

MINUTES--NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD MEETING held Wednesday, May 15, 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 8:30 a.m. in the presence of a quorum.

1b. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Regula, 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 April 17, 2024

A motion was made by Ms. Sumego, seconded by Mr. Vinay, to accept the April meeting minutes. The motion carried.

3. Financial Status Report - month of April

Mr. Hadley said that \$1.14 was received as income during April, receipts to date were \$397,763.78, disbursements to date were \$448,238.20, and cash on hand at the end of April was \$159,051.90.

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

3a. April Bank Reconciliations

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

A motion was made by Mr. Troike, seconded by Mr. Peetz, to accept the April bank reconciliations. The motion carried.

4. Ratification of the Independent Public Accountant (IPA) firm selected by the State Auditor's Office to prepare NEFCO's audits for fiscal years July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2028; authorization for the executive director to sign a Memorandum of Agreement and related paperwork

Mr. Hadley said for the newer members, there is a Bylaws requirement that all action items should be mailed out a week in advance and if not, the action items must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of members present. He stated that the memo is unchanged from what was sent out last week. He said that NEFCO is on a two-fiscal year audit cycle. He said that for the last 10 or 12 years those audits have been prepared by the Auditor of State's Office (AOS). He said due to staffing shortages in the AOS, NEFCO's audit will be done by an independent public accountant (IPA). He stated that the AOS allowed NEFCO some input, but the final decision was made by the AOS. He said that staff provided some basic information to the AOS to include in the request for proposals (RFP). The AOS sent the RFP to multiple IPAs. Three IPAs responded to the RFP with a bid. Mr. Hadley said that staff were allowed to include as assessment for six points in the AOS total scoring system. He said that the AOS chose the firm of Charles E. Harris and Associates for an initial cost of \$32,000 which will be for six years of auditing. The State Auditor's Office will continue to oversee these activities and monitor the audit as it is being

developed and will bill NEFCO for those services. He stated that he was able to get the AOS to agree to extend the ratification of its actions to allow the Board to approve the ratification of the firm selected and to authorize the Executive Director to function as the signatory.

Mr. Eckenrode asked if this is the first time the AOS won't be doing NEFCO's audit? Mr. Hadley said no, about 10 to 12 years ago, the agency went through the same process. He said that the last time NEFCO went through this process staff did seek ratification from the Board after the AOS chose an IPA. He stated that NEFCO will be making payments for these services and the Board will have an opportunity to authorize these types of actions. Mr. Peetz suggested that the motion should say "acknowledge the ratification" since the Board isn't making any changes.

A motion was made by Mr. Peetz, seconded by Ms. Sumego, to acknowledge the ratification of the Independent Public Accountant (IPA) firm selected by the State Auditor's Office to prepare NEFCO's audits for fiscal years July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2028; and to authorize the executive director to sign a Memorandum of Agreement with the selected IPA, and related paperwork. The motion carried.

5. Preliminary FY2025 Appropriations and Expenditures Budget: Report of the Budget and Work Program Committee; Draft FY2025 Work Program

Mr. Hofstetter said that there was a lot of discussion at the Budget Committee meeting on May 10, 2024 regarding the FY2025 budget. He said that the attached is a recap of what was discussed at the Budget Meeting. He gave the Board a couple minutes to read over the memo and attachments. He stated that no action is being requested at today's Board meeting. The Budget Committee will be meeting again in June. He said that he is seeking some guidance from the Board regarding some of the topics discussed. He said that the Budget Committee discussed some key points including adding an "Employee Liability" line item for retirements to Table 3 and postponing the Strategic Plan. He said that the carryover amount has decreased and the Budget Committee discussed a possible dues increase. He said that the proposal was to increase the dues to twenty cents per capita. He stated that he was comfortable with a two cents per capita dues increase. He opened the meeting for discussion to gain input from the Board members. Mr. Regula asked if the dues increase was for FY2025? Mr. Hofstetter said yes, the increase would start in FY2025 which would run from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. Mr. Vinay asked if the Budget Committee was in agreement with the increase. Mr. Hadley said that there is an interest in keeping the dues flat. He said that it was mentioned to the Budget Committee that some of the members during previous years were facing some hard fiscal challenges. He said that NEFCO not being a mandated service was considered. He stated that the Committee's interest was to try to keep the dues as flat as possible, but in hindsight it probably would have been better to have had a modest increase to build up the income. He mentioned that the contingency is much higher than it was in the early 2000s due to the stimulus money that was received. Mr. Vinay said that it looks like the dues haven't been increased for over ten years. Mr. Hadley said that was correct and stated that NEFCO was also able to purchase new computers for staff with the stimulus funding. Mr. Marion thanked Mr. Hofstetter and the Budget Committee for engaging in this process. Mr. Hofstetter asked if the Board would be comfortable if the Budget Committee recommended a two cents per capita dues increase? Mr. Vinay said that he personally agrees with a two cents per capita dues increase. Ms. Christian-Bennett also agreed with the dues increase of two cents per capita. She suggested building an increase every couple of years to keep the income level at a comfortable amount. Mr. Marion said that the Budget Committee will provide a recommendation to the Board in June.

