



NOACA Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
June 13, 2025
Lorain County Community College

Present: Please see the attached attendance record.

President Chris Ronayne convened the NOACA Board meeting at 9:05 a.m.

President Ronayne introduced Rep. Gayle Manning and Lorain County Community College (LCCC) President Marcia Ballinger, who spoke to the Board.

Rep. Gayle Manning welcomed the Board to Lorain County and highlighted Lorain County Community College (LCCC) as a local and national treasure, often mistaken for a four-year institution due to its quality. She expressed appreciation that NOACA brought the meeting to Lorain County, allowing her to attend more easily, as traveling to Cleveland has been a challenge with her demanding schedule. She shared that she serves as Speaker Pro Tempore of the Ohio House and sits on several key committees, including Finance, K-12 Education, Higher Ed, and General Government. Her recent focus has been the state budget, currently in its final negotiation stages. Though unable to stay for the full meeting, she emphasized her ongoing work with local leaders—mayors, superintendents, county commissioners, and LCCC President Marcia Ballinger—stressing her commitment to workforce development, bringing good jobs to the region, and listening to the priorities of Lorain County residents.

President Marcia Ballinger warmly welcomed the NOACA Board to Lorain County Community College (LCCC) and expressed gratitude to Rep. Gayle Manning, Commissioner Jeff Riddell, and NOACA for their continued support, including the recent installation of EV charging stations. She shared how LCCC is advancing economic development in Lorain County, Northeast Ohio, and the state by preparing a skilled workforce aligned with industry needs. President Ballinger emphasized Lorain County's strong potential for growth in GDP, employment, population, and advanced manufacturing, backed by research from Team NEO. She highlighted LCCC's pioneering role in Ohio's higher education system, including being the first community college with a permanent campus and the first authorized to offer applied bachelor's degrees thanks to Rep. Manning's legislative support. She noted LCCC's nationally recognized programs, including its MEMS program with 100% job placement, and the University Partnership, which allows students to earn degrees from 13 partner universities. With 90% of graduates staying in the region and maintaining one of the lowest tuition rates in Ohio, LCCC plays a critical role in local economic stability. President Ballinger celebrated the college's success in exceeding its 2019–2025 goal of 10,000 graduates a year early and outlined LCCC's bold new vision: by 2035, 50% of residents in every Lorain County community will earn a credential or degree and have a family-sustaining job by age 35. Key to this goal is dual enrollment, where LCCC leads the state with nearly half of county high school students graduating with college credit. She concluded by thanking NOACA

and the county for their alignment in shared strategic goals that support the region's growth.

President Ronayne expressed appreciation to Lorain County for hosting the Board meeting at Lorain County Community College's impressive facility. He complimented them on their organization and plans.

Meeting Minutes

Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 14, 2025. Ms. Mary Cierebiej seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Committee Updates

Executive Committee

President Ronayne shared that the Executive Committee has held a series of productive meetings. He thanked Mayor Matt Castelli (Chair), Vice Chair Kyle Dreyfus-Wells, and India Birdsong Terry for their valuable contributions to the HR, Personnel, and Organizational Development Subcommittee. He noted that the search for a new HR Director is progressing well and that NOACA will soon have someone in place. He also expressed his appreciation for working with Director Gallucci on setting goals and objectives, and mentioned that a report will be presented at the next Board meeting.

President Ronayne announced that NOACA's Annual Meeting will be held in the fall and will feature a water theme.

External Affairs

Councilwoman Stephanie Howse-Jones announced that NOACA will host an External Affairs Virtual Forum titled "*Transportation for All: Mobility Options in Northeast Ohio*" on Thursday, June 26, 2025, from 12 to 1 p.m.

Executive Director's Report

Director Grace Gallucci thanked Lorain County Community College (LCCC) and Commissioner Jeff Riddell for the facility. She noted that the facility was not new to NOACA, which had held many open houses and public meetings there, including during work on Vibrant NEO.

Director Gallucci informed members that some news items would be presented during the meeting, while others were included in the meeting packet with links.

Director Gallucci reported on the following:

- **Communications and Outreach – In the News**
 - NOACA In the News: Headlines
 - NOACA In the News: DeWine signs \$11B transportation budget that repeals Strongsville-Brunswick interchange mandate
 - NOACA Billboards
 - Draft LRP Public Comment Period
- **Legislative and Funding Issues**
 - Ohio Biennial Transportation Budget enacted on March 31
 - Ohio Biennial Operating Budget
 - NOACA submitted priorities for federal surface transportation reauthorization to congressional committee leaders and local delegation
 - Federal budget reconciliation process
- **Overall Work Program (OWP)**

- Engagements & Meetings
- NOACA External Affairs Virtual Forum
- NOACA-Vibrant NEO Brownfields RLF
- The Gohio Commute app is now available on iPhone & Android
- Community Safety Reports
- EV Charging Station Program Phase I
- I-71 Corridor Study
- City of Lorain TLCl: E. 28th Street Complete Streets Corridor Study
- May Bicycle & Pedestrian Count
- Meeting Minutes Schedule
- **Announcements**
 - Nominations for the 2025 Walter F. Ehrnfelt, Jr. Award for Outstanding Regional Contribution are due by August 15, 2025
 - NOACA's Annual Meeting will be held October 3, 2025, at the Huntington Convention Center of Cleveland, 12 – 2 p.m. The next Annual Meeting is scheduled for October 3, 2025, and its theme is *Northeast Ohio's Maritime Transportation System: Challenges and Opportunities*.
 - The next Board of Directors meeting will be September 12, 2025, in Lake County.

President Ronayne thanked Commissioner Beverage for helping NOACA find a location for the next Board meeting.

President Ronayne continued the committee updates section of the agenda for comments.

Policy Committee

Mr. Skip Claypool stated that at a previous Policy Committee meeting, he had made a motion for NOACA to comply with the law, referencing President Trump's Executive Order on DEI, which he believed NOACA might be violating. He announced his intention to bring the same motion before the Board, warning that agencies receiving federal funding could be at risk if they fail to comply. He cited a letter from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) supporting that concern, which states that agencies could lose their funding if they do not follow the Executive Order. He noted that he did not want NOACA's federal funding to be at risk.

Mr. Claypool made a motion for NOACA to adhere to the Executive Order on DEI. Mayor John Marra seconded the motion.

Director Gallucci stated that NOACA staff had considered the motion presented by Mr. Claypool at the Policy Committee meeting. Staff engaged legal counsel to review the directives in the Executive Order and to prepare guidance for NOACA, which was presented to the Executive Committee the previous month. Staff were evaluating all of NOACA's programs to ensure compliance with the DEI initiatives outlined in the Executive Order. They were working toward that goal and planned to bring recommendations to the August Executive Committee meeting. Any requirements needing Board approval were expected to be addressed at the September Board meeting.

Mr. Claypool said that a yes vote would reinforce what NOACA was already doing.

Mr. Ryan Gembala agreed with Director Gallucci's response and confirmed that a review was underway. This review focused on policies, committees, and related documents to ensure compliance with President Trump's Executive Order. After the review has been completed, recommendations will be brought to the Executive Committee for further action.

Mr. Claypool said his motion had simply been for NOACA to follow the law. He noted that it appeared NOACA was going to do just that, so a yes vote would emphasize that the agency was committed to complying with the law.

Mr. Gembala stated that compliance with the law is NOACA's top priority.

Mayor Annette Blackwell noted that the issue had been raised in the Policy Committee meeting. As Chair of Equity Committee, she emphasized the importance of applying an equity lens to all work. She highlighted the history of planning in communities of color and low-to-moderate-income areas, where highway projects had disrupted families, closed small businesses, and deepened economic hardship and the wealth gap. She expressed encouragement upon hearing from Director Gallucci that steps were being taken to ensure compliance, making the organization's commitment to equity clear in both planning and execution. Speaking as the mayor of a city impacted by inequitable policies, she shared her optimism that even if the subcommittee were to dissolve, the equity-focused work would continue as part of the organization's standard practice.

Ms. Cierebiej explained that the Policy Committee voted on Mr. Claypool's motion, but it did not pass. Consequently, the issue was referred to the Executive Committee. She pointed out that since the Equity Subcommittee was established by NOACA's charter, eliminating it would require a charter revision rather than a simple motion. She clarified that the matter was being addressed through the proper channels and would be reconsidered later.

Mr. Claypool clarified that Ms. Cierebiej's account had not been quite accurate, explaining that the motion at the last Policy Committee meeting had been tabled, with no discussion at that time about referring it to the Executive Committee. He acknowledged that the matter had eventually gone to the Executive Committee, which he had supported. His main concern had been ensuring legal compliance, emphasizing that if NOACA had not complied, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) would have had the authority to decertify and defund NOACA. He had stressed that the Board's priority should have been to follow the law and had expressed support for any action, including an affirmative vote reinforces that the Board wants to follow the law.

Mayor Sam Alai sought clarification to confirm that there was no indication that NOACA had violated any regulations, and he requested confirmation of this point.

Mr. Gembala said there was no indication that NOACA was out of compliance.

Mayor Alai asked if NOACA staff were looking into the matter.

Mr. Gembala said yes.

Mayor Alai expressed that the Board did not need an affirmative vote to do the right thing. He believed a separate vote to follow the law was unnecessary.

Mayor Tim DeGeeter made a motion to table Mr. Claypool's request. Councilman Brian Kazy seconded the motion.

Mr. Claypool read a paragraph out of the letter from the Department of Transportation:

"Whether or not described in neutral terms, any policy, program, or activity that is premised on a prohibited classification, including discriminatory policies or practices designed to achieve so-called "diversity, equity, and inclusion," or "DEI," goals, presumptively violates Federal law. Recipients of DOT financial assistance must ensure that the personnel practices

(including hiring, promotions, and terminations) within their organizations are merit-based and do not discriminate based on prohibited categories. Recipients are also precluded from allocating money received under DOT awards—such as through contracts or the provision of other benefits—based on suspect classifications. Any discriminatory actions in your policies, programs, and activities based on prohibited categories constitute a clear violation of Federal law and the terms of your grant agreements.”

