



Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 9:00 AM

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

1. Call to Order

Chair Sean Mentel called the December 10, 2025 regular meeting of the COTA Board of Trustees to order at 9:01 am.

2. Roll Call

Board Members Present

Sean Mentel, Chair
Trudy Bartley, Vice Chair (9:16 am)
Erika Clark Jones, Trustee (9:16 am)
Jay Deis, Trustee
Mallory Donaldson, Trustee
Jeff Hunley, Trustee
Doug McCollough, Trustee
Stephen Sayre, Trustee
Matt Starr, Trustee
Amy Taylor, Trustee
Heather Ulrey, Trustee

Board Member Excused

Pete Bucher, Trustee
Marc Reitter, Trustee

3. Approval of Board of Trustee Minutes

A. November 12, 2025 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes

Trustee Jeff Hunley moved to approve the November 12, 2025 Board of Trustees regular meeting minutes, seconded by Trustee Heather Ulrey. Motion carried.

4. Comments or Statements from the Audience

There were no comments or statements from the audience.

5. President's Report

COTA President/CEO Monica Téllez-Fowler said decisions the Board of Trustees will be making today are impactful: Approving the 2026 operating and capital budgets allows COTA to deliver on LinkUS commitments, including funding for three rapid transit corridors that are in development, a new bus line and investment in more buses, paratransit vans and COTA//Plus vehicles to launch a fourth zone; the operating

budget is an investment toward our people and our customers. The 2026-2030 proposed Strategic Plan raises four key organizational priorities and includes clear metrics and accountability. President Téllez-Fowler announced that COTA was awarded \$19.9 million through the Federal Transportation Administration's Buses and Bus Facilities Program and the Low or No-Emission Grant Program, which will support two 60-foot vehicles for COTA's Bus Rapid Transit fleet and complete critical upgrades at COTA's Fields Avenue facility. She also introduced Alicia Walker as COTA's new Chief Operating Officer.

6. Governance Committee Report - Sean Mentel, Chair

Governance Committee Chair Sean Mentel reported that this committee met on December 4, 2025, where they heard committee reports that included three resolutions that are on today's regular agenda. The committee was also presented with an additional 12 resolutions recommended to the consent agenda; resolution 2025-155 was moved to the regular agenda.

COTA Chief LinkUS Program Officer Dorinda McCombs presented Resolution 2025-155:

- A. Resolution 2025-155 Authorizing a Contract with Carahsoft Technology Corporation for the Purchase and Deployment of the Procore Cloud-Based Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) Construction Management System

Trustee Amy Taylor moved to approve Resolution 2025-155, seconded by Trustee Doug McCollough. Motion carried.

7. Strategic and Operational Planning Committee Report - Trudy Bartley, Chair

Chair Mentel reported that the Strategic and Operational Planning Committee met on December 3, 2025 and heard the Strategic Plan presentation and invited President/CEO Monica Téllez-Fowler and Chief Innovation Technology Officer Sophia Mohr to present the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan.

- A. 2026-2030 Strategic Plan - Monica Tellez-Fowler, COTA President/CEO and Sophia Mohr, COTA Chief Innovation Technology Officer

President Téllez-Fowler provided background, and Ms. Mohr outlined 2026 success outcomes in the areas of customer experience, employee engagement, community value, and fiscal responsibility. They presented a scorecard to track impact and discussed next steps, which include establishing baseline metrics; launching an internal communications campaign to integrate mission, vision and values into COTA's daily work, and setting up an accountability process

Ms. Mohr presented the corresponding resolution:

Resolution 2025-141 Adopting the Central Ohio Transit Authority's 2026-

2030 Strategic Plan

Trustee Erika Clark Jones moved to approve Resolution 2025-141, seconded by Trustee Mallory Donaldson. Motion carried.

Strategic and Operational Planning Committee Chair Trudy Bartley introduced COTA Chief Financial Officer Earl Jackson, asking him to provide the same presentation and corresponding resolution that was presented in her committee.

B. 2026 Budget Recommendations - Earl Jackson, COTA Chief Financial Officer

Mr. Jackson presented the 2026 budget recommendations, noting: the 2025 Operating Budget is forecasted to be two percent below budget; the 2026 Operating expenses represent 49.5 percent of the proposed budget; the 2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Transit Supportive Infrastructure (TSI) expenses make up the rest of the budget. He also said sales tax performance, which at the end of October 2025 is 5.4 percent higher than the same period in 2024; however, collections are forecasted to be about one percent lower than budgeted due to expanded sales tax holiday and timing differences.

Mr. Jackson reviewed economic indicators in the areas of federal funds rates, inflation, GDP growth, and employment and provided an outlook on each. He noted potential impacts at the federal level, including tariffs, tax and policy changes. Mr. Jackson also reviewed COTA's priorities and areas of focus that are driving the proposed \$275.9 million operating budget in 2026, which includes LinkUS initiatives, activating the strategic plan, opening the Mobility Center at Rickenbacker, service expansion and enhancements, and improving financial processes. He then reviewed 2026 operating revenue sources, projecting a total revenue of \$276 million, as well as the sales tax projection and allocation.

