



**NOACA HR, Personnel, and Organizational Development Subcommittee  
Meeting Minutes**

March 11, 2025

NOACA Offices

1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio

**Present:** Please see the attached attendance record.

Mayor Matt Castelli, Chair of HR, Personnel, and Organizational Development Subcommittee, convened the meeting at 2:32 p.m.

**Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 25, 2025. Mr. John Gall seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

**Public Comments on Agenda Items**

No public comments were made at this meeting.

**Executive Director's Report**

No report was presented at this meeting.

**Action Items**

No action items were presented at this meeting.

**Presentation/Discussion Items**

**Internal Strategic Plan**

Ms. Suzanne Miklos from OE Strategies expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to discuss the Internal Strategic Plan (ISP or Plan) with the Subcommittee. She emphasized that one of the Subcommittee's most important responsibilities is to support the agency in enhancing its organizational effectiveness and culture, which aligns with the plan's objectives.

Ms. Miklos presented information on the following:

- Project Plan and Timeline
- Internal Vision Statement to Deliver NOACA's Vision
- Ongoing Work - Cultural Values at NOACA
- Comprehensive Plan
  - Systems and Processes: 13 Recommendations
  - Software and Tools: 7 Recommendations
  - Leadership: 5 Recommendations
  - Staff and Culture: 9 Recommendations
- Implementation Tracker

- Staff and Culture
- Systems and Processes
- Software and Tools
- Leadership

Ms. Miklos noted that ongoing efforts are already underway, including a Culture Committee, team-building activities, and established communication channels like an intranet and a suggestion box. These initiatives are being overseen and monitored by both the Steering Committee and senior management.

County Executive Ronayne thanked Ms. Miklos for the report and her work. He said it looked like several months of iteration with NOACA staff and leadership. He said he was curious about the 360 outtakes and how to make that an iterative process going forward.

Ms. Miklos stated that a 360-degree review of individual leaders has not yet been conducted. Regarding the survey results, she noted that the outcomes were within the average range—neither indicating a lack of necessary improvements nor causing significant concern for NOACA. The focus is on progressing from average or good to even better. Under Communications Strategies, the themes were as follows:

1. “Feeling like I understand what decisions I can make”
2. “Feeling like I am fully empowered to do my role and understand how it fits into every other role”

Ms. Miklos stated that the two themes highlighted above were reflected in the plan. She noted that positive themes were:

1. “I love being here”
2. “I love the work that I do”
3. “I love the expertise that I get to share”

Ms. Miklos stated that the survey will be readministered within the next few months. OE Strategies will assess the progress, enabling NOACA staff to refine and adjust the plan accordingly.

County Executive Ronayne said the intranet is a great idea for communication purposes.

Mayor Castelli asked Ms. Miklos to elaborate on the multiple positions recommended in the presentation.

Ms. Miklos stated that the first recommended position was an HR role and asked Director Gallucci for further comment.

Director Gallucci noted that two part-time employees were handling some HR duties at NOACA, and the recommendation was to increase HR presence for staff support. Additionally, NOACA conducted education on its Employee Resource Program, which provides employee support with some HR-related functions. However, many NOACA staff members were unaware of its availability.

Ms. Miklos stated that the second area of consideration was a role like a Chief of Staff or COO, focusing on organizational integration. From a structural perspective, this position was also recommended to enhance efficiency.

Mayor Castelli then asked if training and development of staff fell under the HR position.

Ms. Miklos confirmed that training and development fell under the HR position. She explained that there were different ways to structure this role—either as a generalist resource or with a specific focus on training and development.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells then asked about the composition of the Steering Committee, specifically whether it consisted of NOACA's senior leadership.

Ms. Miklos responded that the steering committee was a cross-sectional group of 10 or 12 individuals representing all departments and levels within the organization.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells asked whether the Steering Committee had a designated chairperson.

Ms. Miklos responded that the committee was coordinated by Sarah White and Liz Barlik. She explained that the group operated as an inclusive body, reaching decisions through consensus.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells then asked if there was any tracking of the implementation of these recommendations yet.