Mr. Claypool questioned the existence of NOACA's Equity Subcommittee, suggesting it appeared to conflict with the letter from USDOT and Executive Order issued by President Trump. He expressed doubt about the Board's position that NOACA was not in violation.

Mayor Alai noted that discussion was not permitted when a motion was on the table and indicated that engaging in discussion at that point would be a violation of Robert's Rules.

Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan requested a roll call vote.

President Ronayne stated that a “yes” vote would be to table the motion put forth by Mr. Claypool.

Roll call votes: Yes = 33, No = 8, Abstention = 1

The following Board members voted no:

- Mayor Larry Antoskiewicz
- Commissioner Morris W. Beverage III
- Commissioner Aaron Harrison
- Ms. Bethany Dentler
- Mr. Thomas Patrick III
- Mayor John Marra
- Mr. Andy Rose
- Mr. Skip Claypool

President Ronayne stated that after receiving the letter referenced by Mr. Claypool, he spoke with Director Gallucci, and NOACA staff had since been working with legal counsel to conduct a thorough review, examining each program and committee. He noted that due diligence was actively underway and that an update would be provided at the September Board meeting.

Commissioner Harrison asked if the Board could expect a legal opinion on the scope of its activities in light of the executive directive.

Mr. Gembala agreed that it was fair to expect such guidance, including input from legal counsel.

Mr. Mike Kubek assured the Board that ODOT and the NOACA Board were committed to following the law and that ODOT was still awaiting guidance on its implementation.

Commissioner Riddell acknowledged that NOACA's process could be difficult but emphasized the importance of allowing it to run its course. He described the matter as significant and expressed appreciation for the motion on the floor. However, he stressed that the Board should allow staff to complete their review so the Board could assess the quality of their work and manage the issue from the bottom up, rather than imposing decisions from the top down.

Mr. Claypool asked whether the Board intended to continue operating without a suspension or decision process until September, potentially violating the law in the meantime. He noted that, based on his reading of the law, clarification was needed from ODOT regarding who had the authority to make the decision. Although ODOT had received the letter and consulted with its counsel, the situation remained unclear to him.

President Ronayne acknowledged that Mr. Claypool was entitled to his interpretation.

Public Comment

Attached to these meeting minutes are comments made by Mr. John Kalas.

Action Items/Resolutions

Board of Directors

Resolution 2025-020: 2025 Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) Project Priorities

Director Gallucci stated that TRAC requests MPO priorities for each application cycle. Two applications from the NOACA region, totaling \$87 million, were submitted for recommendation. Priorities were determined based on alignment with NOACA's goals and Long Range Plan and would be presented at regional TRAC project hearings.

Director Gallucci noted that staff had evaluated the projects and were seeking Board approval of the recommended priorities and that one project had lacked sufficient information, so only one was recommended to move forward.

Mr. Ed May explained that the Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC), managed by ODOT, oversees selecting projects for the Major New Capacity Program funding. To qualify, projects must cost more than \$12 million, enhance transportation capacity or reduce congestion, and be important to mobility, economic development, and quality of life. Each Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) must prioritize its projects before the public hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

Mr. May presented information on the following 2025 NOACA Region TRAC Applications:

- GCRTA Light Rail Track Reconstruction - GCRTA plans to reconstruct ten miles of light rail track, including turnouts, crossovers, pocket track, and roadway crossings along the Blue and Green Lines, specifically between Shaker Square and the eastern termini. The project also includes drainage improvements on the Green Line. GCRTA is requesting \$16.7 million for construction, following a previous allocation of \$4.3 million.
- City of Brook Park: SR-291-2.90 - The City of Brook Park is requesting \$70.3 million for the SR-291-2.90 project to enhance infrastructure, system functionality, mobility, access, and freight movement. Planned improvements in the I-71/Snow Road interchange area include adding a lane to the I-71 NB exit ramp, geometric upgrades to the SB ramp, grade separation over Engle Road and CSX Railroad, new roadway connectors, road widenings, and a pedestrian bridge over Engle Road.

Mr. May noted that the Brook Park Project has not gone through NOACA's Long Rang Plan review process. He stated that regional priorities would be shared with TRAC and presented at the Northeast Ohio regional public hearing. Project sponsors submitted their requests between May 1 and May 31. TRAC plans to hold up to six public hearings from August through October, with a draft project list expected to be released for public comment in December. The Board-approved project priorities will be communicated to TRAC and presented at the Northeast Ohio regional TRAC hearing.

Ms. Bonnie Teeuwen made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-020. Ms. Debbie Berry seconded the motion.

Councilwoman Howse-Jones asked whether it had been NOACA's usual practice to put forth a project that had not gone through its Long Range Plan process.

Director Gallucci said no. She explained that NOACA requires supported projects, particularly prioritized ones, to go through its processes to ensure regional support, public hearings, and outreach. This process also helps NOACA communicate accurate priorities to TRAC, and without that information NOACA could not properly advocate.

Councilwoman Howse-Jones asked why the two projects were combined into one resolution instead of being presented as separate resolutions.

Director Gallucci explained that NOACA usually ranks 2 to 6 projects when presenting to TRAC, assigning them clear priority numbers from 1 through 6. These projects were put on the agenda as a single item. She acknowledged that there was a difference with this item: one project was ranked number one, while the other was not ranked at all.

President Ronayne asked Councilwoman Howse-Jones if she wanted the item to be carried in a different direction.

Councilwoman Howse-Jones said she would like to see the two projects separated.

President Ronayne said the separation was doable.

Councilwoman Howse-Jones made a motion to separate the GCRTA project and the Brook Park project so that each one had its own resolution. Mayor Kim Thomas seconded the motion.

Ms. Berry requested that each motion be stated clearly to ensure everyone understood what was being proposed, emphasizing the need for clarity in cases involving separate motions.

Mayor Castelli expressed confusion, stating that, based on the information provided, the second item was not recommended because it had not gone through the process. He questioned why a vote would take place and what exactly the Board would be voting on in that context.

President Ronayne clarified that he believed that the Board would be voting yes or no on whether to recommend the project to TRAC. He then sought clarification from Director Gallucci or Mr. Gembala to confirm his understanding.

Mayor Castelli interpreted the resolution as recommending one project, while stating that the other project was not currently ranked or recommended because it still needed to go through the review process.

Director Gallucci explained that staff would convey the same position through two separate resolutions: the GCRTA project would be submitted to TRAC as the priority project, and the Brook Park project would not be ranked, and that non-ranking would also be submitted to TRAC.

Ms. Berry suggested clarifying the language by stating in the first resolution that the Board was prioritizing one project for the region, the GCRTA project, as NOACA's number one priority. For the second resolution concerning the Brook Park project, she recommended stating that the Board should indicate there was not enough information and that the project had not gone through NOACA's proper process; therefore, NOACA was not recommending it for TRAC prioritization at this time.

Ms. Cierebiej suggested striking the Brook Park project from Resolution 2025-020.

President Ronayne stated that the Board would not want to be completely silent on the Brook Park project.

Councilwoman Howse-Jones noted that NOACA has a process, as seen earlier with another resolution, where projects were considered individually. She emphasized that, in this case, she lacked sufficient information to make an informed decision and believed that it would be unfair to group a project that had completed the necessary steps with one that had not. She supported separating the projects to avoid jeopardizing the one with complete information, but expressed openness to striking the Brook Park project from the resolution.

Mayor Marra made a motion to table Resolution 2025-020 to allow the two items to be separated and clarified before returning to the Board for a vote, rather than separating the projects immediately. The motion was not seconded and therefore did not carry.

Ms. Berry stated that because the two applications had been submitted, the Board had a responsibility to address both. She emphasized that the Board currently lacked enough information to make an informed decision on the second project but could reconsider the matter once the necessary details were available.

Commissioner Harrison noted that the motion to separate the projects would not change their nature, as both projects were written in the affirmative. He questioned whether separating them would maintain clarity, expressing that keeping them together might better reflect the distinction that one project was ranked and endorsed, while the other was not. He also raised concerns about how TRAC might interpret separate approvals, wondering whether the distinction between a ranked and unranked project would still be conveyed.

President Ronayne stated that it ultimately depended on how the narrative was framed in the second resolution, and he expressed confidence that it could be accomplished.

Mr. Mike Kubek stated that, as ODOT's representative, he would abstain from the vote because the project rankings would be submitted to TRAC.

The Board voted to separate the two items in Resolution 2025-020. Mr. Kubek abstained from voting. The motion passed by voice vote.

Ms. Berry made a motion for the Board to recommend the GCRTA Light Rail Reconstruction project as the number one and only project the Board was supporting at this time. Ms. Cierebiej seconded the motion.

The Board voted. Mr. Kubek abstained from voting. The motion passed by voice vote.

President Ronayne stated that the Brook Park project had not met NOACA's project readiness and process requirements. Therefore, it was not recommended for TRAC prioritization, as the Board did not designate it as a priority. NOACA submitted only one priority from the list provided to the Board, which was the GCRTA project. The Board emphasized that NOACA's established process should be followed.

Commissioner Harrison stated that the resolution indicated the GCRTA project was the Board's sole priority. He felt the Board did not need to take action to reject the Brook Park application.

President Ronayne said there was merit in following the MPO process.

Mayor Castelli agreed with President Ronayne but expressed uncertainty about what the Board was voting on. He noted that the Board appeared to be indicating the Brook Park project was not ready. However, he stated that if the Browns ultimately choose the Brook Park location, the project would become a critical infrastructure improvement. He emphasized that the language regarding the Brook Park project should be expanded to reflect that it benefits the entire region, not just Brook Park. He also noted that surrounding communities would need to invest in appropriate infrastructure. From his perspective, it seemed the Board felt the project was not ready to proceed at this time, and he requested clarification on the vote.

President Ronayne emphasized that the matter involved two key points: the process itself and the project's readiness concerning that process. He stated that Cuyahoga County looked forward to continued discussions with the FAA regarding potential impacts on Cleveland Hopkins Airport and I-71, as well as further conversations with ODOT about ongoing or necessary studies related to traffic congestion.

