



External Stakeholder Relations Committee Minutes

Wednesday, November 5, 2025 at 3:30 PM

COTA - WG Porter Boardroom, 33 N High St, Columbus OH

1. Call to Order

Chair Erika Clark Jones called the November 5, 2025 meeting of the External Stakeholder Committee to order at 3:30 pm.

2. Roll Call

Committee Members Present

Erika Clark Jones, Chair

Pete Bucher, Trustee

Matt Starr, Trustee

Heather Ulrey, Trustee

3. Approval of External Stakeholder Relations Committee Minutes

A. September 9, 2025 External Stakeholder Relations Committee Minutes

Trustee Pete Bucher moved to approve the September 9, 2025 External Stakeholder Relations Committee meeting minutes, seconded by Trustee Heather Ulrey. Motion carried.

4. New Business

A. Customer Sentiment Survey - Sarah McQuaide, COTA Director, Marketing and Engagement

COTA Director of Marketing and Engagement Sarah McQuaide presented the annual Customer Satisfaction Survey Results, reviewing the methodology, key findings and drivers of satisfaction for COTA's fixed route and Mainstream services. She said that surveys conducted with more than 1,700 customers found that overall, customers are satisfied with COTA services, with ratings improving for both fixed-route and Mainstream compared to 2024. The presentation included analysis of satisfaction ratings for various service aspects, as well as areas of opportunity for continued improvement. Ms. McQuaide said survey results are being shared internally to inform decisions, shape messages and drive improvements across COTA.

B. LinkUS Communications and Engagement Update - Patrick Harris COTA Chief External Relations Officer

COTA Chief External Relations Officer Patrick Harris presented the LinkUS Communications and Engagement update, sharing that the LinkUS Communications and Delivery Alliance members are working on a plan refresh to prepare for an expected busy 2026. Mr. Harris noted each corridor is unique with its own set of complexities, and that it is necessary to have effective strategies to communicate with residents and businesses. He said in the coming three months, the team will be delivering a corridor engagement strategy and framework; a unified strategy strategic messaging plan; an update to the communications and engagement plan, which was presented in the first quarter of 2025; a business toolkit framework; an updated LinkUS website, and a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) dashboard. Mr. Harris noted that the dashboard will be an internal tool to measure against goal achievement and community expectations and that the committee will receive an update on the KPIs at each meeting. He presented key events coming in 2026 that will include communication work, including the opening of the Rickenbacker mobility center; and multiple Transit Supportive Infrastructure project groundbreaking events.

C. Draft 2026-2030 Strategic Plan – Ehren Bingaman, TransPro Managing Principal
TransPro Managing Principal Ehren Bingaman presented the draft 2026-2030 Strategic Plan, noting the planning process, efforts to gather Board and stakeholder input, and timeline. Mr. Bingaman shared that the organization’s mission statement, vision statement, and core values went through a refresh/reframing process. He discussed the proposed success outcomes in the areas of customer experience; employee engagement; community value, and fiscal responsibility. An organizational scorecard with objectives and 2026 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each area was presented, which can be used to monitor progress. The goal is to have the strategic plan adopted at the December 10, 2025 Board of Trustees meeting.

5. Other Business

No other business was brought before the Committee.

6. Adjournment

Trustee Bucher moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Trustee Matt Starr. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:17 pm.

Adopted: January 13, 2026

Signed:

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Erika Clark Jones

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Chair, External Stakeholder Relations Committee

Attest:

Signed by:

Melissa Selby-Ford

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President/CEO