Subcommittee with Director Grace Gallucci, himself, and Board members on HR matters.

President Ronayne invited Director Gallucci to provide an update on HR matters.

Director Gallucci reported that NOACA has selected an HR Director who has accepted the position and will begin September 8. She noted that the individual's name will not be announced at this time to allow the new HR Director to address personal matters first.

President Ronayne announced that the September NOACA Board meeting will be held in Lake County and thanked Commissioner Beverage and his colleagues for hosting. He also thanked Commissioner Riddell for hosting the June meeting at Lorain County Community College. President Ronayne noted that rotating meetings among counties provides valuable opportunities to see local initiatives and highlights, such as Lorain County Community College and Mentor High School. He expressed appreciation to NOACA staff for coordinating these meetings and said he

looks forward to future visits to Medina and Geauga counties. President Ronayne then requested that the Executive Committee enter into executive session before reviewing the agenda items.

Ms. Bonnie Teeuwen made a motion to amend the agenda to move the executive session up on the agenda. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Executive Session

Ms. Teeuwen made a motion for the Executive Committee to adjourn to executive session pursuant to ORC 121.22(g)(1) to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee. Commissioner Riddell seconded the motion.

A roll call was conducted, and the motion passed unanimously. The Executive Committee adjourned to executive session at 11:50 a.m.

Ms. Teeuwen made a motion to exit the executive session at 1:20 p.m. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Executive Director/CEO Contract Extension

Commissioner Riddell made a motion to recommend to the Board extending the Executive Director/CEO's employment contract on terms to be negotiated by the Executive Committee. Mr. Haupt seconded the motion.

A roll call was conducted. Commissioner Beverage voted no. The motion passed.

President Ronayne congratulated Director Gallucci and noted that he looked forward to the rest of 2025 and the full 2026 agenda.

Executive Director's Report

Director Gallucci announced that the next Board meeting will be held in Lake County.

Executive Committee Action Items

Compliance with Federal Executive Orders on DEI

Director Gallucci stated that this item would dissolve the Equity Subcommittee. She noted that Executive Order 14173, issued on January 21, 2025, eliminates diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives in federal agencies, among contractors, and for recipients of federal grant funding, while reaffirming existing federal civil rights laws and revoking prior executive orders related to equal employment opportunity (EEO) and environmental justice (EJ). She noted that the USDOT Secretary issued guidance on April 24, 2025, outlining expectations and consequences of noncompliance for funding recipients, followed by a July 2, 2025, letter stating that USDOT will no longer enforce previous DEI or EJ requirements.

Director Gallucci noted that the following existing policies would be amended for language related to DEI, EEO, and EJ:

- Technical Assistance (TA) Program Policy
- Title VI Program Policy
- Toll Credits Policy
- Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) Policy
- Vanpool Policy
- Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Disadvantaged Communities Policy
- Environmental Justice Areas Policy
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- New or Modified Highway Interchange
- Projects Policy
- Public Participation Plan
- Regional Transportation Investment Policy (RTIP)

Director Gallucci said staff would review all applicable Board policies to identify references to DEI. In some cases, these references are descriptive, while in others they serve as criteria. She noted that adjustments will be made to ensure consistency with the Executive Orders and that dissolving the Equity Subcommittee is necessary. Legal counsel has been fully involved in these discussions and the related work. She thanked Ms. Liz Barlik for her efforts in reviewing the policies.

This item will be presented to the Board for approval September 12, after which the proposed changes will be implemented immediately.

Commissioner Beverage stated that he assumed legal counsel had reviewed the amendments and that the proposed changes would bring NOACA into compliance.

Director Gallucci confirmed this and noted that NOACA staff had worked closely with NOACA's legal counsel.

Mr. Gembala added that he and NOACA staff collaborated on the amendments to ensure the governing documents comply with the Executive Order on DEI.

Ms. Teeuwen inquired whether there had been a discussion with the Equity Subcommittee members regarding its elimination.

Director Gallucci stated that the Equity Subcommittee members had been notified that staff and legal counsel are recommending its dissolution to maintain compliance.

Ms. Teeuwen asked whether the Subcommittee had discussed the Executive Order.

Director Gallucci responded that it had not, as the last meeting was canceled after NOACA received the order and, based on the Secretary's further guidance, immediately suspended the Equity Subcommittee on the recommendation of legal counsel. She explained that while there had been preliminary discussion at a prior meeting—anticipating some action but not knowing the scope—the Subcommittee had not been informed beyond what is included in the packet and presented to the Executive Committee today. She added that members were notified in writing when the Subcommittee was suspended, and she personally spoke with the chair. Following today's meeting, another communication will likely be sent to inform members that the recommendation for dissolution is now official and being forwarded to the Board.

Ms. Teeuwen asked if there had been a discussion with the Subcommittee chair regarding its dissolution.

Director Gallucci confirmed that she spoke with Mayor Annette Blackwell, who, while disappointed, was not surprised by the recommendation and recognized the need for compliance.

Ms. Teeuwen inquired whether the Subcommittee had suggested any alternatives, and Director Gallucci stated that none were offered.