President Ronayne, speaking as a Cuyahoga County representative of 59 communities, expressed concern about airport access and congestion on game days and emphasized the importance of conducting proper studies. He noted that the project had come to the NOACA Board without the usual staff or county engagement typical for major TRAC projects. He stressed the importance of project sponsors to respect the MPO process, signaling to ODOT's TRAC that the project was not ready. He indicated a willingness to make a motion reflecting the need to follow the proper process while respecting the spirit of readiness.

Mayor Pam Bobst referred to the fifth whereas clause in the resolution, which mentioned two eligible project applications. She asked staff to explain how the projects were considered eligible beyond their financial requests, noting that one of them did not go through the usual process. She questioned the basis for deeming it eligible.

Director Gallucci explained that eligibility is based on ODOT's criteria, not on NOACA's processes or its Long Range Plan. However, ODOT continues to seek NOACA's input when prioritizing projects.

Mr. Kubek confirmed Director Gallucci's statement and explained the process involved in funding transportation projects. He noted that TRAC takes into account the recommendations of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). If a project is awarded funding, it must go through the appropriate process with NOACA. He added that the sponsor of the Brook Park project had been in communication with both NOACA and ODOT. ODOT had informed the sponsor about potential funding sources and the necessary steps, including inclusion in NOACA's Long Range Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). However, although the City of Brook Park had expressed its intention, he was not sure whether Brook Park had submitted its application to NOACA.

Director Gallucci mentioned that the City of Brook Park had inquired about the project submission process and was preparing its application, which NOACA expected to receive within the next month or two. She emphasized that, as Mr. Kubek had pointed out, even if the project received TRAC funding beforehand, it would still need to come to NOACA for additional steps.

Commissioner Riddell emphasized that as NOACA moves forward with its mission of supporting economic development, Brook Park should go through the proper process. He noted that the focus should not be solely on the potential involvement of the Browns. The new owner of the IX Center has broader, though not yet publicly detailed, plans related to intermodal and freight development, which could have a greater long-term impact than just eight football games.

Mayor Castelli acknowledged that the proper process had not yet been followed and supported the need for further review. He expressed confidence in continuing the process and noted that Brook Park appeared ready to provide more information. He also urged that the project request be evaluated from a broader regional perspective to consider all potentially impacted areas.

President Ronayne agreed with Mayor Castelli and Commissioner Riddell. He emphasized points discussed in the previous meeting, highlighting the significance of the Aerozone site, the NASA facility, and the 180-acre area as major opportunities for revitalization. He also noted the importance of the airport and surrounding communities along the I-71 corridor in the broader regional context.

Mayor Larry Antoskiewicz suggested that the Board consider tabling the item until all necessary information is available. He compared the situation to past discussions and emphasized that delaying a decision on submitting the project to TRAC would be more beneficial for all parties involved.

President Ronayne clarified that no formal motion had been made yet, but stressed the importance of the matter. He highlighted that the site was a priority for NOACA in terms of economic development, particularly within the Aerozone. He emphasized the need for the Board to affirm its commitment to following established processes. By doing so, the Board would reinforce that TRAC applicants must adhere to the procedures agreed upon in the past. He supported Councilwoman Howse-Jones's suggestion to clarify that the Board was not recommending the Brook Park project at this time due to concerns about process and project readiness.

Ms. Berry reminded the Board that it had previously approved a Transportation for Economic Development Initiative (TEDI) study months ago for the Aerozone area in question. She noted that the results from that study were not yet available but could influence future improvements or modifications to the project. Additionally, she mentioned that an ongoing joint study between ODOT and NOACA might lead to changes in the final project request.

President Ronayne expressed that no member county would get a pass on the established process. He then asked Councilwoman Howse-Jones if she wanted to include the second project, Brook Park, in a motion for the Board to vote on a recommendation.

Councilwoman Howse-Jones expressed that the Brook Road project should not be recommended at this time, as it had not gone through NOACA's Long Range Plan process and must follow a steady, proper procedure.

Commissioner Beverage requested confirmation that the Brook Park project had not been submitted to NOACA yet.

Director Gallucci confirmed that the project had not been submitted to NOACA. She explained that the proper process would occur in the next quarter or two, after which it would come to the NOACA Board for approval. However, the project sponsor had submitted their application to TRAC first.

Commissioner Beverage asked whether the original motion addressed how the Board prioritizes projects and presents them to TRAC.

Director Gallucci said yes.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion stating that, since the Brook Park project had not been submitted to NOACA and had not gone through NOACA's process, NOACA should express to TRAC that it does not recommend or prioritize the Brook Park project at this time. Councilwoman Howse-Jones seconded the motion.

Ms. Cierebiej said that, in response to Ms. Berry's point about the TEDI project already approved through NOACA, the roads and various components of the Brook Park project would be considered part of that effort. She recommended that the consultant working on TEDI coordinate with the Browns to ensure alignment. She also asked Mr. Gembala whether the original resolution number should be split into parts A and B to reflect the separation.

Mr. Gembala agreed with Ms. Cierebiej on splitting the resolution accordingly to reflect two separate motions.

President Ronayne said he appreciated the suggestion and expressed confidence that NOACA staff would make that accommodation.

Commissioner Harrison said he was a stickler for process, like others at the meeting, but urged the Board to be thoughtful about taking affirmative negative action against the Brook Park project. He noted the project was of significant economic importance to the region, as Commissioner Riddell mentioned, and while it might be politically challenging, he questioned whether it was NOACA's role to actively work against it. He supported the original approach of having one ranked and one unranked project, saying it spoke volumes. While he was fine with pulling the project out, he said he would likely vote against any action that took a negative stance on it.

Commissioner Beverage agreed on the economic importance of the Brook Park project. He recalled concerns from a prior meeting about the state attempting to bypass the MPO's authority regarding an I-71 interchange. He stressed that if NOACA is the designated coordinating agency, its process must be followed. While he may support the project after proper review, he believed the Board must uphold its responsibilities and prevent any attempt to circumvent the process.

President Ronayne agreed and emphasized that the integrity of NOACA, its staff, and its process must be upheld.

Mr. Kubek assured the Board that both ODOT and NOACA would continue to comply with federal law by following the established process and ensuring that all project sponsors do the same.

Ms. Berry requested that the motion be repeated.

Commissioner Beverage restated his motion:

"When NOACA presents its priorities and projects to TRAC that it lets them know that the Brook Park project has not gone through the proper process and is not prioritized and is not recommended at this time."

President Ronayne reminded the Board that Councilwoman Howse-Jones seconded the motion.

The Board voted on the resolution. Mr. Kubek abstained from voting. Commissioner Aaron Harrison, Ms. Bethany Dentler, and Mr. Paul Magovac voted no. The motion passed by voice vote.

President Ronayne thanked Board members for a thoughtful and collegial exchange on a complex issue. He noted the shared agreement about the region's economic development potential and the many layers of transportation and infrastructure involved, especially concerning future land use near the airport. He emphasized that this was important to all five counties and expressed appreciation for the clarity brought to the motion.

Executive Committee

Resolution 2025-021: SFY 2026-2027 NOACA-ODOT MPO Biennial Agreement

Mr. Ronnie Blackshear explained that as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Northeast Ohio, NOACA is a subrecipient of federal transportation funds and shares responsibility with ODOT for the 3-C planning process—Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive. He emphasized that NOACA and ODOT work collaboratively to ensure the planning process meets all state and federal requirements.

Mr. Blackshear stated that the SFY 2026–2027 NOACA-ODOT MPO Biennial Agreement outlines the MPO's purpose, designation, and boundaries; financial reporting; NOACA's Overall Work Program and required planning activities; coordination with transportation entities; billing, compensation, audits, and completion reports; and compliance with nondiscrimination regulations.

Mr. Blackshear stated that, pending Board approval, the Executive Director will sign the Biennial Agreement and transmit it to ODOT officials.

Mr. Claypool pointed out a paragraph in the Biennial Agreement that stated the agreement is between Cleveland and Lorain. He asked whether the other counties were being excluded from the agreement.

Director Gallucci stated that the resolution states all five counties.

Mr. Claypool stated that NOACA staff must have corrected the meeting packet, as it listed Cleveland and Lorain.

Mr. Kubek stated that ODOT is a party to the contract, so he would be abstaining from the vote.

Mayor Kirsten Holzheimer Gail made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-021. Ms. Cierebiej seconded the motion.

The Board voted. Mr. Kubek abstained from voting. The motion passed by voice vote.

Responding to Mr. Claypool's point, Director Gallucci clarified that the memo's references to the "Cleveland-Lorain-Elyria Urbanized Area" does not specifically refer to Lorain County. Instead, it refers to the Cleveland-Lorain-Elyria Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which is the official designation for the urbanized area.

President Ronayne asked if the MSA was a federal designation.

Director Gallucci said yes.

Resolution 2025-022: Regional Strategy for Coordinating Funding Opportunities Update 4th Quarter SFY 2025

Ms. Alison Ball stated that the Strategy updates to programs and projects are reviewed quarterly. Communities may propose updates by submitting a form available on the NOACA website. If an update is needed between the scheduled reviews, NOACA will proceed in accordance with Resolution 2023-032.

Ms. Ball explained that the attachment includes a marked-up version showing status changes in different colors, as well as a final version that uses only italics for unsubmitted projects and green for awarded ones.

Ms. Ball stated that the City of Cleveland requested a name change for the Cleveland Riverfront Master Plan, which is now under construction. Cleveland also updated the Strategy to include the Riverfront project in the PROTECT Resilience Improvement Grant for 2025 and 2026. Additionally, the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission added the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan to the Safe Streets for All Demonstration and Implementation program in 2026.

Ms. Ball stated that NOACA follows guidance from federal agencies, such as the U.S. DOT, EPA, and NOAA. Staff would continue collaborating with partner communities and organizations to ensure project applications are submitted, regularly update the Funding Resources webpage, and revise the Strategy for calendar years 2025 and 2026.

Mayor Gail made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-022. Commissioner Harrison seconded the motion.

The Board voted and Resolution 2025-022 passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-023: Long Range Plan Update (*weNEO2050+*)

Director Gallucci stated that the resolution represents NOACA's Long Range Plan, outlining the region's future through 2050. It updates the 2021 plan, formerly called *eNEO2050*, now renamed *weNEO2050+*. She added that Mr. Makarachi would provide further details.

