



Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 28, 2026 at 9:00 AM

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

1. Call to Order

Chair Sean Mentel called the January 28, 2026 regular meeting of the COTA Board of Trustees to order at 9:23 am.

2. Roll Call

Board Members Present

Sean Mentel, Chair
Trudy Bartley, Vice Chair
Jay Deis, Trustee
Jeff Hunley, Trustee
Doug McCollough, Trustee
Stephen Sayre, Trustee
Amy Taylor, Trustee

Board Member Excused

Pete Bucher, Trustee
Erika Clark Jones, Trustee
Mallory Donaldson, Trustee
Marc Reitter, Trustee
Matt Starr, Trustee
Heather Ulrey, Trustee

3. Approval of Board of Trustee Minutes

A. December 10, 2025 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Trudy Bartley moved to approve the December 10, 2025 Board of Trustees regular meeting minutes, seconded by Trustee Amy Taylor. Motion carried.

4. Comments or Statements from the Audience

Walter Hardy expressed excitement to see COTA hiring a Construction Manager At Risk, said that the Performance Incentive Compensation (PIC) program is important to engage employees, and questioned multiple bonuses given to the CEO and Deputy CEO. He commended the staff work through the recent extreme weather and said it is important to encourage people to use the bus, instead of people driving in small cars. Mr. Hardy had questions about the vans that are to be purchased, and how they will be logistically handled. He also questioned the firewalls to be purchased, saying COTA could find a more affordable way.

5. **President's Report**

COTA President/CEO Monica Téllez-Fowler thanked frontline employees and support staff who maintained transit service during severe winter weather. President Téllez-Fowler highlighted updates on the LinkUS program, including progress on BRT corridor design, transit-supportive infrastructure projects, budget transparency, and upcoming public engagement. She noted positive federal funding developments for the West Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and vehicle investments. She noted additional agenda items in today's meeting include selecting Elford, Inc. as the Construction Manager at Risk for the East Main Street BRT corridor and reviewing the Performance Incentive Compensation program. Ms. Téllez-Fowler said the new Mobility Center at Rickenbacker has opened, emphasizing its role in strengthening regional workforce access.

6. **Governance Committee Report - Sean Mentel, Chair**

Governance Committee Chair Sean Mentel reported that this committee met on January 22, 2026, where they heard committee reports, a presentation on the Performance Incentive Compensation program, and 16 resolutions were presented-- 11 that are on today's consent agenda and rest are on the regular agenda.

A. **Performance Incentive Compensation (PIC)/Distribution - Sophia Mohr, COTA Chief Technology Officer**

COTA staff (Deputy CEO Garth Weithman, Chief Operating Officer Alicia Walker, and Chief Financial Officer Earl Jackson) reviewed COTA's 2025 Performance Incentive Compensation (PIC) results and outlined proposed program updates for 2026. In 2025, Fixed Route achieved 64.28% of its PIC goals—driven by improved on-time performance but limited by reliability and safety challenges—resulting in a 1.61% payout. Paratransit performed more strongly at 80.81% of goals and a 2.02% payout, though operator shortages affected on-time performance. The presentation detailed operational factors affecting reliability, safe operations, ridership, customer satisfaction, expenses, and strategic plan progress. It also highlighted notable achievements such as an improved On Time Performance (OTP) of 81% (up from 70.87% in 2024), strong customer satisfaction and Net Promoter Score (NPS) results, successful expense management, and significant progress across key capital and strategic initiatives.

For 2026, the PIC program introduces several refinements: removal of the Diversity Spend metric due to federal changes, updated Safe Operations targets, static measures for Paratransit, alignment of paratransit customer satisfaction metrics with Fixed Route, and updated targets reflecting current performance levels. Proposed 2026 targets include maintaining or improving service reliability goals, increasing OTP expectations, and supporting system growth through expanded service hours, fleet improvements, technology upgrades, and LinkUS-

related capital projects.

Mr. Weithman presented the corresponding resolutions approving the 2026 Performance Goals and payout for the 2025 Performance Incentive Compensation Program:

Resolution 2026-01 Approving The 2026 Performance Goals for COTA's Performance Incentive Compensation (PIC) Program

Trustee Doug McCollough moved to approve Resolution 2026-01, seconded by Vice Chair Bartley. Motion carried.

Resolution 2026-02 Approving the Level of Compensation Payout for the 2025 Performance Incentive Compensation (PIC) Program

Trustee Jay Deis moved to approve Resolution 2026-02, seconded by Trustee McCollough. Motion carried.

COTA Chief LinkUS Program Officer Dorinda McCombs presented the Capital Delivery division resolution 2026-05:

- B. Resolution 2026-05 Authorizing a Contract with Elford, Inc for Construction Manager At Risk Services for the East Main Street Bus Rapid Transit Corridor

Trustee Amy Taylor moved to approve Resolution 2026-05, seconded by Trustee Deis. Motion carried.

