

MINUTES--NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD MEETING held Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at the City of Green Community Hall in Central Park.

1a. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marion at 8:31 a.m. in the presence of a quorum.

1b. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Vinay, seconded by Ms. Kiper, to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

1c. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Marion led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1d. Audience Participation (members of the public)

Mr. Marion asked if there was anyone from the audience who had any comments.

2. Consideration of the draft minutes of the regular meeting of the NEFCO General Policy Board on March 20, 2024

A motion was made by Ms. Kiper, seconded by Mr. Conrad, to accept the March meeting minutes. The motion carried.

3. Financial Status Report - month of March

Mr. Hadley said that \$2,452.55 was received as income during March, receipts to date were \$397,762.64, disbursements to date were \$404,477.23, and cash on hand at the end of March was \$202,811.73.

A motion was made by Ms. Sumego, seconded by Mr. Eckenrode, to approve the financial status report subject to audit. The motion carried.

3a. March Bank Reconciliations

Mr. Hadley asked for acceptance of the March bank reconciliations.

A motion was made by Mr. Vinay, seconded by Mr. Eckenrode, to accept the March bank reconciliations. The motion carried.

4. Consideration of an Amendment to the Clean Water (208) Plan to create a new Sterling Facilities Planning Area and to change the existing wastewater prescription to serve the Sterling area in Milton Township in Wayne County

Mr. LaPlante said that the Wayne County Office of Environmental Services requested a 208 Plan amendment to create a new Sterling Facilities Planning Area (FPA) and to change the existing wastewater treatment prescription, prior to receiving permit-to-install (PTI) approval by Ohio EPA for the construction of a publicly owned wastewater treatment plant to provide sanitary sewer to the Sterling area in Milton Township in Wayne County. The Sterling area is in northern Wayne County between the Village of Creston and the City of Rittman (Figure 1). The Sterling area has been identified by the Wayne County Health Department and by the Wayne Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) as having a high rate of septic system failure. He said that to address the resulting public health nuisance the Wayne County Office of Environmental Services is in the design and construction phase of a new publicly owned wastewater treatment plant to serve the Sterling area. He noted that the new plant will be designed to have the capacity to treat all the wastewater from that area. The new wastewater treatment plant receiving stream will be Fall Creek, which is a tributary to Chippewa Creek. He stated that the Wayne County Office of Environmental Services has plans to apply to the Ohio EPA in the spring for the PTI. He said that

bids from contractors will start to be collected in early fall. The Wayne County Board of Commissioners authorized using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and Ohio Public Works Commission funds to pay for the wastewater treatment plant design and construction. This amendment is needed as a step in Ohio EPA's PTI process. He said that the ARPA funds must be appropriated by December 31, 2024 and expended by December 31, 2026. He stated that a current Sterling FPA boundary does not exist (Figure 2). He said that the FPA boundary 'change' consists of the proposed FPA boundary, shown as a blue line in Figure 3. He said that the new Sterling FPA will have an area of approximately 1.5 square miles. This amendment will also change the existing wastewater treatment prescriptions in the geographic area of the proposed new Sterling FPA. The existing prescription (cream color) (Figure 2) prohibits any sanitary sewer. The new prescription will be "Areas Expected to be Served with Sanitary Sewer within the next 20 years" (orange) (Figure 3). This prescription requires existing homes and other structures to connect to sewer when it is available. He listed the local governments and agencies that are affected by the amendment: Milton Township, City of Rittman, Village of Creston, Wayne County Farm Bureau, Wayne Soil and Water Conservation District and the Wayne County Health Department. He said that a public notice describing the proposed amendment was published by the Wooster Daily Record on February 27, 2024; no comments were received. The new Chapter 3, Appendix 3-56 Sterling FPA is attached. He said that on April 3rd the ERTAC recommended approval of the amendment. He asked for Board approval of Resolution No. FY2024-007.

A motion was made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Vinay, to approve Resolution No. FY2024-007. The motion carried.