Mr. Ali Makarachi presented information on the following:

- Timeline and Objectives
- Planning Elements of the LRTP
- Data Update
 - 2050 Population Projection
 - Telecommuting Share
 - Online Shopping Share
 - Virtual Meetings
 - Household Travel Survey
- Scenario Planning
 - Scenarios
 - Modeling Scenarios
- Congestion Management Plan
 - CMP Steps
 - Congestion Management Objectives
 - Congested Highway Corridors
 - Congested Interchanges / Intersections
 - Highway Congestion
- Performance Measures
 - Zero-Car Household Density
- Accessibility and Mobility
 - Access to Transit

- Annual Trip Ridership
- Freeway and Arterial Delay
- Work Commute Time
- Transportation Safety
 - Safety Performance Measure
- Air Quality
 - Greenhouse Gas Emission
 - Emissions per Million Residents
 - PM_{2.5} per Million Residents
- Infrastructure
 - Pavement Maintenance Costs
 - Bridge Conditions
 - Bridge Rehabilitation & Maintenance Costs
 - Nonmotorized Infrastructure
- Freight Planning
 - Required Truck Space
 - Truck VMT Percent
 - Truck Routes
- Future Technology
 - EV Adoption by State in 2023
 - Estimated Number of EVs by 2050
 - Estimated Number of L2 Ports by 2050
 - Estimated Number of DCFC Ports by 2050
 - Estimated Required Budgets
 - Technology Adoption
- Scenario Costs
 - Scenario 1: MAINTAIN (Do Nothing)
 - Specific Projects of Scenarios
 - Specific Projects and Cost of Scenario 4
 - Project Costs of Scenarios
 - Scenario Costs and Budget Level
 - Scenario Measure of Effectiveness Value
 - MOE & Cost

Mr. Makarachi stated that, pending Board approval, staff would implement the updated plan.

Mr. Claypool asked what the nonattainment designation was for the nitrogen oxides (NOx).

Mr. Makarachi stated that NOACA staff have been using software called MOVES to run this before each scenario.

Mr. Claypool stated that based on his understanding, the region was out of nonattainment for its volatile organic compounds (VOCs) by one part per billion. He asked if that was correct.

Mr. Makarachi said yes.

Mr. Claypool questioned whether anyone knew how small one part per billion was. He noted concerns about a sensor on top of a garage in Geauga County that monitors VOCs and questioned the reliability of the data. He expressed discomfort with the Board voting on a plan based on data he believed was flawed. He also pointed out that the final part of the resolution stated the urban transportation planning process would comply with all federal laws; however, he

did not believe the region was in compliance at that time due to DEI-related concerns. He concluded by saying he would probably vote no on the LRP update.

President Ronayne asked Mr. Kubek if he had any comments in response to Mr. Claypool and whether projections were part of the process.

Mr. Kubek indicated that he had no comment.

President Ronayne complimented NOACA staff on presenting the Long Range Plan, noting that it was a significant milestone brought before the Board.

Director Gallucci recognized Mr. Makarachi and the Transportation Planning and Engineering Division for their leadership in updating the Long Range Plan.

Commissioner Harrison asked Mr. Makarachi to display the slide showing the BRT (bus rapid transit) scenarios. He noted that Scenarios 3 and 4 assumed that, despite a shrinking population, households would still be located near BRT stops.

Mr. Makarachi explained that, through calibration with GCRTA, staff identified corridors suitable for BRT. In doing so, staff assumed a transit-oriented development (TOD) pattern, meaning some people, instead of moving away, would relocate closer to BRT stations to take advantage of increased transit access. Scenarios 3 and 4 reflect more advanced transit systems with more lines compared to scenarios 1 and 2.

Commissioner Harrison asked if the transit options would be more available.

Mr. Makarachi said yes, that access would be easier.

Commissioner Harrison said that, in addition to increased availability, he wanted to know whether staff were also assuming a behavioral shift — that people would prefer to live closer to areas with greater BRT access.

Mr. Makarachi said yes and noted that the model includes mode choices. He explained that staff focus on behavior and attitudes when analyzing modes. He added that the approach uses a non-nested, rigid model. Similarly, NOACA examines how people behave and whether additional transportation options increase the likelihood of choosing the bus.

Commissioner Harrison compared the situation to early adopters, noting that as the system becomes more stable, more people are likely to move closer to transit stops. He added that in future years, staff assume a higher percentage of the region's shrinking population will be inclined to live near transit stops than they are today.

Mr. Makarachi said yes. He noted that although transit would become more accessible and reliable, it would represent only about 6% to 7% of travel, with cars remaining the dominant mode of transportation.

Commissioner Harrison asked if the percentage would be higher than the current percentage.

Mr. Makarachi said yes.

Commissioner Harrison commented that the baseline for the population numbers was Census data, which he had concerns about, though he acknowledged that it was a separate issue. He

questioned that if Census data served as the population baseline, then what served as the baseline for the assumed change in behavior. He asked what data supported the idea that increased transit availability would lead people to shift their preferences and choose to live closer to transit stations, rather than continue to prefer a home on a plot of land in areas like Medina or Geauga County.

Mr. Makarachi explained that one module of the model simulates future conditions, specifically focusing on mode choice. This mode choice module operates based on travel time and accessibility for each transportation mode. The model and software developed compare these factors—for example, if driving takes 45 minutes, but a bus is available at a lower cost and with a reasonable travel time, the module may determine that the individual would choose transit. He emphasized that this is based on the same type of behavioral modeling used to predict consumer choices, such as purchasing decisions. Travel time, cost, and other factors all influence the outcome. He noted that the process is complex, with around 10,000 lines of code used to automate it.

Commissioner Harrison expressed greater confidence in data grounded in past trends, though he acknowledged concerns regarding the accuracy of Census figures. He stated that projections following a clear trend line from the last Census to the next would be more reliable, whereas other projections appeared more speculative. He noted that although high-end and low-end scenarios were presented, they were based on identical assumptions—specifically, an increasing adoption rate among a declining population. He concluded that if this core assumption proved inaccurate, neither scenario would be viable.

Mr. Makarachi explained that four years ago, NOACA's forecast for EV adoption and charger needs had been much higher than current projections. In that year's update, the chart showed lower numbers occurring every four years, reflecting actual behavior. The model is calibrated annually using current data, including traffic counts, trip generation, and household size. He also mentioned a recent Household Travel Survey involving about 9,000 people, which staff were reviewing to make updates for the next 25 years.

President Ronayne asked Mr. Makarachi if he would be available to people who have more technical questions.

Commissioner Harrison inquired about the electric vehicle (EV) projections Mr. Makarachi presented. He asked whether the rising EV numbers were based on a percentage of the region's current population or a higher percentage applied to a declining regional population.

Mr. Makarachi explained that the projections were based on the number of households, which was declining. He noted that the entire system was built around household data.

President Ronayne asked Mr. Makarachi if he would be available after the meeting for any follow-up questions, noting that there was a lot of information to absorb and acknowledging the significant amount of work involved.

Mr. Makarachi said yes.

President Ronayne thanked staff for putting together the work.

Mr. Brandon made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-023. Ms. Teeuwen seconded the motion.

President Ronayne asked how a county, city, or village could determine the status of its projects within the Long Range Plan. He also inquired whether the Long Range Plan was available on the NOACA website.

Director Gallucci responded that the projects were listed in Chapter 10 of the Long Range Plan and are available on NOACA's website.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-023. Mayor Marra and Mr. Claypool voted no. Mr. Kubek abstained from voting. The motion passed by voice vote.

Governance Committee

Resolution 2025-024: Code of Regulations Revision – Geauga County Membership

Ms. Elizabeth Barlik reminded the Board that this item was originally presented in March as an informational item and is now being brought forward for action. Geauga County requested to add the County Engineer as a member of the NOACA Board. However, under the current NOACA Code of Regulations, Geauga County is limited to three Commissioners on the Board. Therefore, fulfilling the request would require adjusting the county's existing Board seat allocations.

Ms. Barlik noted that the Board of Directors membership is determined by NOACA's Code of Regulations Article IV, Section 4.2. The proposed amendment for Geauga County would be as follows:

- (b) Geauga County
 - (i) County Commissioner
 - (ii) County Commissioner
 - (iii) County Commissioner (County Engineer)

Ms. Barlik presented the following existing examples:

- Lorain County
 - (iii) County Commissioner (County Engineer)
- Medina County
 - (ii) County Commissioner (Municipal Representative)
 - (iii) County Commissioner (Township Representative)

Ms. Barlik stated that the next steps involved obtaining written ratification from all five counties, as required by Article IX of the NOACA Code of Regulations, to approve the proposed change to Board membership in Article IV. Once all five counties have provided their approval, Article IV, Section 4.2(b)(iii) will be officially amended to change the designation from "County Commissioner" to "County Commissioner (County Engineer)" for Geauga County.

Commissioner Carolyn Brakey made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-024. Mr. Andy Haupt seconded the motion.

Mayor Alai said he listened to Mr. Kalas, who spoke about Mr. Claypool being targeted. Although he and Mr. Claypool did not always agree, Mayor Alai strongly opposed anything that would limit Mr. Claypool's ability to speak at the NOACA Board meetings. He pointed out that the Resolution stated that the request came from Geauga County on multiple occasions and asked if that was true. He added that if the request did come from Geauga County, he would vote for it; if not, he might have an issue.

Director Gallucci stated that Geauga County had requested multiple times that its County Engineer be included in its representation on the NOACA Board. She noted that even when

Mr. Claypool was a Commissioner the County had asked to add another member, creating a fourth representative. However, NOACA cannot grant Geauga County an additional seat for its Engineer. Director Gallucci explained that including the County Engineer can only be done by adjusting the county's existing representation.

Mayor Alai asked whether the request to add the County Engineer to the NOACA Board originated from Geauga County.

Director Gallucci and Commissioner Brakey confirmed that the request originated from Geauga County.

Commissioner Harrison noted that all Board members can appoint alternates. While he appreciated the intent behind the request, he suggested that it would be accurate to say any of the currently appointed Commissioners could designate the County Engineer as their alternate representative. He sought confirmation on whether that was correct.