Commissioner Beverage moved to recommend the Compliance with Federal Executive Orders on DEI item be placed on the September 12, 2025, Board of Directors agenda. Trustee Brandon seconded the motion. The Committee approved it by voice vote.

Board of Directors September 12, 2025, Meeting Agenda

Director Gallucci reviewed the action items that had been recommended by other committees for inclusion on the Board of Directors' September 12, 2025, meeting agenda. She explained that the

Executive Committee would take a single action on the group of items, unless a motion was made to separate and consider one or more individually.

Governance Committee

Code of Regulations Revision – Economic Development Subcommittee (approved 5/9/25)

A revision to the Code of Regulations is required to formally codify the Economic Development Subcommittee. This change is intended to ensure compliance with the CEDS document and support the designation as an Economic Development District by US EDA. The proposed revision was presented to the Board as notice at its previous meeting and is now ready for a vote.

Finance and Audit Committee

SFY25 Overall Work Plan (OWP) Completion Report

The annual OWP Completion Report, due September 30, summarizes staff activities from the FY 2025 OWP for submission to FHWA and ODOT.

- Covers 29 projects
 - 15 fully completed
 - 5 reached 90–99% completion
 - 6 reached 80–89% completion
 - 3 less than 80% complete
 - Overall average completion rate: 92%
- Includes 122 work products or tasks across the 29 projects:
 - 98 fully completed
 - 2 at 90–99% completion
 - 4 at 80–89% completion
 - 18 less than 80% complete
- Many projects are multi-year efforts

Approximately 81% of the budget has been expended. Unspent funds—including encumbrances and contracts—will carry forward to FY 2026. When the \$15,000,000 CFI grant is included, total expenditures equal 36% of the budget.

SFY26 Overall Work Plan (OWP) Budget Amendment

The following revenues and expenditures will need to be amended to the previously approved SFY26 OWP operating and pass-through budget:

OPERATING BUDGET REVENUES	AMOUNT
Unbudgeted/Unencumbered Carry Forward	
OCPG – True Up	\$113,339
CMAQ - Rideshare	99,862
New Funding Sources	
Supplemental STBG Planning Grant	\$100,000
Supplemental Brownfield Grant – Operating	241,475
Local Crowdfunding – Irishtown Bend	726,577
Total Revenue Increase	\$1,281,253
OPERATING BUDGET EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
Personnel	\$387,476
Consultants	152,500
Other	741,277
Total Expenditures	\$1,281,253

FY 2026 Operating and Capital Budget Amended Budget: \$34,362,363
FY 2026 Federal Pass-Through Budget: \$9,751,852
Supplemental Brownfield RLF: \$750,00
\$241,475 budgeted in Operating
\$508,525 budgeted in Pass-through (Loans/Grants)

Planning and Programming Committee

SFY 2025 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Project Recommendations

CMAQ funding is available every two years. The 2025 CMAQ project recommendations total \$40 million. The Ohio Statewide CMAQ Committee administers the CMAQ program in partnership with the eight largest MPOs. CMAQ funds are provided to the State to help regions either achieve compliance with air quality standards or maintain compliance. Currently, the region is not in compliance.

The Executive Committee was presented with a list of project recommendations.

SFY 2025 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program Recommendations

The Section 5310 Program supports transportation for seniors and individuals with disabilities:

- Two years of apportionments are being administered following the Coordinated Plan update.
- Application period: February 14 – April 11
 - 2 transit project proposals requesting \$3,843,200
 - 19 competitive applications requesting \$3,111,293
- After a 5% reduction for NOACA's administrative costs, \$5,143,231 is available.
- NOACA funding recommendations:
 - \$2,314,454 for transit vehicle replacements
 - \$2,819,003 for competitive applications

The Executive Committee was presented with a list of project recommendations.

President Ronayne asked if the GCRTA project involved railcars.

Director Gallucci clarified that the request pertains to vehicle replacements in the paratransit fleet. She noted that CMAQ funding is used for GCRTA's larger vehicles, while the Section 5310 Program supports smaller vehicles than the agency's traditional paratransit units.

A total of \$5,256,033 in FTA funds is available to the Cleveland Urbanized Area (UZA) from Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2024 and 2025 apportionments, with an additional \$150,000 in carryover funds.

Director Gallucci stated that, while \$5.2 million over two years may not seem substantial, the Section 5310 Program is among the most impactful for the community. She emphasized that these funds are essential for providing transportation to seniors and individuals with disabilities throughout the region.

Geauga County Five-Year Facility Planning Area (FPA) Boundary and Prescriptions Update

NOACA updates Facility Planning Area (FPA) boundaries and prescriptions with Designated Management Agencies (DMAs) every five years. The Geauga County update began in January

2025, with draft maps distributed in May for review. Feedback was received from local jurisdictions, and all DMAs signed Acknowledgement of Map Accuracy Forms. Proposed parcel-level updates are posted on NOACA's website. The Geauga County Board of Commissioners accepted the updates, developed in close coordination with the county sanitary sewer engineer and commissioners, to streamline and improve the map.