5. Stark Economic Development Board requests letter of support for EDA Recompete Pilot Program Phase 2 grant application

Mr. Lautzenheiser said the attached project summary for the Stark Economic Development Board (SEDB) letter of support request for an EDA Recompete Pilot Program Phase 2 grant application has been slightly revised since last week. He said that the letter of support is for the Reconnecting Canton project to hopefully reduce the crime age employment gap in southeast Canton. He said that late last year, the Stark Economic Development Board and its consortium were awarded a Phase 1 Recompete grant for this project. The SEDB and the other twenty-one finalists were invited to apply for the Phase 2 program. The Phase 2 application is due April 25th. He noted that the SEDB is requesting \$20 million in EDA grant funding for the Phase 2 project. He said that this is called the implementation phase, to implement the projects that have been identified in the Phase 1 application. He stated that no local match is required for this program. He said that the EDA is expected to award between four and eight Recompete Phase 2 projects and each of those applications will include between three and eight component projects. He stated that this letter of support from NEFCO will have both a letter of alignment, which explains how the projects align with NEFCO's CEDS Plan, and secondly, suggested commitments from NEFCO as an organization to support and advance the project. Mr. Lautzenheiser described the six projects: connections to good jobs; entrepreneurial connections; infrastructure support; transportation connections; technology connections; and integrated governance. He asked for Board approval of the attached letter of support/commitment.

A motion was made by Mr. Eckenrode, seconded by Mr. Hofstetter, to authorize NEFCO's Chair to sign the Stark Economic Development Board's letter of support for an EDA Recompete Pilot Program Phase 2 grant application. The motion carried.

6. Appointment of CY2024 NEFCO Budget and Work Program Committee

Mr. Marion said that the Budget Committee is made up of various county/city organizations throughout the NEFCO Region. He asked for a motion to adopt the CY2024 NEFCO Budget and Work Program Committee. Below is a list of the Budget Committee members:

James Benekos, City Engineer, City of Canton
Andrei Dordea, Finance Director, City of Wooster
Joseph Eckenrode, Deputy Director of Administrative Services, County of Summit
Jonathan Hofstetter, Commissioner, Wayne County; Committee Chair
Dave Ruller, City Manager, City of Kent
Tia Rutledge, Planning Manager, Portage County Water Resources
Helen Tomic, Comprehensive Planning Administrator, City of Akron
James Troike, Sanitary Engineer, Stark County

A motion was made by Ms. Sumego, seconded by Ms. Vinay, to approve the CY2024 NEFCO Budget and Work Program Committee. The motion carried.

7. Authorization to enter into contracts with the Ohio EPA for state and federally-funded water quality management planning; authorization for the Executive Director to sign for NEFCO

Mr. Hadley said that for a number of years NEFCO, an Areawide Planning Agency, has received contracts from the Ohio EPA. He said that several years ago, NEFCO instituted and sought Board approval for the executive director to sign the Ohio EPA contracts. He said that the memo is unchanged from last week. It essentially authorizes Mr. Hadley to sign the Ohio EPA contracts; one of which is \$75,000 from the current state budget, and another, consists of roughly \$99,000 in pass-through federal money from US EPA. He said that essentially this contract work is to maintain NEFCO's water quality management plan for the four-county region. He noted that the only entities that can do 208 Clean Water Plan amendments and updates in Ohio are designated Areawide Planning Agencies or Ohio EPA (in nondesignated counties). He asked for the Board's authorization to sign the contracts when they are available.

A motion was made by Mr. Eckenrode, seconded by Ms. Sumego, to authorize NEFCO to enter into contracts with the Ohio EPA for state and federally-funded water quality management planning, and for the Executive Director to sign for NEFCO. The motion carried.