Ms. Miklos confirmed that NOACA is tracking the implementation of these recommendations. She noted that while she had provided some examples of completed initiatives, the Steering Committee is responsible for tracking all specific progress. Some key accomplishments include posting the Employee Value Proposition on the website, efforts in recruitment, ongoing activities by the Culture Committee, significant progress on the intranet, the establishment of a suggestion box, and regular leadership discussions by the Senior Management Team (SMT) every other month. While she could not provide specifics on some project work, she emphasized that a more formal reporting list exists within the Steering Committee.

County Executive Ronayne then asked if the Steering Committee is an internal group within the organization.

Ms. Miklos said yes.

County Executive Ronayne inquired about the continuation of the ISP after OE Strategies' contract ends, asking if their work was ongoing and which phase they were in.

Director Gallucci clarified that while OE Strategies' contract remains active, their work on the ISP is complete. However, they continue to support NOACA in its implementation, particularly at the senior staff level.

County Executive Ronayne voiced his approval of this continuation and referenced Ms. Miklos' mention of the 360-degree survey. He asked if there were opportunities for additional assessments, emphasizing the value of deeper staff input. While recognizing the Board's focus on the CEO and strategic goals, he inquired about a structured process for gathering staff feedback without Board overreach into operations.

Director Gallucci stated that staff are discussing a formal process for conducting a 360-degree review for the senior team as part of this year's performance review, with OE Strategies facilitating it.

Ms. Miklos noted that the steering committee has been highly engaged and anticipates opportunities for staff discussions once the survey is completed. She praised NOACA's approach,

highlighting the value of all-staff meetings, where employees can review results, track progress, and provide input. She expects this practice to continue.

Ms. India Birdsong Terry had a question about the following item in the ISP:

<u>Staff and Culture</u> Improve quality of performance feedback, planning, and coaching	Item No. 9 Add key performance indicators (KPIs) to job descriptions.
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Ms. Terry asked Ms. Miklos to elaborate on the process for KPI development, focusing less on job descriptions and more on whether it would be an internal or external effort and how it aligns with the strategic plan.

Ms. Miklos responded that it would be an internal exercise. She noted that employees appreciate the work plan process and suggested more education on using the OWP to help staff understand how their roles connect.

Director Gallucci added that NOACA is reevaluating its performance process, previously reviewed with OE Strategies. While job descriptions are included in the performance plan, metrics are inconsistently applied across the organization. NOACA will be more intentional about developing KPIs, ensuring they align and support career progression across different levels.

Ms. Terry had a question about the following item in the ISP:

<u>Staff and Culture</u> Become an employer of choice in NEO	Item No. 5 Conduct training on communication and how to foster a spirit of collaboration
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Ms. Terry asked whether KPI development would require internal or external assistance and whether it would involve retreats or an annual process.

Director Gallucci responded that staff are considering both. NOACA holds annual organizational retreats to kick off the performance year. The December 2024 meeting emphasized communication and collaboration, which will continue at the organizational level. Additionally, staff are exploring training options focused on these areas for individual employees.

Mayor Castelli inquired whether each employee understands their KPIs as they relate to their job descriptions.

Director Gallucci explained that staff currently refer to performance measurements as "metrics" rather than KPIs. Each performance plan includes an objective, a goal, and a metric, but these vary among employees—even those in the same role. The goal is to make them more consistent and better aligned across different levels.

Ms. Terry asked if there were overarching KPIs for the organization that individual metrics would connect to.

Director Gallucci responded that staff are working on this. While the OWP includes performance metrics, they primarily track projects and studies rather than measuring overall organizational success. Efforts are underway to develop "organizational performance metrics," incorporating both strategic and tactical elements, which will align with the ISP.

Ms. Miklos noted that the Subcommittee's questions are valuable in helping employees understand how their work connects across the employee life cycle and back to the organization's overall goals. She emphasized the importance of making clear connections from job postings to performance evaluations and organizational objectives.

Director Gallucci stated that NOACA has a Regional Strategic Plan focused on community impact but acknowledged the need for stronger alignment between these broader performance metrics and individual performance reviews. This is an area of ongoing work.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells asked about the timeline for implementing this plan, questioning whether it spans multiple years or a shorter period.

Director Gallucci mentioned that she initially suggested a one-year timeline for the plan but acknowledged that it might be too ambitious.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells responded that the decision ultimately rests with Director Gallucci but requested that the Subcommittee receive a quarterly implementation tracker. Director Gallucci agreed.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells emphasized the importance of maintaining a sense of urgency in implementing the plan. Director Gallucci agreed, noting that staff have categorized tasks as short-, medium-, and long-term to ensure progress while maintaining urgency.