Policy Committee

Cleveland-Elyria Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP)

The Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) is a required part of the \$1 million grant the region received from the USEPA. That grant required NOACA to prepare a Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP), which was completed and submitted last year. The CCAP builds on the PCAP, providing more detail, and is due December 1, 2025. The Executive Committee was presented with the list of requirements included in the CCAP. While a benefits analysis for low-income and disadvantaged communities (LIDAC) was originally required when NOACA signed the agreement, it is no longer mandatory—though it is still encouraged. The Board previously adopted emissions reduction targets in December 2024, and those targets remain unchanged. The CCAP will include strategies outlining how NOACA intends to meet them.

NOACA is currently holding public comment on the CCAP. Director Gallucci thanked the City of Cleveland for its assistance and leadership in developing the plan, noting that the City's sustainability team took the initiative in formulating many of the recommendations. She added that NOACA will submit the CCAP to the USEPA.

Director Gallucci stated that NOACA learned a Board alternate had reached out to USEPA Administrator Lee Zeldin to request that the contract with NOACA be dissolved, halted, or canceled. That individual is not authorized to speak on behalf of NOACA, and the Administrator's office contacted her to inform her of what had happened. USEPA is not planning to cancel the agreement, as the individual does not have authorization either as a Board member or an alternate. At this point, the only person authorized to act, based on the Board's designation, is Director Gallucci, as she signed the document on behalf of the Board. She added that if the Board were to direct her to cancel the agreement, she would do so; otherwise, she does not plan to take any action.

Commissioner Beverage asked if the agenda items would be voted on individually at the Board meeting.

Director Gallucci confirmed they would be, noting that this process was only to establish the Board agenda.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to place the slate of items on the September 12 Board of Directors agenda. Ms. Teeuwen seconded the motion. The Committee voted and the motion passed by voice vote.

Presentation/Discussion Items

No presentation/discussion items were presented at this meeting.

Reports/Updates

No reports/updates were presented at this meeting.

Old Business

No old business was discussed at this meeting.

New Business

Director Gallucci reported that Ohio's Inspector General issued a report last week alleging that Medina County Engineer Andy Conrad, a NOACA Board member, and an ODOT employee involved in NOACA work submitted a falsified CMAQ application in the last funding round. She explained that the recommendations in the report concern the ODOT employee only; no recommendations were made for the county engineer since he is an elected official, who is subject to different rules, or NOACA staff.

Director Gallucci noted that staff conducted an unofficial review of the scoring criteria and believes the project likely would have been funded regardless. The falsification related to the level of service (LOS), which was listed as an F instead of the actual C or D. While this made the project appear more eligible, the report used to justify the application also indicated an F, so NOACA staff would not have detected a discrepancy. Staff will review the matter in more detail. She stated that official action is needed for the Ohio Statewide CMAQ Committee to review the application through their model to confirm whether the project would still have been funded with the correct LOS rating. Some criteria are prescribed, while others are calculated with statewide emissions data, so the process will take time. She hopes the review will be complete by the Board meeting, though Columbus may not be on the same schedule.

President Ronayne asked if the CMAQ Committee's review using the corrected LOS rating was the rescoring process for the application affected by the alleged falsification.

Director Gallucci confirmed. She added that staff wanted the Executive Committee to be aware of the matter, that appropriate steps are being taken, and that transparency is important. When asked by President Ronayne what year this occurred, Director Gallucci said she believed it was 2022.

Commissioner Beverage asked if the Climate Change Action Plan was required to receive funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation or other federal sources.

Director Gallucci explained that, at the time, the plan was a requirement for funding authorized by Congress through the Inflation Reduction Act, specifically under the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants program. She noted that Lake County received approximately \$80 million for improvements at the Painesville power plant, and having the PCAP in place was necessary to secure those funds.

President Ronayne reminded members that the next Board meeting is scheduled for September 12, 2025, at Mentor High School in Lake County.

Adjournment

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:50 p.m. Ms. Teeuwen seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

The next regular Executive Committee meeting will be Friday, November 14, 2025, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., at the NOACA offices.

Note: Additional information on the agenda items can be found on [NOACA's website](#) and [YouTube channel](#).



Executive Committee 2025 Attendance Record

MEETING DATES	Special Meeting 1/24/25	2/14/25	5/9/25	Special Meeting 6/18/25	Special Meeting 7/11/25	8/27/25	11/14/25
BEVERAGE III , Morris (Morgan McIntosh, Alternate)	X	A	X	X		X	
BIBB , Justin (Bonnie Teeuwen, Alternate) (Mike Culp, Alternate on 5/9/25 and 7/11/25)	A	A	A	A	A	A	
BRANDON , Jeff (Allen Biehl, Alternate)	X	X	X	X	X	X	
DVORAK , Jim (Andy Haupt, Alternate)	A	X	A	X	X	A	
RIDDELL , Jeff (John Gall, Alternate) (Thomas Patrick III, Alternate on 5/9/25)	A	A	A	X	X	X	
RONAYNE , Chris (Debbie Berry, Alternate)	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Total Member Attendance	6	6	6	6	5	6	

X = Member present A = Alternate present