Director Gallucci said the Commissioners could make the designation.

Commissioner Harrison noted that while he was not advocating for any specific change, he would support Geauga County having an additional seat as well. However, he emphasized that any change would require approval and ratification from all five counties, which he believed was unlikely from Medina County. He expressed concerns about the Board's current structure and representation. He observed that a board with more than 40 members has limited effectiveness, especially given the amount of work that takes place at the Committee level outside of full Board meetings. Although he commended current and past chairs for their leadership, he suggested that the size and structure of the Board may warrant reevaluation. Commissioner Harrison supported the idea of a smaller board with strong Committee engagement, where more voices could be meaningfully heard. He believed this type of structural discussion should be part of the bylaws review, particularly because of the higher ratification standard. While he was not speaking on behalf of his fellow Commissioners, he indicated that Medina County would likely not ratify the current proposal without a broader conversation. He recommended referring the matter back to the Governance Committee for further discussion about the Board's future structure and effectiveness.

Councilman McCormack stated that he supported the motion because it only affected the Geauga County delegation and had their backing. He noted that if it had impacted the entire Board, it would have been different, but since it was specific to Geauga County and supported by their Commissioner, he fully supported the Resolution.

Mr. Claypool commented that the issue had been largely an internal political matter for Geauga County, and while he had not wanted to delve into the specifics, he had expressed support for Commissioner Harrison's position. He noted that historically, the NOACA Board had been more balanced, with three commissioners from each county, along with a mayor and a HUD representative. Over time, however, imbalances had developed. He had disagreed with Director Gallucci's claim that adding an extra seat for Geauga County was impossible, contending that the Board could have made such a decision if it chose to. He pointed out that adding a fourth seat would not have affected the voting outcome, as Cleveland and Cuyahoga County would still have held the majority of votes. Mr. Claypool suggested that adding the seat would have helped make the Board fairer and more balanced. He proposed that the issue be sent to the Governance Committee for further discussion, as he believed there had been a clear public perception of imbalance on the Board, which concerned him.

In response to Mr. Claypool's comment, President Ronayne said that Mr. Brandon was the Chair of Governance, so the issue probably should be brought up by the Governance Committee and the Executive Committee, since there was a bylaw issue associated with the membership.

Mr. Brandon suggested tabling the Resolution so the Governance Committee can discuss the proposed change at its next meeting.

President Ronayne summarized points that had been made by some Board members, including one point that a Board member had described as a matter within the context of Geauga County.

Commissioner Riddell, former Governance Committee Chair, reminded the Board that Cleveland had previously requested and received a charter change but later asked to revert to its original membership after a leadership change. He emphasized that such changes are significant and cautioned that if a fourth seat were given to one county for an Engineer, the Board must consider whether other counties would be given the same opportunity.

President Ronayne stated that the matter relates to governance and bylaws and should be discussed with Mr. Brandon, Chair of the Governance Committee, and the Executive Committee.

Mr. Haupt stated that the request would not change the number of NOACA Board seats but aims to add technical expertise and experience as voting members. He highlighted his extensive experience working across Lake, Geauga, and Cuyahoga counties, including with ODOT District 12, and emphasized that Geauga County roads connect to other counties. He noted that the County Engineer's office holds valuable expertise and history, ensuring parity with other counties, and noted that this change would come at no cost.

Mayor Marra had debated whether to make a motion to table the Resolution, but had acknowledged that the Board needed to remove it from the agenda. He had asked whether the request to change the seat had come from two Geauga County Commissioners or the Geauga County Council, noting that there would have been a conflict, and it would have been very political if the two Commissioners had requested the change to remove or replace another Commissioner's seat with an Engineer. He had said the Board needed clarification to ensure it had not been a political move.

President Ronayne inquired about the method by which the request was received.

Director Gallucci stated that she did not recall receiving any official communication from the Geauga County and believed that the request came from two of the three Geauga County Commissioners on the NOACA Board.

Commissioner Brakey agreed with Director Gallucci, stating that the Commissioners were concerned the Geauga County Engineer would not have a seat on the NOACA Board. They want to ensure that, moving forward, Geauga County's technical expertise is represented.

President Ronayne reminded the Board that Commissioner Brakey made the motion and Mr. Haupt seconded the motion.

Mayor Marra questioned why the Board needed to replace the seat at all, pointing out that any Commissioner already had the option to have the Engineer represent them. He asked how they could effectively determine who was competent or not, suggesting that the request might have been personal or even an act of retaliation to remove someone who was outspoken and

challenged matters. He said the Resolution should be removed from the agenda and brought to a vote, adding that he would vote no and believed that it did not belong on the agenda.

Director Gallucci had explained that this request had come before the Board previously and had been respected at each county level. She had noted that every County and the City of Cleveland had the opportunity to decide who represented them on the Board. For example, Lorain County had given one of its commissioner seats to its County Engineer, and Medina County had ensured representation at the municipal and township levels. She had stated that this proposal gave Geauga County the same option. She had emphasized that it did not name individual Commissioners, just two Commissioners and an Engineer, so it would endure over time and was not intended as a political move tied to current members.

Mr. Patrick asked whether, in Lorain County's case, the seat listed as "County Commissioner (County Engineer)" had been a Commissioner seat delegated to the Engineer, or if it had truly been an Engineer seat that a Commissioner could not take back at any time.

Director Gallucci explained that the seat had been assigned by the NOACA Board to the County Engineer. She noted that if a commissioner ever wanted it returned, they would need to come before the Board to request the removal of the engineer component so it would again become a commissioner seat.

Mr. Patrick noted that reclaiming a seat would not be an easy thing to do. He mentioned that Lorain County had that flexibility because it had more than three representatives on the NOACA Board. He felt the existing alternate proxy process already addressed the issue—if someone wanted their Engineer at the table, they could designate them as an alternate and send them to the meetings. He also stated that he would have liked more information on why a new seat could not have been added, while acknowledging that doing so would have led to Board growth, which would have needed to be matched for all representatives due to population considerations.

Director Gallucci explained that staff had looked into this issue in depth when one of the three Geauga County Commissioners previously raised it. She noted that the challenge is that NOACA's Code of Regulations requires the Board's makeup to be proportionate to population, following a formula detailed in the appendix.

Mr. Patrick asked how frequently the population numbers in the Code of Regulations are updated.

Director Gallucci explained that the Code of Regulations is updated every 10 years with the Census, most recently with the 2020 Census. She noted that a change made previously had guaranteed each county a minimum of three representatives on the NOACA Board, regardless of population. For example, based strictly on population, Geauga County would have had only one and a half seats, but the minimum had ensured they received three, with any additional seats determined by a formula.

Mr. Patrick said he understood and suggested that the Governance Committee may need to revisit the structure of that representation.

Director Gallucci stated that when staff previously conducted the analysis, the resulting number of representatives was much higher than the current membership, indicating that the Board would grow significantly if the structure were adjusted purely based on that analysis.

Mr. Claypool compared the situation to the purpose of the Electoral College, which is meant to prevent the majority from overpowering the minority, suggesting that the Board had reached a

point where such an imbalance exists. He pointed to the reasoning given by Director Gallucci as another example of excuses blocking efforts to create fairness for a small county like Geauga County. He argued that adding the County Engineer to the Board is entirely possible without harming the voting structure and is appropriate, since Geauga is the only county with three commissioners on the Board, while others, like Lorain, have seven representatives. He also cautioned that allowing two Commissioners to request bylaw changes through NOACA's Director that impact another Commissioner sets a troubling precedent.

President Ronayne had noted that the discussion had highlighted the need for a future conversation with the Governance Committee about the Board's composition, as well as with the Executive Committee, since any change would have required a bylaw amendment. He had pointed out that the matter had begun as a request from the Geauga County Board of Commissioners and, as others had mentioned, also seemed to be an internal issue that they needed to address among themselves.

Mr. Claypool clarified that the request was not made by the entire Geauga County Board of Commissioners, but rather by two individual Commissioners.

President Ronayne said it was an action taken or a request made by the Geauga County Board.

Mr. Claypool said there was no resolution.

President Ronayne clarified that his use of the word "action" was that the request was acted upon by two Commissioners who had communicated to NOACA.

Director Gallucci said she did not believe the two Commissioners had taken any action on the matter within their own Council.

President Ronayne acknowledged that the issue had been complex and said NOACA would continue reviewing the Board's composition through the Governance and Executive Committees before returning to the Board. He noted that the matter had been brought before the Board, motioned by Commissioner Brakey and seconded by Mr. Haupt, with the understanding that the Governance Committee would further discuss it. He also mentioned a recent proposal suggesting that the Board size was too large, indicating potential future adjustments in accordance with the bylaws.

Mayor Bobst asked whether any of the three Commissioners had designated the County Engineer as their alternate.

Director Gallucci and Commissioner Brakey pointed out that Mr. Haupt, the Geauga County Engineer, was present at the Board meeting.

Director Gallucci stated that the current membership prohibits the County Commissioner and County Engineer from attending the meeting at the same time.

Commissioner Brakey explained that the request aimed to add the County Engineer to ensure Geauga County's three-member panel represented on the NOACA Board included that expertise. This would allow the County Engineer to have an alternate from the Engineering Department, providing backup rather than having no one to support him.

Commissioner Riddell said the issue was a governance matter, like the Brook Park project that had bypassed proper procedures. He questioned whether the Board should support something

not officially presented by the Commissioners. He wondered why the Geauga County Commissioners had not adopted their own Resolution to show local community support for changing the seat.

President Ronayne stated that the issue at hand was how the correspondence had been submitted to NOACA.

Commissioner Brakey said she understood that the Commissioners followed the proper process in handling this change.

Director Gallucci stated that during her tenure, no local motion or vote had been required; it was typically a simple request from the jurisdiction. In this case, the request came from two of the three Commissioners.

President Ronayne clarified again that the word “action” was used to refer to a verbal communication, not to an official action by the Geauga County Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Claypool emphasized that the Board is a decision-making body, and direction should not come from one or two individuals alone. Formal action must be taken through a motion by the full board, as required by law. He noted that no such motion had occurred in this case, so the Board had not taken official action.