Ms. Miklos highlighted the balance between urgency and the realities of change management, noting that while one-year plans are common, full implementation often takes closer to two years.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells agreed, stating she had no issue with a longer timeline if progress was being made within the change management process.

Ms. Miklos concurred, emphasizing that while the initial timeline may be optimistic, movement is happening, discussions are ongoing, and oversight from the Subcommittee is valuable. She thanked the Subcommittee for its efforts.

Director Gallucci expressed gratitude to Ms. Miklos and OE Strategies for their valuable support to NOACA. She acknowledged Ms. Miklos' effective collaboration with the team.

### **HR Job Description & Recruitment Plan**

Director Gallucci distributed copies of the HR job description to the Subcommittee, explaining that it incorporates input from senior staff, their teams, the Subcommittee (particularly the chair and vice chair), and similar positions from other MPOs. The job description reflects extensive feedback and careful revisions.

Director Gallucci thanked Ms. Lindy Burt for her assistance in compiling the document, noting that they worked diligently on it.

Director Gallucci explained that the position is an Associate Director as it does not have a department or division budget but is part of the Executive budget and division, reporting directly to the Executive Director. The job description follows the typical NOACA format, highlighting key details first, followed by duties, responsibilities, credentials, and required skills. Staff aimed for a comprehensive job description but are open to feedback on streamlining it if necessary. The role emphasizes HR functions, including policy development, collaboration with senior management, organizational planning, succession planning, and staffing. Standard HR Director responsibilities are also included.

Mayor Castelli found the HR job description and recruitment plan comprehensive. He inquired whether the position would be a high-level HR role while also requiring some technical work, emphasizing the need for clarity in the job description. He noted that the HR professional will function as a department of one, despite collaborating with the entire staff. Since candidates at this level may be accustomed to administrative or HR generalist support, he stressed the importance of making expectations clear during recruitment, if not explicitly stated in the job description.

Director Gallucci noted that all NOACA Directors, even those with staff, perform technical work due to the organization's small size—no director is solely a manager. She praised the senior team for handling both managerial and technical responsibilities. The HR Director role will be similar, but as a department of one, it will be even more challenging.

Ms. Katie Taylor asked where the HR Director position would be on the organizational chart.

Director Gallucci stated that the Associate Director would report to her as part of the Executive Division.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells asked if all the payroll functions are handled by the Finance Division.

Director Gallucci yes

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells also asked if the Finance Division handles compliance and I-9s.

Director Gallucci said yes.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells suggested that NOACA highlight the entrepreneurial nature of the HR Director position during recruitment, emphasizing that the role involves building upon an already well-functioning HR system to elevate it further. She recommended articulating the available support in recruiting materials while making it clear that the position requires initiative. She also noted that linking the role to NOACA's Internal Strategic Plan is a positive aspect and acknowledged that recruiting for this position may be a little bit tricky.

Director Gallucci appreciated Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells's use of the word "entrepreneurial" to describe the HR Director role, agreeing that it effectively captures what NOACA is seeking.

County Executive Ronayne praised the job description, noting the emphasis on collaboration with Finance and the legal team. He also commended the decision to elevate the role from a generalist to a director position. He inquired whether the title variance between "Associate Director" and "Director" was due to pay grade considerations.

Director Gallucci confirmed that the classification was set to fit the pay grade and structure, as the role does not oversee a division and operates as a solo position.

County Executive Ronayne asked for clarification on whether the position in the summary is a Director.

Director Gallucci confirmed that it is a director-level position and part of the senior management team within the Executive Division. She provided an example of Ms. Liz Barlik, who holds an Associate Director title, reports directly to her, and is part of the Executive Division.

County Executive Ronayne noted that while Ms. Barlik is classified as an Associate Director, she functions as a Director reporting to Director Gallucci.

Director Gallucci said that was correct.

County Executive Ronayne praised the Subcommittee for elevating the role from HR Generalist to HR Director, emphasizing that it aligns with NOACA's goals and supports Director Gallucci.

Director Gallucci clarified that this position is distinguished from other directors because it does not oversee a division with multiple staff or a budget.

