

MINUTES--NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD MEETING held Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at the City of Green Community Hall at Central Park.

1a. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marion at 8:35 a.m. in the presence of a quorum.

1b. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Eckenrode, seconded by Mr. Troike, 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 16, 2025

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

3. Financial Status Report - month of April

Mr. Hadley said that \$.93 was received as income during April, receipts to date were \$455,374.77, disbursements to date were \$470,669.91, and cash on hand at the end of April was \$126,771.88.

A motion was made by Mr. Maley, seconded by Mr. Eckenrode, 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. Rechichar, seconded by Mr. Maley, to accept the April bank reconciliations. The motion carried.

4. Preliminary FY2026 Appropriations and Expenditures Budget: Report of the Budget and Work Program Committee; Draft FY2026 Work Program

Mr. Eckenrode said that the Budget Committee met on May 16th. He said that the agency's revenues for FY2026 will be around \$610,207, which \$238,792 comes from the membership dues with a carryover of about \$100,000 shown on Table 1. He said that the Committee's discussion focused on the Employee Liability line item shown on Table 3. He said that the Budget Committee will seek guidance on the employee liability line item from the Personnel Committee. He stated that the funds from the employee liability line item will be used for employees who will be retiring in the near future. He noted that another Budget Committee meeting will be held in early June so that the Committee can prepare and present the FY2026 budget to the Board for approval.

Mr. Hadley said that the agency is still awaiting approval from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the NEFCO Planning Partnership Grant. He noted that no action is being requested today from the Board members regarding the budget. He said that the Committee felt that there was enough uncertainty or unfinished business to schedule a second meeting in June. He said that the Ohio EPA funds are very solid. Staff have the executed contracts from Ohio EPA which start July 1, 2025. He said there was discussion about the Employee Liability line item, and

how to manage payouts for accrued vacation and sick leave. He stated that he has included some budget revenue assumptions and budget expenditure assumptions. The committee did not select a specific dues level for fiscal year 2026. He said that the agency's current dues were placed in the budget as a placeholder. He said that draft FY2026 work program is attached.

Mr. Troike said that the Budget Committee also discussed the need for the Board to set policies for paid time off (PTO). Mr. Hadley agreed. He said that he and Mr. Eckenrode discussed this topic a little bit and it is probable that those policies will not be in place by the June board meeting. He said that his approach, subject to Budget Committee approval, would be to put a placeholder number in the budget so that the Committee has something to work with and then work from there.

5. NEFCO FY2025 Work Program – status

a. Economic Development

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that staff are still waiting for approval from the US Department of Commerce for NEFCO's Partnership Planning Grant.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Department of Commerce will be revamping the Tech Hub program. He said that on May 15th the Department of Commerce rescinded the second Tier 1 rewards which account for about \$200 million in grant awards. He stated that the Department of Commerce claimed that the process was rushed, that there wasn't actually a process for awarding that second round, and the funds were not yet available. He noted that this rescission does not impact the Akron Sustainable Polymers Tech Hub. He said that Commerce has indicated that the Tech Hubs program will be modified in the near future.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that although EDA is not approving any grants at this time, staff has been encouraged to collaborate with applicants to develop projects for public works projects, economic adjustment assistance projects, local technical assistance, planning projects, and feasibility studies for when the funding becomes available.

Mr. Lautzenheiser discussed three new grants that are available. He said that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP) program supports projects that develop, coordinate, and expand producer-to-consumer marketing, local and regional food markets, and local food enterprises. He said that the program includes three programs: the Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP); Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP); and the Regional Food System Partnerships (RFSP). Funding availability is \$26.5 million total; \$11 million for FMPP, \$11 million for LFPP, and \$4.5 million for RFSP. A local match requirement is 25 percent. The grant deadline is June 27, 2025.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the U.S. Department of Transportation released the Regional Infrastructure Accelerator (RIA) Program. He said that the RIA program assists entities in developing improved infrastructure priorities and financing strategies for the accelerated development of a project that is eligible for funding under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Credit Program. The available funding is \$20 million; awards given will be between \$1 million and \$2 million. No local match is required. The submittal deadline is June 16, 2025.

Mr. Lautzenheiser mentioned that the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration has a new program called FY25 Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities and Low or No Emission. This program supports capital projects to purchase or lease zero-emission or low-emission transit buses and acquire, construct, rehabilitate, and lease required supporting facilities such as recharging, refueling, and maintenance facilities. The Buses and Bus Facilities (Bus) Program supports capital projects to purchase, lease, or rehabilitate buses and related equipment, and acquire, construct, lease, or rehabilitate bus-related facilities. He said that funding available

will be \$1.1 billion for the Low-No Program and \$398 million for the Bus Program. A 20 percent local match is required. The program deadline is July 14, 2025.