Director Gallucci explained that the official action is what was occurring at the meeting and the request had followed the proper process: it had been made to staff, placed on the Governance Committee agenda, reviewed and approved there, forwarded to the Executive Committee, and then placed on the Board agenda. She emphasized that the change could only occur with the Board’s approval at that meeting.

Mr. Claypool stated that the request came from individual Geauga County Commissioners, not the entire Geauga County Board. He urged the NOACA Board to consider the precedent this sets, warning that informal requests by one or two members could cause future issues. He suggested that Commissioners Brakey and Dvorak formally bring the request to the full Geauga County Board, pass a motion, and then present it at a future NOACA Board meeting.

Councilman McCormack stated that, to his understanding, proper procedures were followed to bring the Resolution before the NOACA Board at this meeting. He then requested a roll call vote on the Resolution.

A roll call vote was conducted with the following outcome: 19 Yes votes, 17 No votes, and 3 Abstentions. The motion passed.

The following members voted no on Resolution 2025-024:

- Mayor Sam Alai
- Commissioner Morris W. Beverage III
- Mayor Annette Blackwell
- Mayor Pam Bobst
- Mr. Jeff Brandon
- Mayor Kevin Brubaker
- Mayor Tim DeGeeter
- Commissioner Aaron Harrison
- Councilwoman Stephanie Howse-Jones
- Councilman Brian Kazy
- Mr. Paul Magovac
- Commissioner Jeff Riddell
- Mr. Bob Klaiber
- Mr. Thomas Patrick III
- Mayor John Marra
- Mr. Andy Rose
- Mr. Skip Claypool

Commissioner Beverage asked how Geauga County Commissioners would determine which two Commissioners would fill the seats, as opposed to the automatically designated engineer seat.

Commissioner Brakey said the decision would be made at the Geauga County Commissioners' organizational meeting at the beginning of next year.

Commissioner Beverage asked if all three members of the Geauga County Board of Commissioners would take action.

Commissioner Brakey said yes.

President Ronayne stated that NOACA needed to improve its governance and procedures to ensure clarity.

Director Gallucci stated that NOACA's Code of Regulations requires staff to present changes to the NOACA Board in advance of action. She asked Ms. Barlik to provide information regarding the advance notice.

Ms. Barlik stated that staff needed to provide notice to the Board of a Code change before a vote could take place. In this case, the request was presented for information at the March Board meeting, although a special meeting could have been called.

Director Gallucci pointed out that when the item was presented at the March Board meeting, no objections were raised at that time.

Commissioner Beverage asked whether the change would require adoption by all five counties to take effect.

Director Gallucci confirmed that ratification was required by all five counties.

Commissioner Beverage then questioned whether a single county voting against the change would prevent it from being adopted.

Director Gallucci stated that was correct.

Finance and Audit Committee

Resolution 2025-025: Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Loan Termination – City of Middleburg Heights

Mr. Jason Knauer stated that authorization was needed for the Executive Director/CEO to issue a Notice of Termination for the \$500,000 Northeast Ohio Brownfield Program Loan Agreement with the City of Middleburg Heights. The loan, executed on March 14, 2024, was intended for asbestos remediation at the former Sears and Sears Auto site at 6950 W. 130th Street in Middleburg Heights.

Mr. Knauer stated that Middleburg Heights Mayor Castelli formally requested termination of the loan on April 8, 2025, due to delays caused by the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). He explained that the City spent more than the match required by the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) grant, project bids came in lower than expected, and the ODOD grant fully covers cleanup and demolition. To date, the City had not drawn any funds from the loan.

Mr. Knauer stated that \$500,000 had been unencumbered from the Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund and would become available for new projects.

Mr. Knauer stated that, pending Board approval, NOACA staff would update the budget to reflect the availability of funds.

Ms. Cierebiej made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-025. Commissioner Harrison seconded the motion.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-025. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-026: Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Amendment to Terms and Conditions – NREUV MLK Plaza, LLC

Mr. Knauer reviewed the approved loan terms and conditions, which included a 10-year repayment period, a personal guaranty from Dr. Gina Merritt (the sole owner of NREUV MLK Plaza, LLC), \$30,000 in debt service reserve funds held in escrow and drawn down as principal repayments are made, a cognovit promissory note, and, if possible, a surety bond to protect NOACA against default. Dr. Merritt requested an 18-year repayment term to align with loans from Freddie Mac and the Cleveland Foundation, which also have 18-year terms. She explained that coterminous loans would ensure equitable repayment and improve cash flow, reducing loan pressure. Sudsina & Associates LLC supported this request, and the Finance & Audit Committee recommended it with the addition of requiring the surety bond. The Vibrant NEO Board approved the request at its meeting on June 9, 2025.

Mr. Knauer stated that with the extended repayment term, the annual repayment would be reduced to \$16,667, which would result in less money available to revolve into new loans.

Mr. Knauer stated that, pending Board approval, the loan terms and conditions would be amended to include an 18-year repayment term and require a surety bond before execution of the loan agreement by the appropriate parties.

Ms. Berry made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-026. Commissioner Brakey seconded the motion.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-026. Councilwoman Howse-Jones abstained from voting. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-027: Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Recommendation for Funding – Site Readiness for Good Jobs Fund

Mr. Knauer explained that the property at 7000 Central Avenue in Cleveland spans 9.6 acres and includes a 185,000-square-foot building formerly used for industrial manufacturing. Zoned for industrial use, the site is proposed to be renovated for similar purposes. Ideal tenants include businesses in food production, rail-related industries, or aerospace. The project is expected to generate 100 permanent jobs, with an average wage of \$20 per hour.

Mr. Knauer stated that the project had undergone several environmental assessments, including a Phase I, Limited Phase II, asbestos survey, lead-based paint inspection, and a VAP Phase II, which was still in progress. He noted that the applicant had requested \$166,905 from the Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund for lead-based paint remediation. Sudsina & Associates, LLC determined that the applicant was creditworthy, and the Vibrant NEO Board approved the funding recommendation at its meeting on June 9, 2025.

Mr. Knauer stated that \$166,905 would be allocated from the Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund, with funds disbursed as reimbursements for eligible expenses.

Mr. Knauer further stated that, pending Board approval, the loan would be executed and funds encumbered. He noted that the recommendation was conditional upon the availability of funds—either from U.S. EPA supplemental funding or from the terminated Middleburg Heights loan.

Ms. Cierebiej made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-027. Mayor Paul Koomar seconded the motion.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-027. Ms. Berry abstained from voting. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-028: Procurement – Ratification of Vanpool Program Contract Extension

Director Gallucci stated that the NOACA Vanpool Program was launched in 2022 as a pilot initiative. She noted that NOACA had seen some success with the program. She stated that two items on the agenda related to the Vanpool Program: one was the ratification of the existing contract, and the other was authorization to enter into a new contract.

Ms. Lindy Burt stated that in December 2021, the Board authorized a three-year contract with CLERAC, LLC, doing business as Commute with Enterprise, to operate NOACA's Vanpool Program. The contract expired in February 2025, but an amendment was executed by the Executive Director on February 21, 2025, with the Board President's consent, extending the contract through June 30, 2025. The extension maintained the current pricing and terms to ensure continued service for employers and commuters. The procurement process for the next contract began in March 2025.

Ms. Burt stated that the financial impact of the amendment was estimated at \$155,000, covering payments to the vendor from March through the end of June, with funding provided by CMAQ. She reviewed the financial details and noted that, pending Board approval, NOACA would complete the amended contract period ending June 30, 2025.

Mayor Gail made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-028. Mayor Bobst seconded the motion.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-028. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-029: Procurement – Regional Vanpool Program

Ms. Burt stated that there were 53 vanpools operating at the time, each dedicated to a single worksite with voluntary employee participation. She explained that the vendor supplied the vehicles and managed the program, while NOACA provided a partial subsidy covering 50% to 80% of the cost for each vanpool. The remaining costs were paid by riders and some employers. She noted that the current service provider is Commute with Enterprise.

Ms. Burt explained that the program aimed to give residents more opportunities to engage in the local economy, lower commute times with competitively priced transportation, and enhance regional air quality by cutting transportation-related carbon emissions. She noted that the services offered included vehicle acquisition and leasing, fleet management, program marketing, a digital user app, driver coordination, rider support, invoicing, and accounting, along with data collection and reporting.

Ms. Burt stated that the RFP was posted from March 7 to April 7, 2025, with direct outreach made to seven potential vendors specializing in para-transit services. She noted that a pre-proposal

conference was held on March 13, 2025, and only one proposal was received. The recommendation was to proceed with CLERAC, LLC, doing business as Commute with Enterprise.

Ms. Burt reviewed the financial impacts, explaining that the estimated annual cost was \$508,000, based on 58 vanpools with an average 50% subsidy per vanpool. She noted that the actual cost would depend on the number of vanpools and the subsidy amount provided. The contract was for one year with two optional one-year extensions, for a potential term of up to three years, funded by the CMAQ program.

Ms. Burt stated that, pending Board approval, NOACA will enter into a contract with CLERAC, LLC dba Commute with Enterprise to operate the program.

Mayor Bobst made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-029. Mayor DeGeeter seconded the motion.

Commissioner Harrison asked if \$508,000 was an “up to” amount. He reminded Ms. Burt that she said the amount could fluctuate.

Ms. Burt stated that the estimate was based on 58 vanpools at a 50% subsidy rate, reflecting the peak during the last program period. Although the number had since decreased to 53 vanpools, participation fluctuated as vanpools were added and removed. She noted that NOACA aimed to grow the program through targeted outreach and marketing efforts that year.

Commissioner Harrison asked if the contract had an annual cap.

Ms. Burt said no.

Director Gallucci stated that NOACA can control the dollars spent through the annual budget process. The Board will approve a budget, and then it will be executed through this contract to that cap.

Commissioner Harrison asked whether the CMAQ dollars are tied to how much NOACA spends on the program or if the entire funding comes from CMAQ dollars.