8. NEFCO FY2024 Work Program – status

a. Economic Development

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that there is \$5 million still available for the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance program. He said that this funding is generally allotted to the state of Ohio. This includes projects that would be construction, non construction, planning, technical assistance, and revolving loan funds. These projects must be located in an area that has some economic distress as the EDA metrics require less than 80 percent of the per capita median income or greater than 1 percent of the national average of unemployment. He said that a 50 percent local match is required. He said that the planning and local technical assistance program is essential to support feasibility studies, impact analysis, and disaster resiliency planning. He stated that there isn't an economic distress requirement for this program, but a distressed area in a particular location would be favorable for getting funded.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Argonne National Laboratory has updated its National Economic Resilience data for the National Economic Resilience Data Explorer (NERDE). He said that this is a good source for those that are looking to apply for grants.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has updated and boosted the minimum benchmark speed for broadband to 100 megabits per second (Mbps) for download speeds, and 20 Mbps for upload. He said that this is the first increase in nearly 10 years since 2015.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Ohio EPA will be hosting the Ohio Brownfields Conference on May 7, 2024 at the Greater Ohio Policy Center in Dublin.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the NOACA/Vibrant NEO Brownfields Revolving Loan Funds are available for cleanup of remediation brownfield sites. This program is a good source for a zero percent interest loan.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Department of Transportation Safe Streets and Roads funding is available for all. He stated that there is \$1.25 billion available for projects that are essentially trying to create safer roads and streets for all users, particularly non motorized uses and public transportation. He said that this program funds both the development of a safety action plan and the implementation of projects that would be in a safety action plan. He noted that a safety action plan has already been completed for the communities in the AMATS region; Summit and Portage Counties and the northeastern corner of Wayne County. He said that any communities that are identified in AMATS' Action Plan would be eligible to apply for implementation projects.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Stark County Area Transportation Study (SCATS) is currently developing a Safety Action Plan. He said that the Wayne County Engineers office is leading a Safety Action Plan for Wayne County. He said that the US Department of Transportation has announced an Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program with \$44.55 million available. This program is for planning, designing and constructing projects that essentially will improve active transportation facilities.

b. Environmental Planning

Mr. LaPlante said that the general timeline for this year's facilities planning areas update deadline is June 26, 2024 for the wastewater management agencies (MAs) to submit their requested FPA boundary or wastewater treatment prescription changes to NEFCO. He said that staff would like to know how much participation there will be to gauge how much of NEFCO's staff resources will be needed for this year's update. He stated that last year's update had a total of nine FPA map changes or FPA update areas from six wastewater MAs. In comparison, this year's FPA update has eight MAs proposing more update areas than last year.

Mr. LaPlante said that the NEFCO interactive online FPA map has been updated on NEFCO's website. He noted that some of the MAs use this interactive online map as a reference when reviewing projects or for permit-to-install (PTI) applications.

Mr. LaPlante said that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced, on April 10, 2023, the final per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) maximum contaminant levels (MCL) rule for public drinking water systems. He stated that the new PFAS MCL rule gives the public water system operators until 2027 to complete initial monitoring for PFAS and must also provide the public with information on PFAS levels in drinking water. He said that the public water system operators have until 2029 to implement solutions that reduce PFAS in drinking water if it is detected above the MCL. Beginning in 2029, the public water systems that are in violation of these MCLs must take action to reduce the levels and provide notification to the public of the violation. He said that this is the first MCL since 1996 that US EPA created for an emerging contaminant.

Mr. Hadley said that President Biden's office issued a fact sheet pointing out that billions of dollars are currently available from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to assist communities that are dealing with PFAS and specifically these regulations. He said that if anyone would like a copy of the fact sheet, to please contact the NEFCO staff.

9. Federal and State legislation or information of importance to local governments

Mr. Hadley said that the federal government did not shut down because of an agreement for the FY2024 appropriations representing a group of federal agencies which months ago were thought to be tougher to settle with on an agreement. He stated that he is trying to find out the funding levels that exist for some of the agencies that NEFCO works with.

Mr. Hadley said that the House passed the Stronger Workforce for America Act. He said that for additional details, to please contact NEFCO. He stated that FEMA commemorated 45 years of emergency management. He said that no changes were made to the National Flood Insurance Program manual regarding the delineations (coverages) on the flood insurance maps. He stated that there are two and a half pages of changes that were made to the updated manual which is posted on FEMA's website.

Mr. Hadley said that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that \$35 million in grants is available through the Great Lakes Environmental Justice Program. This program is administered under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). He said that the Ohio Lake Erie Commission was a recipient of one of the two grants for the Lake Erie basin.

