



NOACA HR, Personnel, and Organizational Development Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2025
NOACA Offices

1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio

Present: Please see the attached attendance record.

Mayor Matt Castelli, Chair of HR, Personnel, and Organizational Development Subcommittee, convened the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Mr. John Gall made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 12, 2025. Ms. India Birdsong Terry seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Mr. Gall made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of September 30, 2025. Ms. Annie Pease seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

No public comments were made at this meeting.

Executive Director's Report

Director Grace Gallucci announced the passing of Richard J. Regovich, Lake County Commissioner and NOACA Board Member, who was born on July 3, 1967, and passed away on November 26, 2025.

Action Items

Charter Review

Ms. Liz Barlik reminded the Subcommittee that it adopted a charter on February 25. She noted that, following the September discussion about next steps, she wanted to bring the charter back for review to determine whether any updates are needed. If revisions are warranted, the Subcommittee can make them and then vote. The full charter is in the packet, and she highlighted the three key sections for review: purpose, goals, and functions.

Ms. Barlik reviewed the Subcommittee's purpose.

Mayor Castelli said the charter looks good and reiterated that the Subcommittee is a higher-level body focused on human resources. While it provides advice and guidance, day-to-day HR operations fall to the Executive Director, the HR Director, and legal counsel.

Ms. Barlik reviewed the Subcommittee's goals, noting that they originate from NOACA's internal strategic plan (ISP) and were adopted by the HRPOD Subcommittee.

Ms. Annie Pease thanked Ms. Barlik for highlighting the connection between the goals and the ISP, and asked whether the goals have an associated timeline, given the cadence of Subcommittee meetings and their alignment with the broader organizational plan.

Ms. Barlik said there is no specific timeline for the goals. They serve as a high-level mission within the ISP, while the individual actions under them carry their own timelines.

Mayor Castelli said he assumed the Subcommittee would hear from Ms. Lisa Durkin about her work and how it aligns with the Subcommittee's overarching goals.

Ms. Barlik noted that the goals belong to the Subcommittee.

Ms. Terry asked how often the charter should be updated, acknowledging it is newly created.

Ms. Barlik responded that updates are infrequent unless the Subcommittee's function changes. She said the original vision has evolved, especially with Ms. Durkin now on board, and the goal is simply to ensure alignment. If everything still fits, no changes are needed.

Ms. Terry added that if the charter is tied to a strategic plan, it may need to be revisited whenever that plan is updated.

Mayor Castelli asked Ms. Pease for her thoughts on the overarching goals and how they connect across NOACA.

Ms. Pease said she was interested in Ms. Durkin's update and in understanding how the ISP goals connect to the Subcommittee's functions. She also asked whether the ISP includes targets that would clarify what the Subcommittee is working toward and on what timeline.

Mayor Castelli stated that the charter did not need to be approved at this meeting.

Director Gallucci agreed, noting the item could be deferred until the next meeting to allow more discussion.

Mayor Castelli reiterated that the charter is not urgent and action is not required today.

Ms. Terry suggested hearing the State of Human Resources – First Three Months presentation if it would only take a few minutes. She asked if members could provide comments afterward.

Ms. Barlik said yes.

Director Gallucci emphasized that while alignment with the internal strategic plan is important, the Subcommittee's goals should be its own. She said there is time for members to consider this, discuss it today, submit comments, and adopt the charter at the next meeting.

Ms. Barlik reviewed the Subcommittee's functions and requested member input.

Mayor Castelli said the Subcommittee should address timelines: what has been completed, what is still in progress, and which functions need defined deadlines.

Ms. Terry referenced the following function: “Develop a performance management process for the Executive Director.” She asked whether the Subcommittee’s role is to remain involved to refine the process and serve as a sounding board as needed. She noted that removing this function could risk returning to past issues.

Director Gallucci agreed and said the final bullet should remain as an ongoing maintenance item.

Mayor Castelli said that, in line with Ms. Terry’s point, the Subcommittee developed the process, while its implementation will fall to the Executive Committee. He added that the process remains ongoing and will stay in place.

Ms. Durkin explained that the Subcommittee’s mission and goals must remain flexible because organizations evolve. While some tasks have clear timelines, most HR work requires continual reassessment, adjustment, and organic change. She emphasized that these responsibilities are ongoing rather than fixed.

Presentation/Discussion Items

The State of Human Resources – First Three Months

Ms. Durkin provided an update on her first three months as NOACA’s new HR Director, noting that her priority has been relationship-building with the Executive Director, senior leaders, managers, and all employees. She gathered broad feedback, assessed compliance and personnel records, supported open enrollment processes, and began updating the agency’s employee policy and procedure handbook. She highlighted the strong foundation laid by staff despite the prior absence of a full-time HR presence.

Ms. Durkin described progress on the internal strategic plan and the evolution of the employee working group into a formal Employee Engagement Committee. This committee serves as a two-way communication channel, helping relay employee perspectives to leadership and communicating organizational priorities back to staff. The group will support policy reviews, recognition initiatives, and future programs such as career pathing, with its charter and membership structure nearing completion.

Ms. Terry asked how many total members are on the engagement committee.

Ms. Durkin noted that the Employee Engagement Committee has ten members, representing about 20% of the organization. Although best practice suggests closer to 10%, the current size reflects the group’s origins as a steering committee. Two directors, Liz Barlik and Bev Burtzlaff, will stay on for six months to provide continuity before their seats are opened to other employees. She emphasized that the committee’s research, feedback, and involvement have strengthened communication between staff and leadership.