Director Gallucci confirmed that all the funding is CMAQ dollars.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-029. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-030: Procurement – Extension of Traffic Count Contracts

Ms. Burt explained that the purpose of the traffic count program is to collect data used to calibrate and validate NOACA's travel forecasting model and to support other planning activities by sharing data with stakeholders. Program planning and preparation occur from July to August, with traffic counts conducted from late September through October.

Ms. Burt stated that the original contract was procured through an RFP process in February and March 2024, with five proposals received. Two vendors were selected to test different technologies and their impact on result accuracy. The Board approved the original contracts in June 2024 under Resolution 2024-029.

Ms. Burt reviewed the financial impact and explained that NOACA had decided to extend the contracts with both vendors for another year, at \$100,000 each, totaling \$200,000. Both vendors

had agreed to keep pricing fixed for the upcoming year. Funding for the contracts would come from NOACA's Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG).

Ms. Burt stated that, pending Board approval, NOACA would extend contracts with Eggeman Engineering and Southern Traffic Services/REKOR.

Commissioner Riddell made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-030. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-030. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-031: Procurement – Amendment to NOACA EV Charging Stations Program Contract

Director Gallucci stated that NOACA was progressing with Phase I of the EV Charging Stations Program, and the resolution amended the consultant's contract to include a warranty component.

Ms. Burt stated that the contract with SAF, Inc. would be in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 to purchase extended manufacturer warranties for electric vehicle (EV) charging station equipment. She explained that Phase I of the EV Charging Stations Program began in July 2023, with construction expected to be completed by August 2025. This phase includes 46 charging units at 40 locations across the NOACA region, consisting of 27 Level 2 dual chargers and 19 DC fast chargers.

Ms. Burt explained that Section 6.10 of the Partner Agreement with each site owner includes a commitment to five years of maintenance. Each charging unit comes with a basic two-year warranty, and the requested amendment would allow for the purchase of a three-year extension to that warranty.

Ms. Burt reviewed the financial impacts and stated that the total cost for the amendment would not exceed \$100,000, increasing the contract amount from \$3,542,262 to \$3,642,262. She noted that the funding source was CMAQ and that the Phase I budget for the EV Charging Stations Program was \$4,140,000.

Mr. Brandon made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-031. Mayor Gail seconded the motion.

Commissioner Riddell asked for clarification on the presentation, confirming if he understood correctly that the original contracts had NOACA guaranteeing two years with the manufacturer, while the station owner was responsible for the remaining three years of the five-year maintenance period.

Ms. Burt clarified that NOACA was committed to five years of maintenance in agreements with the site owners. She noted that the equipment included a basic two-year warranty, and the amendment was intended to add three more years to fulfill NOACA's five-year maintenance commitment.

Commissioner Riddell asked if NOACA had ever received a maintenance commitment from the local owner.

Ms. Burt responded no, not under this phase of the project.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-031. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-032: SFY 2026 Annual Priority List

Mr. Ed May stated that all proposed projects met NOACA's evaluation criteria and were included in the Plan and TIP, with consensus from staff, sponsors, and ODOT to advance funding in SFY 2026. The Annual Priority List included 25 projects totaling \$68 million. If additional funds became available, they were allocated based on a Board-approved hierarchy. He also outlined funding distribution by work type, with the largest share for roadway minor rehab (46%), followed by bridge preservation (21%), intersection improvement (safety) (3%), landscaping/aesthetic (2%), pedestrian facilities (1%), and roadway minor rehab (46%). He reviewed projects across various categories, including safety, transit, and pedestrian infrastructure.

Mr. May stated that, pending Board approval, NOACA would manage the SFY 2026 program to ensure all available funding was spent during the fiscal year, including advancing additional projects if funding became available

Ms. Cierebiej made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-032. Ms. Keshia Chambers seconded the motion.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-032. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-033: Functional Classification Amendment Recommendation (Berea Freeway/SR-237)

Mr. Derek Taylor explained that the FHWA Functional Classification Review takes place every decade following the U.S. Census. During this process, State DOTs and MPOs review the classification network to identify technical data errors and propose classification revisions, which are then submitted to FHWA for final approval.

Mr. Taylor stated that NOACA staff requested a reclassification of a 2.5-mile segment of the Berea Freeway, from Eastland Road to I-71. The current classification is "Principal Arterial-Other" and the proposed change is to "Principal Arterial-Freeway/Expressway."

Mr. Taylor reviewed the mobility and accessibility of the 2.5-mile segment proposed for reclassification, noting it functions as a Principal Arterial with only three access points: Snow Road, Hopkins Airport, and I-480/Brookpark Road, and no driveway access to adjacent properties. He also outlined the evaluation criteria for the functional classification modification, including the segment's network share at the regional and county levels.

Mr. Taylor stated that, pending Board approval, staff would forward the recommendations to ODOT and FHWA for final review and approval.

President Ronayne inquired about the new classification of the road.

Mr. Taylor said the roadway would be changed from a "Principal Arterial-Other" to a "Principal Arterial-Freeway/Expressway."

Mr. Cunningham made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-033. Ms. Teeuwen seconded the motion.

Ms. Berry asked if the classification change opens the roadway to state or federal funding that it would not have been eligible for otherwise.

Mr. Taylor said not that he was aware. He explained that it was simply a classification change for data organization and similar purposes. He noted that the roadway had remained on the Federal aid system regardless.

Ms. Cierebiej asked about the speed limit on this section of the road.

Mr. Taylor stated that the speed limit is 50 miles per hour, and toward the north end near I-71, it is 60 miles per hour.

Ms. Cierebiej asked if there was any signage, since it becomes a local street heading south.

Mr. Taylor mentioned that drivers approaching the signalized intersection at Eastland are typically met with signage instructing them to begin slowing down as they near the signal.

Ms. Cierebiej expressed concern for Berea and others, noting that the roadway already feels like a highway and is driven that way. She said she did not know if it were required, but it would be helpful to have a sign advising drivers to slow down as they approach the light.

Mr. Taylor stated that NOACA staff were classifying the roadway as it operates. No regulations were being changed around the freeway. He noted it is locally called the Berea Freeway.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-033. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-034: 2025 Public Transportation Agency Safety Performance Measure Targets

Ms. Kessa Turnbull explained that under the Public Transportation Agency Safety Performance Measures (PTASP), public transit providers and State DOTs must set safety performance targets (SPTs) addressing fatalities, injuries, safety events, and system reliability, as outlined in the National Public Transportation Safety Plan. Transit agencies update these targets annually through their safety plans, and MPOs, in coordination with the agencies, must establish regional targets within 180 days.

Ms. Turnbull reviewed targets for Lake, Geauga, Lorain, and Medina counties. She also reviewed GCRTA's updated methodology as the region's only Class One transit provider and noted the 2024 FTA updates, which require a rolling average using at least three years of data, expanded performance targets, and restrictions on increasing certain targets. Additionally, she presented GCRTA's updated safety performance targets.

Ms. Turnbull stated that NOACA staff would continue to coordinate with transit agencies in developing the PTASP and setting targets. She noted that, pending Board approval, the targets would be included in NOACA's Transportation Improvement Program and Long Range Plan.

Mr. Ben Capelle made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-034. Mayor Blackwell seconded the motion.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-034. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-035: Wadsworth FPA Prescriptions Modification Request in Sharon Township – Highlands of Sharon Phase 3

Ms. Sarah Stanzi stated that the modification would transfer 15.5 acres of a 50.65-acre parcel in Sharon Township, changing the wastewater treatment designation from "Areas Served by On-Site Systems" to "Sewers Expected Within 20 Years." She noted that the affected parties are the City

of Wadsworth and Sharon Township. She confirmed that notification requirements had been met and that all parties were in agreement.

Ms. Stanzi reviewed the existing FPA prescriptions and outlined the proposed changes.

Ms. Stanzi stated that, pending Board approval, NOACA staff would submit the modification to the Ohio EPA for certification by the Governor. Staff would then send copies of the resolution to the appropriate agencies.

Mayor Gail made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-35. Ms. Cierebiej seconded the motion.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-035. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-036: LaGrange FPA and Lorain County & LORCO FPA Boundary & Prescriptions Modification Request in Village of LaGrange and LaGrange Township – North Pointe

Ms. Stanzi stated that the modification would transfer two parcels totaling 36.56 acres to the LaGrange FPA, changing their wastewater treatment designation from “Areas Served by On-Site Systems” to “Sewers Expected Within 20 Years.”

Ms. Stanzi reviewed the current FPA boundary, prescriptions, and the proposed changes. She noted that the affected parties—the Village of LaGrange, Lorain County, LORCO, and LaGrange Township—had been notified and were all in agreement.

Ms. Stanzi stated that, pending Board approval, NOACA staff would submit the modification to the Ohio EPA for certification by the Governor. Staff would then transmit copies of the resolution to the appropriate agencies.

Mayor Gail made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-036. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-036. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-037: Medina County FPA Prescriptions Modification Request in Sharon Township - Windfall Road

Ms. Pamela Davis stated that the modification would transfer the wastewater treatment designation for 0.62 acre of one parcel from “Areas Served by On-Site Systems” to “Currently Sewered,” and for a 2.07-acre parcel from “Areas Served by On-Site Systems” to “Local Prescriptions within the Medina County FPA in Sharon Township.”

Ms. Davis reviewed the current FPA prescriptions and the proposed changes. She noted that the affected party is Sharon Township, notification requirements have been fulfilled, and the affected party is in agreement. She also reviewed the analysis.

Ms. Davis stated that, pending Board approval, NOACA staff would submit the modification to the Ohio EPA for certification by the Governor. Staff would then transmit copies of the resolution to the appropriate agencies.

Mayor Gail made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-037. Commissioner Riddell seconded the motion.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-037. The motion passed by voice vote.

Resolution 2025-038: Avon Lake – LORCO Phase I FPA and French Creek FPA Boundary & Prescriptions Modification Request in North Ridgeville – Burns Road

Ms. Davis stated that the modification request is to transfer a 6.20-acre parcel from the French Creek FPA to the Avon Lake–LORCO Phase I FPA and to change the wastewater treatment prescriptions from “Sewers Expected Within 20 Years” to “Currently Sewered.”