Mr. Jackson reviewed the proposed 2026-2030 CIP, providing highlights of key expenditures in 2026, including buses and other revenue vehicles; modernization and expansion plans, and technology purchases. Mr. Jackson also reviewed 2026 priorities for the Transit Supportive Infrastructure Grant Program, which includes onboarding a TSI administrator for the program.

Mr. Jackson presented the corresponding resolutions authorizing the budget and capital improvement program:

Resolution 2025-142 Authorizing Appropriations for the Expenditures of the Central Ohio Transit Authority for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2026

Trustee McCollough moved to approve Resolution 2025-142, seconded by Trustee Hunley. Motion carried, with one abstention from Trustee Stephen Sayre.

Resolution 2025-143 Authorizing the Adoption of the 2026-2030 Five-Year Capital Improvement Program

Trustee Clark Jones moved to approve Resolution 2025-143, seconded by Vice Chair Bartley. Motion carried with one abstention from Trustee Sayre.

8. External Stakeholder Relations Committee Report - Erika Clark Jones, Chair

External Stakeholder Relations Committee Chair Erika Clark Jones reported that this committee did not meet in December and is next scheduled to meet January 13, 2026.

9. Performance Monitoring/Audit Committee Report - Marc Reitter, Chair

Board Chair Mentel reported that the Performance Monitoring/Audit Committee did not meet in December.

10. Consent Agenda

- A. Resolution 2025-144 Authorizing Additional Expenditures for the Contract with Transdev Services, Inc. for Transportation Services for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities
- B. Resolution 2025–145 Authorizing an Agreement with the City of Westerville for the Continuation of the COTA//Plus Operating Zone
- C. Resolution 2025-146 Authorizing a Contract with T-Mobile USA, Inc. for Mobile Data and Voice Services
- D. Resolution 2025-147 Authorizing an Amendment to the Transit Supportive Infrastructure Grant Award with the Franklin County Engineer's Office for the Galloway Road Project
- E. Resolution 2025-148 Authorizing an Amendment to the Transit Supportive Infrastructure Grant Award with the Franklin County Engineer's Office for the Grener Road Shared Use Path Project
- F. Resolution 2025-149 Authorizing an Amendment to the Transit Supportive Infrastructure Grant Award with the Franklin County Engineer's Office for the Groveport Road Project
- G. Resolution 2025-150 Authorizing an Amendment to the Transit Supportive Infrastructure Grant Award with the Franklin County Engineer's Office for the McComb Road Project

- H. Resolution 2025-151 Authorizing an Amendment to the Transit Supportive Infrastructure Grant Award with the Franklin County Engineer's Office for the Renner Road Project
- I. Resolution 2025-152 Authorizing an Amendment to the Transit Supportive Infrastructure Grant Award with the Franklin County Engineer's Office for the Reynoldsburg-New Albany Road/Morse Road Project
- J. Resolution 2025-153 Authorizing an Amendment to the Transit Supportive Infrastructure Grant Award with the Franklin County Engineer's Office for the Snouffer Road Project
- K. Resolution 2025-154 Authorizing an Amendment to the Transit Supportive Infrastructure Grant Award with the Franklin County Engineer's Office for the Winchester Pike Project

Vice Chair Bartley moved to approve Resolutions 2025-141 through 2025-154, seconded by Trustee Ulrey. Motion carried.

11. Other Business

Trustee Clark Jones moved to amend the agenda to add Resolution 2025-156, seconded by Vice Chair Bartley. Motion carried.

COTA Chief LinkUS Program Officer Dorinda McCombs presented Resolution 2025-156, Authorizing Additional Expenditures for the Contract with HNTB Ohio, Inc. for LinkUS Program Planning and Engineering Support Services.

Trustee Hunley moved to approve Resolution 2025-156, seconded by Trustee Clark Jones. Motion carried.

12. Meeting Schedule

- Strategic and Operational Planning Committee, 9:30 am, Tuesday, January 13, 2026
- External Stakeholder Relations Committee, 3:30 pm, Tuesday, January 13, 2026
- Performance Monitoring/Audit Committee, 2 pm, Thursday, January 15, 2026
- Governance Committee, 4 pm, Thursday, January 22, 2026
- Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, Wednesday, January 28, 2026


13. Adjournment

Vice Chair Bartley moved to adjourn the December 10, 2025 Board of Trustee meeting, seconded by Trustee Hunley. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:12 am.

Adopted: January 28, 2026

Signed: Signed by:

4E9CFE64E9D444D...
Chair, Board of Trustees

Attest: Signed by:

C680309626B34D2...
President/CEO