COTA Chief Operating Officer Alicia Walker presented the Operations Division resolutions 2026-15, 2026-16, and 2026-17:

- C. Resolution 2026-15 Authorizing Additional Expenditures for the Contract with Gillig LLC for the Purchase of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Powered Heavy Duty Transit Coaches, Spare Parts, and Training

Trustee Jeff Hunley moved to approve Resolution 2026-15, seconded by Trustee Stephen Sayre. Motion carried with one abstention from Trustee Jay Deis.

- D. Resolution 2026-16 Authorizing a Contract with Transportation Equipment Sales Corp. for the Purchase of Ford Transit Vans with ADA Access for COTA Plus

Trustee McCollough moved to approve Resolution 2026-15, seconded by Vice Chair Bartley. Motion carried with one abstention from Trustee Jay Deis.

- E. Resolution 2026-17 Authorizing a Contract with Transportation Equipment Sales Corp. for the Purchase of Ford Transit Vans with a Glaval Commute Body for COTA Mainstream

Vice Chair Bartley moved to approve Resolution 2026-17, seconded by Trustee McCollough. Motion carried with one abstention from Trustee Jay Deis.

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

Strategic and Operational Planning Committee Chair Trudy Bartley reported that the committee met on January 13, 2026, which included presentations on the COTA Scorecard; COTA's Employee Resource Group report and employee engagement work; COTA Service Planning's annual report, and a LinkUS update.

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

External Stakeholder Relations Committee Chief Staff Liaison Patrick Harris reported that the committee met on January 13, 2026, which included presentations on COTA's Government Affairs work and 2026 priorities, and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for LinkUS public engagement and outreach efforts.

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

Performance Audit/Monitoring Committee Chief Staff Liaison Earl Jackson reported that the committee did not meet in January. He noted financial and operation reports are available for board members to review.

10. Consent Agenda

- A. Resolution 2026-03 Authorizing a Contract with CDW Government Inc. for Network Equipment
- B. Resolution 2026-04 Authorizing Expenditures for the Enterprise Resource Planning System Licensing and Support Agreement with Infor (US), Inc
- C. Resolution 2026-06 Authorizing a Contract with DLZ Ohio, Inc. for Architectural Transit Planning and Engineering Services
- D. Resolution 2026-07 Authorizing a Contract with HDR Engineering, Inc. for Architectural Transit Planning and Engineering Services
- E. Resolution 2026-08 Authorizing a Contract with Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. for Architectural Transit Planning and Engineering Services
- F. Resolution 2026-09 Authorizing a Contract with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. for Architectural Transit Planning and Engineering

Services

- G. Resolution 2026-10 Authorizing a Contract with TranSystems Corporation for Architectural Transit Planning and Engineering Services
- H. Resolution 2026-11 Authorizing a Contract with Marker, Inc. for On-Call Site Improvement Services
- I. Resolution 2026-12 Authorizing a Contract with Old Fashioned LLC for On-Call Site Improvement Services
- J. Resolution 2026-13 Authorizing a Contract with Robertson Construction Services, Inc. for On-Call Site Improvement Services
- K. Resolution 2026-14 Authorizing a Contract with Setterlin Building Company for On-Call Site Improvement Services

Trustee Deis moved to approve Resolutions 2026-03, 2026-04, and 2026-06 through 2026-14, seconded by Trustee Stephen Sayre. Motion carried with Chair Sean Mentel abstaining on Resolution 2026-04.

11. Other Business

- A. Executive Session for the following purpose: ORC 121.22(G)(1) to Consider the Appointment, Employment, Dismissal, Discipline, Promotion, Demotion or Compensation of a Public Employee or Official

Vice Chair Bartley moved to enter Executive Session for the purposes described above, seconded by Trustee McCollough. Through roll call, the committee members unanimously voted to enter Executive Session at 10:22 am.

Executive Session ended at 11:38 am.

- B. 2026-18 Authorizing Compensation for the President/CEO of the Central Ohio Transit Authority

Trustee McCollough moved to approve Resolution 2026-18, seconded by Vice Chair Bartley. Motion carried.

12. Meeting Schedule

- Strategic and Operational Planning Committee, 9:30 am, Tuesday, March 3, 2026
- External Stakeholder Relations Committee, 3:30 pm, Tuesday, March 3, 2026
- Performance Monitoring/Audit Committee, 2 pm, Thursday, March 5, 2026

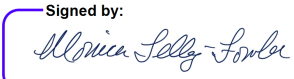
- Governance Committee, 4 pm, Thursday, March 12, 2026
- Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, 9 am, Wednesday, March 25, 2026

13. Adjournment

Trustee McCollough moved to adjourn the January 28, 2026 Board of Trustees meeting, seconded by Trustee Deis. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:40 am.

Adopted: _____ March 25, 2026 _____

Signed:  Signed by: _____
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Chair, Board of Trustees

Attest:  Signed by: _____
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President/CEO