Ms. Davis reviewed the current FPA boundary and prescriptions, as well as the proposed changes. She noted that the affected parties are North Ridgeville, Avon Lake, LORCO, and Lorain County. Notification requirements have been fulfilled, and all parties are in agreement. She also reviewed the analysis.

Ms. Davis stated that, pending Board approval, NOACA staff would submit the modification to the Ohio EPA for certification by the Governor. Staff would then transmit copies of the resolution to the appropriate agencies.

Ms. Cierebiej made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-038. Mayor Blackwell seconded the motion.

The Board voted on Resolution 2025-038. The motion passed by voice vote.

Presentation / Discussion Items

Northeast Ohio Household Travel Survey Final Report

Director Gallucci stated that the Household Travel Survey is conducted once every 10 years and is used not only to calibrate the model but also for the Long Range Planning process.

Mr. Jesse Casas, Consultant from Westat, stated that the goal of the survey is to collect 9,000 completed household responses. The survey was being conducted between February 20, 2024, and October 31, 2024, with travel dates selected to align with typical school days—Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays—while schools are in session. To support this effort, NOACA mailed 685,000 invitations, reaching over 70% of households in the NOACA region. As a result, 16,476 households were recruited, and 8,086 surveys have been completed to date.

Mr. Casas presented information on the following, based on n=8,086:

- Key Demographic Distributions
 - Met county goal distributions
 - Household size matches ACS distributions
 - ¼ of households have at least one child present
 - Household vehicle counts match ACS
 - Vast majority of vehicles are gas-powered
 - Household workers match the ACS distribution
 - Households with income less than \$75K underrepresented

Ms. Laura Wilson presented information on the following:

- Key Travel Behavior Characteristics
 - Trip rate (averages)
 - HH trip rates by income (Trip N=61,920)
 - HH trip rates by county (Trip N=61,920)
 - Trip distribution by time of day departure (Trip N=46,841)
 - Travel mode distribution (N=61,920)
 - Travel purpose distribution (N=61,920)

- Trip distance by county (Trip N=61,854)
- Trip distance by mode (Trip N=61,168)
- Trip duration by mode (Trip N=61,717)

Ms. Wilson stated that the Household Travel Survey (HHTS) was funded with Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Ohio Consolidated Planning Grant (OCPG) funds totaling \$1,750,591. She noted that the next steps involve using the survey results in the calibration and validation of NOACA's travel forecasting model, as well as in various other planning activities.

Regional Metroparks Trail Connectivity Study (RMTCS) Final Report

Director Gallucci stated that the regional Metro Parks connectivity study is one of NOACA's first regional Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) projects.

Mr. Matt Hills, consultant from OHM Advisors, stated that the Regional Metroparks Trails Connectivity Study (RMTCS) aims to strengthen the NOACA service area by establishing a comprehensive active transportation network designed for users of all ages and abilities. Over the next 25+ years, this network will connect parks, neighborhoods, schools, and key employment and shopping destinations, supporting both recreational and non-recreational travel.

Mr. Hills presented information on the following:

- Project Team and Stakeholders
- Goals
- Timeline
- Project Process
 - Phase 1: Existing Network Analysis
 - Phase 2: Network Development
 - Phase 3: Recommendations & Implementation
 - Existing Conditions
 - Existing Conditions Analyses
 - Existing Conditions Engagement
 - Network Development – Criteria
 - Composite Trip Potential
 - Network Development Engagement
 - Scoring Analyses
 - Figure 4-1: NOACA Region-wide Scoring
 - Figure 4-2: County-specific Scoring
- Recommendations and Implementation
 - Implementation Plan
 - Figure 4-12: Cuyahoga County Implementation Plan
 - Figure 4-13: Geauga County Implementation Plan
 - Figure 4-14: Lake County Implementation Plan
 - Figure 4-15: Lorain County Implementation Plan
 - Figure 4-16: Medina County Implementation Plan
 - Facility Types
 - Cost Estimates Based on Facility Types
 - Maintenance Considerations
 - Communication Strategies

Mr. Hills stated that the study budget is not to exceed \$249,965. He noted that the project recommendations from the final report are included in the LRTP update, awaiting Board of Directors approval.

Code of Regulations Revision – Economic Development Subcommittee

Director Gallucci stated that the Code of Regulations must be updated to include the Economic Development Subcommittee, as this is a required criterion for obtaining Economic Development District (EDD) status.

Mr. Blackshear presented information on the development of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and Economic Development Subcommittee (EDS), as well as NOACA's application for EDD status.

Mr. Blackshear explained that the Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires NOACA to amend its bylaws to formally codify the EDS. This step is essential for securing designation as an EDD, which would enhance access to additional funding and support for regional stakeholders. To meet this requirement, the EDS's membership and functions will be incorporated into Article VI, Section 6.5 of NOACA's bylaws, under the Policy Committee section.

Mr. Blackshear stated that, in accordance with Article IX of the Code of Regulations, the next steps include providing notice of the proposed amendment at the June Board meeting, with formal action scheduled for the September Board meeting.

Reports/Updates

No reports or updates were discussed at this meeting.

Old Business

No old business was discussed at this meeting.

New Business

No new business was discussed at this meeting.

Public Comment

No one signed up to speak at the end of the meeting.

Adjournment

Councilwoman Howse-Jones made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:30 p.m. Ms. Berry seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Chris Ronayne, Cuyahoga County Executive
NOACA Board President

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



Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ATTENDANCE

X = Member present A = Alternate present * = Ex officio, non-voting

MEETING DATES	1/24/25	3/14/25	6/13/25	9/12/25	12/12/25
BOARD OFFICERS					
BEVERAGE III, Morris W.	X	X	X		
BIBB, Justin	A	A	A		
BLACKWELL, Annette M.	X	X	X		
BRADLEY, Jack	X	X	A		
BRANDON, Jeff	X	X	X		
BRENNAN, Michael D.	X	X	X		
CONRAD, Andy	X	X	A		
CUNNINGHAM, Mark	X	X	X		
DVORAK, James W.	A	X	A		
GRIFFIN, Blaine A.	X	X	X		
HARRISON, Aaron M.	X	X	X		
PLECNIK, John	A	A	A		
RIDDELL, Jeff	A	A	X		
RONAYNE, Chris	X	X	X		
CUYAHOGA COUNTY					
County Government					
CIEREBIEJ, Mary	X/A	X	X		
DEVER, Michael	X	X	A		
HOUSER, Michael J.	A	X	A		
Regional Authorities					
DREYFUSS-WELLS, Kyle	A	A	X		
GUTHEIL, David		A	A		
KOOMAR, Paul	A	X	X		
Suburban Regions					
ALAI, Samuel	A		X		
ANTOSKIEWICZ, Larry	X	X	X		
BOBST, Pamela	X	X	X		
CASTELLI, Matthew	X	X	X		
DEGEETER, Timothy	A	X	X		
GAIL, Kirsten Holzheimer	X	X	X		
GEORGE, Meghan	A	X			
SEREN, Kahlil		X			
THOMAS, Kim		X	X		
CITY OF CLEVELAND					
DEROSA, James	A	X	A		
FIELDS, Marka	X				
HOWSE-JONES, Stephanie	X	X	X		
KAZY, Brian	A		X		
MCCORMACK, Kerry	X	X	X		
MERSMANN, Calley	A	X	X		
O'Keeffe, Sarah		X			
MOSS, Matt			X		
GEAUGA COUNTY					

MEETING DATES	1/24/25	3/14/25	6/13/25	9/12/25	12/12/25
BOARD OFFICERS					
BRAKEY, Carolyn	A	X	X		
SPIDALIERI, Ralph	A	A	A		
LAKE COUNTY					
EXLEY, Alan	X	X			
CAPELLE, Ben		X	X		
REGOVICH, Richard	X/A	X	A		
LORAIN COUNTY					
BRUBAKER, Kevin	X		X		
CARNEY, Ken	A	A	A		
CORCORAN, Kevin	X		X		
MOORE, David J.		A	A		
MEDINA COUNTY					
MAGOVAC, Paul	X	X	X		
STATE OF OHIO					
AHMED, Ferzan*		A			
EMERMAN, David*	X				
PICURI, John	X	X	A		
Total Members Attend:	42	43	43		

Public Comments

Speaker: John Kalas, Medina County
Agenda Item: Resolution No. 2025-024

“According to the Board of Directors packet, this resolution was born of numerous requests by Geauga County Commissioners to have their highway engineer added as a NOACA Board member. Because a very delicate balance of Board membership is required for the structure to remain under Cuyahoga County’s control, NOACA is suggesting that Geauga County alter its membership composition on the Board from three county commissioners to two county commissioners in the Geauga County Highway Engineer. On its face, this may appear as an action to create uniformity across the board. To me, it is about two Geauga County Commissioners working with NOACA to snuff out a board member and his alternate, Mr. Walter Claypool, who just so happens to be the most vocal challenger of NOACA’s policies. I will take it a step further and note that the move also serves to discourage anyone looking to rise through the political ranks to challenge bad NOACA policy head-on. It speaks volumes to me that the most powerful board in the region is fearful of the challenges leveraged by one individual. I suppose I would be nervous, too, if my entire premise were built upon a house of cards. I have witnessed and challenged these same fabrications myself over the years, from abysmal levels of community participation to fraudulent surveys to shaping policy around false narratives. The most recent example of the latter being the Canadian wildfires, which are still broadcast as being a product of climate change while ignoring the numerous mainstream media articles, particularly the New York Times, pinning the cause on bad forestry maintenance, flat out arson, and reforestation with trees local firefighters referred to as ‘gasoline on a stick.’ In the year 1974, on the day that he was arrested, Russian author, dissident, and political prisoner, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, released the text, ‘Live, Not by Lies.’ In it, Solzhenitsyn equates lies with ideology, the illusion that human nature and society can be reshaped to predetermined specifications. I am a knowing party in NOACA’s desire to reshape society through predetermined solutions, whether it comes from the numerous nonprofits or macro planning agencies like the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy or the American Planning Association. NOACA is more in the market of justifying instead of planning. It is obvious that they will take whatever steps are necessary to protect those fragile narratives. So today, I ask the Board members in attendance to live not by lies, and preserve one of the few thoughtful, impassioned voices in the region by striking down Resolution 2025-024.”