



External Stakeholder Relations Committee Minutes

Thursday, May 8, 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 May 8, 2025 meeting of the External Stakeholder Committee to order at 3:30 pm.

2. Roll Call

Committee Members Present

Erika Clark Jones, Chair

Committee Members Excused

Heather Ulrey, Trustee

3. New Board Member Appointment – Oath of Office

A. Matt Starr

Chair Clark Jones administered the oath of office to Matt Starr.

4. Approval of External Stakeholder Relations Committee Minutes

A. March 4, 2025 External Stakeholder Relations Committee Minutes

Trustee Matt Starr moved to approve the March 4, 2025 External Stakeholder Relations Committee meeting minutes, seconded by Chair Clark Jones. Motion carried.

5. New Business

A. Local Government Update - Kelsey Ellingsen, COTA Local Government Affairs Director

COTA Local Government Affairs Director Kelsey Ellingsen shared that COTA attended and was highlighted at multiple State of Community events, which provided opportunities to listen to priorities and issues. Ms. Ellingsen noted that COTA's Advisory Panel is also an opportunity to provide information to stakeholder representatives and be responsive to their needs; the panel provides input on COTA's public programs and services.

B. Ridership Marketing Plan - Sarah McQuaide, COTA Marketing and Engagement Director

COTA Marketing and Engagement Director Sarah McQuaide presented COTA’s ridership marketing plan, which has the goal to increase ridership by 10 percent through helping new customers ride with confidence, community engagement, and promoting service enhancement. Ms. McQuaide shared that several steps have been taken to improve and offer new resources, and that the marketing team is measuring impact in real time to make sure the strategy is effective and based on data and feedback.

C. LinkUS Communications and Engagement Update – Jeff Pullin, COTA Public and Media Relations Director

COTA Public and Media Relations Director Jeff Pullin presented the LinkUS Communications and Engagement update, noting that the plan presented earlier this year remains the North Star for this work. Mr. Pullin reported on LinkUS milestones, specifically: the late-night service change in May; the May progress report has been assembled, and the City of Columbus—as the lead agency—unveiled the Transit-Oriented Development strategy. Jeff highlighted expected milestones for the next four quarters, in which public information campaigns and events will be built around.


6. Other Business

No other business was brought before the Committee.

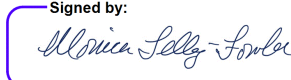
7. Adjournment

Trustee Starr moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Chair Clark Jones. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm.

Adopted: _____ September 9, 2025 _____

Signed: 
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Chair, External Stakeholder Relations Committee

Attest: 
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President/CEO