6. NEFCO FY2024 Work Program – status

a. Economic Development

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that NEFCO submitted its six-month performance progress report and financial reports for its partnership planning grant. These are requirements for NEFCO's

Partnership Planning grant with the EDA. He stated that he also submitted the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) report which is required for the semi-annual and annual reports.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that there are some available funding opportunities for the FY2023 Public Works/Economic Adjustment Assistance (PW/EAA) and the FY2021-2023 Planning and Local Technical Assistance programs. The PW/EAA is for construction, non-construction planning activities, and revolving loan funds projects. These projects must be in a distressed area per the EDA distressed criteria, with a 50 percent match. He said that funding is still available for these programs. He stated that the Planning and Local Technical Assistance programs are for feasibility studies, economic impact analysis, and disaster resiliency plans. He said that these projects don't have to be in a distressed location, although, if the project is in a distressed location the scoring would be higher than non-distressed areas.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that staff is eagerly awaiting the announcements for the national competitions, the Tech Hubs Phase 2 application and the Recompete Pilot Program Phase 2 applications. He said that there are two of these projects in the NEFCO Region: the Greater Akron Sustainable Polymers Project with the Tech Hub and the Reconnecting Canton project for the Recompete programs. He provided some information on the tech hubs project. He said that an announcement could possibly be made as early as next month. He said that of the thirty-one applications that were received for Phase 2 the EDA has identified eight themes or categories of projects. The Recompete Pilot Program awards will be announced later in the summer.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that NEFCO provided the attached letter of support for Stark Parks for its Ohio and Erie Canal National Heritage Restoration Project. This project will upgrade the canal and adjacent features in the Canal Fulton area including paving the towpath trail, providing restrooms at Lock 4, and improving accessibility for fishing and kayaking.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the EPA announced a new clearinghouse for environmental justice. He said that this would be funding opportunities, mapping resources, and other technical and planning assistance for anyone looking to apply for a federal grant.

Mr. Lautzenheiser mentioned that the 2024 Ohio Association of Regional Councils (OARC) Conference on Freight will be held on August 28-30, 2024 in Cleveland. He said that NEFCO receives one complimentary registration to this conference for being a member of OARC. He stated that if anyone would like to attend this conference, to please contact the NEFCO staff.

Mr. Lautzenheiser discussed some upcoming funding opportunities with fast approaching deadlines. He said if anyone has any questions or requests to please contact him.

Mr. Lukas asked about the National Science Foundation grants. Mr. Lautzenheiser said that he mentioned this grant because Case Western had been awarded a development engines grant in 2023, which includes this whole region. He said that there are various projects being planned as part of this grant. He said that with the new announcement anyone is open to apply.

b. Environmental Planning

Mr. LaPlante said that staff have had a lot of interest this year compared to last year with wastewater management agencies wishing to update their facilities planning areas. He said that the updated maps will be shown in clusters of parcels and parcels that are contiguous to each other that are being updated by the management agencies to reduce the 64 individual maps to review. He said that the mapping guidelines have been revised showing examples of how to group together the different proposed prescription changes and boundary changes. He stated

that the revised guidelines were sent to the participating wastewater management agencies. He said that the submittal deadline is June 26th.

Mr. LaPlante said that the funding for the FY2025 water quality management planning contracts will provide the agency with \$75,000 from Ohio EPA through the state biennium budget and about \$99,000 in federal pass-through funding that Ohio EPA receives from USEPA. He stated that this funding is used for NEFCO's water quality work program. He noted that the contracts were received on April 30th and are expected to be finalized at the end of the month, and will then be sent to Ohio EPA for execution.

Mr. LaPlante said that the Ohio EPA webinar The New Definition of Solid Waste Rules and Requirements for Exclusions will be held on May 16, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Mr. LaPlante mentioned the USEPA Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series: PFAS Drinking Water Regulation and Treatment Methods (held on April 30, 2024) and the Technical Assistance for Lead (service line replacement) will be held on May 21, 2024, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Mr. LaPlante mentioned an Ohio EPA announcement which is now offering a service line inventory assistance program. He said that public water systems can now submit a request for service line inventory assistance provided by Ohio EPA at no cost. He stated that requests will be accepted by Ohio EPA until June 28, 2024.