County Executive Ronayne noted that while the position is classified as Associate Director, it functions as a Director, which Director Gallucci confirmed.

County Executive Ronayne agreed with previous comments that this role requires an entrepreneurial mindset, describing it as a "player-manager" position. The HR Director will need to handle both routine administrative tasks and high-level leadership responsibilities alongside Director Gallucci, as they will not have direct staff support.

Mayor Castelli stated that there was a lot of exciting stuff that this individual is going to get involved with for the organization.

County Executive Ronayne emphasized that the HR director will handle both tactical and strategic responsibilities. They will be responsible for day-to-day HR tasks while also providing strategic leadership and visioning alongside Director Gallucci. The role will involve building on OE Strategies' work and helping shape NOACA's future in collaboration with Director Gallucci and the senior management team.

Commissioner Regovich noted that while the HR Director will work independently, their collaboration with other directors will naturally impact and receive support from staff under those directors. He also endorsed the use of the term "entrepreneurial," as it reflects a strong foundation with room for growth.

Ms. Terry asked if the HR Director would follow the same remote work policy as other staff.

Director Gallucci confirmed that all NOACA staff, including the HR Director, work from home on Mondays. She explained that closing the building on Mondays helps NOACA save energy while giving employees flexibility to plan their week.

### **HR Manual Review**

Director Gallucci informed the Subcommittee that she had sent them the HR manual after the last meeting. She described it as a decent document but acknowledged room for improvement. Updating the manual would be a responsibility of the new HR Director.

Mayor Castelli inquired about the last review and update of the HR manual.

Director Gallucci stated that the manual is updated regularly for individual sections. When something comes up, staff evaluate and update that section. The wholesale review was done by NOACA's consultant about two years ago.

County Executive Ronayne inquired about NOACA's best practices regarding review timelines and updates.

Mayor Castelli said he believed that the way Director Gallucci described it was fine. It has been through a comprehensive review within the last couple of years and Director Gallucci updates it as needed. Updating the manual is one of those things that should be done regularly.

Commissioner Regovich supported having the new HR Director review the manual. He mentioned that he attempted to read the 59-page document and noted that it contained information in need of updating such as policies on smoking.

Mayor Castelli thanked Director Gallucci for sharing the HR manual and asked if it had been reviewed by NOACA's legal team.

Director Gallucci confirmed that the manual was initially developed by NOACA's legal counsel and was reviewed two years ago by a consultant, who is also an HR attorney.

### **Executive Session**

Mr. Gall made a motion for the HR, Personnel, and Organizational Development Subcommittee to adjourn to executive session pursuant to ORC 121.22(G)(1) to consider the compensation of the Executive Director. Commissioner Regovich seconded the motion. Roll call was done and the vote was unanimous.

The Subcommittee adjourned to executive session at 3:25 p.m.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells made a motion to exit the executive session. Commissioner Regovich seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

The Subcommittee exited out of the executive session at 4:00 p.m.

### **Reports/Updates**

No reports or updates were presented at this meeting.

### **Old Business**

No old business was discussed at this meeting.

### **New Business**

Ms. Terry made a motion to recommend the 2025 Performance Goals and Competencies for Executive Director Grace Gallucci to the Executive Committee. Commissioner Regovich seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

### **Adjournment**

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:01 p.m. Commissioner Regovich seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

The HR, Personnel, and Organizational Development Subcommittee will hold its next meeting Tuesday, April 8, 2025, 2:30-4:00 p.m.

*Note: Additional information on this meeting can be found on [NOACA's website](#) or on [NOACA's YouTube channel](#).*



**NOACA HR, Personnel and Organizational Development Subcommittee 2025  
Attendance Record**

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>2/11/25</b>	<b>2/25/25</b>	<b>3/11/25</b>	<b>4/8/25</b>
<b>CASTELLI, Matt</b>	X	X	X	
<b>DREYFUSS-WELLS, Kyle</b>	X	X	X	
<b>GALL, John</b>	X	X	X	
<b>HARRISON, Aaron</b>				
<b>REGOVICH, Richard</b>	X	X	X	
<b>RONAYNE, Chris</b> (Debbie Berry, Alternate)	X	A	X	
<b>TAYLOR, Katie</b>	X	X	X	
<b>TERRY, India Birdsong</b>		X	X	