Ms. Durkin reported that the committee will soon review NOACA’s updated policies and procedures handbook, which modernizes and clarifies existing guidance. In her first three months, she also gained insight into NOACA’s strong performance evaluation program and participated in finalizing FY 2025 evaluations. She praised the agency’s merit process as more effective and equitable than that she has seen elsewhere. Feedback from staff revealed the need to improve performance planning, beginning with updated job descriptions; all employees and supervisors have completed revisions, and she is now conducting FLSA assessments before moving into full performance plan development.

Ms. Durkin described recent leadership development efforts. Based on employee survey input and consultation with OE Strategies, NOACA launched training for senior leaders, managers, and principals focused on a servant-leadership and accountability model. This includes clarifying management expectations, strengthening communication, and practicing “radical candor.” The senior management team has been renamed the senior leadership team, and managers are now referred to as manager leaders. Training will continue in the coming weeks, and early feedback indicates the sessions are already improving clarity, collaboration, and leadership effectiveness across the organization.

Mayor Castelli asked where the term “radical candor” originated.

Ms. Durkin explained that it was developed by Kim Scott, a longtime Silicon Valley leader, who emphasized that honest guidance only works when it is grounded in genuine care and respectful communication. She said the team is learning both effective and ineffective ways to use it.

Mr. Gall noted the change in titles to “senior leader” and “manager leader.”

Ms. Durkin clarified that Director Gallucci made that change.

Mr. Gall praised the shift, saying managers manage things, but leaders lead people, and the titles should reflect that.

Ms. Durkin said that once the job description assessment is complete, the next priority will be strengthening performance planning, including training and development in both technical and soft skills. This will support career pathing and succession planning. She noted that her goal is to have these enhancements in place within her first 12 months.

Director Gallucci said Ms. Durkin has done exceptional work over the past three months, consistently demonstrating strong engagement, relationship-building, and a remarkable work ethic. She said the progress presented today reflects significant effort and that Ms. Durkin is exactly the HR leader NOACA needs at this time.

Ms. Pease thanked Ms. Durkin for the extensive progress made in only three months.

Ms. Durkin credited her success to strong collaboration with Director Gallucci, senior leadership, managers, and staff.

Director Gallucci emphasized that Ms. Durkin is an exceptional HR leader, particularly at this moment in the organization’s evolution.

Mr. Gall echoed Director Gallucci’s comment, noting that Ms. Durkin was essential in the HR role, which was much needed and will strengthen employee satisfaction, retention, and overall performance.

Mayor Castelli asked whether OE Strategies is assisting Ms. Durkin with the work.

Ms. Durkin confirmed they are, noting that an employee-survey request for a 360-degree review of senior leadership is already being implemented. She also stated she has quickly developed a productive working relationship with OE Strategies.

Mayor Castelli asked how NOACA staff is responding to the idea of “radical candor.”

Ms. Durkin shared that she practices direct, honest communication and has already addressed behavioral and performance concerns with employees. She noted generational differences in how feedback is received but said most employees appreciate honesty delivered appropriately.

Director Gallucci agreed that radical candor is an important skill for managers.

Mayor Castelli expressed continued interest in the topic.

Ms. Pease asked for clarification on what “performance planning” entails.

Ms. Durkin explained that it expands NOACA’s Overall Work Program (OWP) by creating specific goals, objectives, metrics, and expectations for each employee. The process reduces subjectivity, strengthens accountability, and incorporates mandatory training and development tied to career pathing and succession planning.

Director Gallucci added that linking employee performance directly to the Overall Work Program (OWP) is a major improvement the agency has long needed.

Mayor Castelli thanked Ms. Durkin for her thorough presentation.

Reports/Updates

No reports/updates were presented at this meeting.

Old Business

Mayor Castelli mentioned that the HRPOD Subcommittee Charter would be discussed at a future meeting.

Mr. Gall reported that Ms. Terry requested that the Charter be emailed to all Subcommittee members for feedback.

Mayor Castelli said Director Gallucci would oversee the request.

New Business

Director Gallucci thanked the HR Subcommittee, especially the members of the HR Director selection panel, for their support during the hiring process, noting it was rigorous but led to the right choice.

Mayor Castelli thanked the Subcommittee and told Ms. Durkin they are glad to have her at NOACA, adding jokingly that it is all going to fall on her shoulders.

Adjournment

Mr. Gall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 a.m. Ms. Pease seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

The HR, Personnel, and Organizational Development Subcommittee will hold its next meeting Friday, March 27, 2026, 10 – 11:00 a.m., at the NOACA Offices.

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



NOACA HR, Personnel and Organizational Development Subcommittee 2025 Attendance Record

MEMBER	2/11/25	2/25/25	3/11/25	4/8/25	5/13/25	8/12/25	9/30/25	12/5/25
CASTELLI, Matt	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
DREYFUSS-WELLS, Kyle	X	X	X		X	X		
GALL, John	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
HARRISON, Aaron					X			
REGOVICH, Richard	X	X	X		X		X	
TAYLOR, Katie	X	X	X	X	X			
TERRY, India Birdsong		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ex-officio								
RONAYNE, Chris (Debbie Berry, Alternate) (Annie Pease, Alternate on 12/5/25)	X	A	X		A	A		A

X = Member Present

A = Alternate Present