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

Mr. Hadley said that the Senate passed the \$105 billion Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill. He said that this was a high priority for the Senate and Congress. He said that during all the appropriations bills that were considered within the last few months, this reauthorization bill's final action was extended a couple times. Currently, the reauthorization bill has been extended until Friday, May 17th. He said that there is a lot of money connected to this reauthorization bill. He said that the House and Senate have different versions of the reauthorization bill, as is typical. The Senate passed their version. The House has extended the deadline for its version of the reauthorization bill through the 17th to try to reach an agreement so that it could be sent to the President. Mr. Hadley said that there is a similar process being followed for the Farm Bill. The current Farm Bill expires on September 30, 2024. He said that not having a bill reauthorized forces agencies, programs and governments that depend on that money to look to what the appropriators will provide on an annual basis.

Mr. Hadley noted that the Senate passed the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), which was then sent to the President for his signature.

Mr. Hadley said that he has included information on an update related to a critical rule for perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS).

Mr. Hadley provided some information on the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act (GLRI) of 2024. He stated that the GLRI Act helped fund the removal of the Route 82 dam. He said that the GLRI Act is up for reauthorization and the bill has bipartisan support from Senators Stabenow (MI) and Vance (OH).

Mr. Hadley stated that Congress addressed the President's FY2025 budget and EPA Administrator Regan is addressing questions related to the House and Senate on various aspects of what the President is recommending.

Mr. Hadley mentioned a report released by the Northeast Midwest Institute regarding the Impacts of the Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act which was signed into law on November 15, 2021.

Mr. Hadley said that he provided information related to lead pipe investments and the impact on children or lead pipe removal.

Mr. Marion welcomed to the Board meeting Margo Sommerville, City of Akron Council President, Rochelle Hartigan, Portage County appointee, and Dylan Garritano, Akron City Planner, Office of Integrated Development.

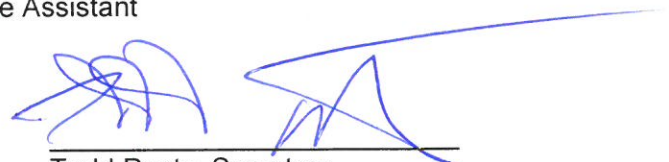
8. For the Good of the Order: an opportunity for members to share news about their community/county/agency/company, or to list a prominent issue affecting them

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

9. Other Business

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting was adjourned at 9:23 a.m.

Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant



Todd Peetz, Secretary
NEFCO General Policy Board
June 26, 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			X							
Daniel Blakely (Tia Rutledge)	A	A	A		A							
Joseph Diorio (Justin Rechichar)		X	X	X	X							
Rochelle Hartigan (2/1/2024)					X							
Todd Peetz (Gail Gifford)	X	X			X							
Amos Sarfo (Eric Long)	X	X	X	X	X							
CITY OF KENT												
Kailyn Cyrus (Bridget Susel)	X	X	X	X	X							
STARK COUNTY												
Keith Bennett	X	X	X		X							
Alfredo Carranza	X		X									
Kirt Conrad			X	X								
David Maley	X	X	X		X							
Dan Moeglin (Sarah Buell)		A	X		X							
Mike Naso (Helene Papczun)		A	X		X							
Bob Nau (Curtis Bungard)	X	X	X		X							
Richard Regula (Bill Smith)	X				X							
Jim Troike (Tom Davis and Jeff Lonzrick)	X	A	X		X							
Stephan Wilder (Ben Young)	X			X								
Vacant												
Vacant												
CITY OF CANTON												
Jim Benekos (John Highman Jr. and Chris Barnes)	X		X	A	X							
COUNTY OF SUMMIT												
Jim Balogh	X	X	X	X								
Alan Brubaker (Larry Fulton and Chuck Hauber)	A		A		A							
Caitlin Elrad	X	X		X								
David Kohlmeier (Zak Kaczor)		X	X	X	X							
David Lukas	X				X							
Sam Scaffide	X	X		X								
Ilene Shapiro (Craig Stanley & Joe Eckenrode)		A		A	A							
Dianne Sumego			X	X	X							
Michael Vinay (Matt Calcei)	X	X	X	X	X							
CITY OF AKRON (3/25/2024)												
Tina Boyes				A								
Jan Davis												
Kyle Julien (Dylan Garritano)				X	A							
Chris Ludle (Michelle DiFiore)	A	A	A	A								
Shammas Malik (David Messner)				A	A							
Margo Sommerville (Joan Williams & Sara Biviano)					X							
Helen Tomic (Kurt Mulhauser)	A	A		X	X							
WAYNE COUNTY												
Jonathan Hofstetter (Sue Smail)	X	X		X	X							
Jennifer Kiper (Rob Kastner)	X	X	X	X	X							
Steven Wheeler (Kevin Givins)	A	A	A	A	A							
CITY OF WOOSTER												
Robert Reynolds (Vince Marion & Joel Montgomery)	A	A	A	A	A							
OHIO EPA-NEDO^a												
David Emerman (Allen Tyler)	A		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 May 15, 2024 meeting
Meghan Adair, Summit/Medina Workforce Area
Mycheala Holley, Representative for Congresswoman Emilia Sykes