Mr. Hadley said that there have been a lot of artificial intelligence stories published regarding the federal government's efforts to determine how and when it is appropriate for artificial intelligence to be used. He noted that artificial intelligence is now an option on many computers (via software). He stated that Office 365 has a tab that provides assistance in whatever you happen to be working on at the time. There are several articles related to artificial intelligence; please contact NEFCO if you would like additional details.

Mr. Hadley said that he has provided some information regarding Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) resources to improve cybersecurity among organizations.

Mr. Marion welcomed to the Board meeting Kyle Julien, Director of Planning and Urban Development, City of Akron.

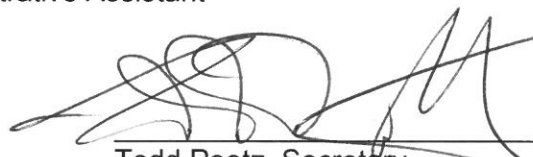
10. For the Good of the Order: an opportunity for members to share news about their community/county/agency/company, or to list a prominent issue affecting them

No one at the Board meeting had anything to comment about for their community/county/agency.

11. Other Business

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant



Todd Peetz, Secretary
NEFCO General Policy Board
May 15, 2024

NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD 2024 ATTENDANCE SHEET

Member (alternate)	1/17	2/21	3/20	4/17	5/15	6/26	7/17	8/21	9/18	10/16	11/20	12/18
PORTAGE COUNTY												
Sabrina Christian-Bennett (Mike Tinlin)	X	X										
Daniel Blakely (Tia Rutledge)	A	A	A									
Joseph Diorio (Justin Rechichar)		X	X	X								
Rochelle Hartigan (2/1/2024)												
Todd Peetz (Gail Gifford)	X	X										
Amos Sarfo (Eric Long)	X	X	X	X								
CITY OF KENT												
Kailyn Cyrus (Bridget Susel)	X	X	X	X								
STARK COUNTY												
Keith Bennett	X	X	X									
Alfredo Carranza	X		X									
Kirt Conrad			X	X								
David Maley	X	X	X									
Dan Moeglin (Sarah Buell)		A	X									
Mike Naso (Helene Papczun)		A	X									
Bob Nau (Curtis Bungard)	X	X	X									
Richard Regula (Bill Smith)	X											
Jim Troike (Tom Davis and Jeff Lonzrick)	X	A	X									
Stephan Wilder (Ben Young)	X			X								
Vacant												
Vacant												
CITY OF CANTON												
Jim Benekos (John Highman Jr. and Chris Barnes)	X		X	A								
COUNTY OF SUMMIT												
Jim Balogh	X	X	X	X								
Alan Brubaker (Larry Fulton and Chuck Hauber)	A		A									
Caitlin Elrad	X	X		X								
David Kohlmeier (Zak Kaczor)		X	X	X								
David Lukas	X											
Sam Scaffide	X	X		X								
Ilene Shapiro (Craig Stanley & Joe Eckenrode)		A		A								
Dianne Sumego			X	X								
Michael Vinay (Matt Calcei)	X	X	X	X								
CITY OF AKRON (3/25/2024)												
Tina Boyes				A								
Jan Davis												
Kyle Julien (Dylan Garritano)				X								
Chris Ludle (Michelle DiFiore)	A	A	A	A								
Shammas Malik (David Messner)				A								
Margo Sommerville (Joan Williams & Sara Biviano)												
Helen Tomic (Kurt Mulhauser)	A	A		X								
WAYNE COUNTY												
Jonathan Hofstetter (Sue Smail)	X	X		X								
Jennifer Kiper (Rob Kastner)	X	X	X	X								
Steven Wheeler (Kevin Givins)	A	A	A	A								
CITY OF WOOSTER												
Robert Reynolds (Vince Marion & Joel Montgomery)	A	A	A	A								
OHIO EPA-NEDO^a												
David Emerman (Allen Tyler)	A		A									
CITIZENS COUNCIL												
Vacant (2)												
X = member present A = alternate present												

^aex officio

See reverse side for a list of guests who attended last month's Board meeting

Guests in Attendance at the April 17, 2024 meeting

Zack Cowan, planning Director, City of Stow