Please contact Mr. Lautzenheiser if you have any questions or requests.

b. Environmental Planning

Mr. LaPlante said that the extended April 25th deadline has passed for the wastewater management agencies (MAs) to submit their GIS mapping data. He said that there are four MAs proposing over 400 parcels or combinations of parcels with wastewater prescription changes. He said that by June 20th, staff would like to have the draft graphics, so that the graphics can be reviewed. He said that after reviewing the draft graphics staff will notify the MAs if any additional changes need to be made. He stated that in October staff will ask the Board to release the updates for public notification. He noted that the timeline states that the management agencies have until July 18th to submit complete update packages. He said that after July 18th, NEFCO's GIS Specialist will begin to construct the online draft map that will be used for public notification in the fall. He said that the goal is to have the Board approve the update in December which will allow staff to submit the update to Ohio EPA for state certification in late December or early January.

Mr. LaPlante said that updates that only require text changes will be accepted until June 20th. The text updates are voluntary for any of the management agencies that don't have map changes. He stated that text updates are absolutely required for management agencies who are making any map changes. He said that simply changing the prescription on the map is not an update, the text has to match the map change. He stated that staff will not accept submittals where the map and text don't match.

Mr. LaPlante said that he listed some bullet points of what staff has done this year as part of the initiation of the Clean Water 208 Plan Chapter 5 "*Management of Nonpoint Source Pollution and Stormwater Runoff*".

Mr. LaPlante said that Ohio EPA has announced that the Division of Surface Water (DSW) is accepting comments until June 5, 2025 on its Proposed Water Quality Standards Variances Rule (OAC 3745-1-38).

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

Mr. Hadley said that the federal item commanding the most attention is in the House and the ability of the House to bring a "big beautiful bill" out of the House Rules Committee. He said that there were some budget hawks who had been holding out for certain items. These committee members are expecting the bill to make it out of the House. He said that Speaker Johnson's goal is to have it done by Memorial Day, and then it goes to the Senate.

Mr. Hadley said that the Trump administration released its budget proposal. This is a normal function of an administration: to provide guidelines for future budgets. He stated that this often happens and when a president does this there are usually some major cuts being proposed. He emphasized that this is just President Trump's opinion on various programs and that the cuts are not done deals, but it is certainly jarring to see some of the major cuts, such as to HUD.

Mr. Hadley said that he has included certain items related to housing. He said that on page 4, a U.S. Housing Market Report Card was published by Realtor.com. He said that he was surprised by this because he thought that the Midwest was pretty strong in terms of housing affordability, but he didn't know the metrics that were involved. He stated that Ohio received a C+ grade. He said that he would provide the report's link to any interested member.

Mr. Hadley said that the feds are looking at relocating the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. He said that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Coalition issued a report on April 21st celebrating CDBG's annual activities. The report is 45 pages. He said that the report describes what CDBG is doing across the country, and how it's been addressing local needs. He said that he would provide the report's link to any interested member.

Mr. Hadley said that USEPA Administrator Zeldin has taken a look at regulations related to PFAS. He said that PFAS has been discussed at ERTAC meetings and members have looked at the potential cost to local water suppliers if those regulations go through with Ohio EPA. He said that he has included some information on PFAS contamination. It looks like the US EPA is making revisions so that the regulations won't be quite as strenuous on local water suppliers as was first thought.

Mr. Hadley said that he has included some information about energy. He said that Secretary Wright has been testifying before a committee in the House related to his budget and what changes are recommended. He said that for those members that deal with transportation funding through the Highway Trust Fund are aware that the Trust Fund isn't equitable in many cases in terms of the funding being provided through taxes and the benefits returned. He said that there is some work being done on the next highway act. He said that the US Government Accountability Office looked at the use of new variables to change the formula for funding and interviewed stakeholders including some Metropolitan Planning Organizations. But at the end of the study, it was reported that participants largely did not support creating new federal highway formula programs.

Mr. Hadley said that he hasn't heard much about the Farm bill, which will be coming up for discussion in FY2026.

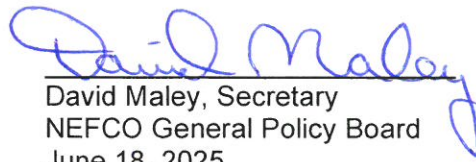
7. For the Good of the Order: an opportunity for members to share news about their community/county/agency/company, or to list a prominent issue affecting them

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

8. Other Business

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

Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant


David Maley, Secretary
NEFCO General Policy Board
June 18, 2025

NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD 2025 ATTENDANCE SHEET

Member (alternate)	1/15	2/19	3/19	4/16	5/21	6/18	7/16	8/20	9/17	10/15	11/19	12/17
PORTAGE COUNTY												
Sabrina Christian-Bennett (Jill Crawford)	X	X	X	X								
Daniel Blakely (Tia Rutledge)		A	A	A	A							
Rochelle Hartigan												
Becky Lehman (Justin Rechichar)	X	X	A	X	A							
Todd Peetz (Amy Reichlin)		X	X	X	X							
Amos Sarfo (Eric Long)	X	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												
Ted Herncane		X	X	X	X							
David Maley	X	X	X	X	X							
Dan Moeglin (Sarah Buell)												
Mike Naso (Helene Papczun)		A	A	A								
Bob Nau (Curtis Bungard)	X	X	X	X								
Richard Regula (Bill Smith)	X	X	X	X								
Jim Troike (Tom Davis and Jeff Lonzrick)	A			A	X							
Pete Wearstler		X	X		X							
Stephan Wilder (Jason Segedy & Ben Young)	X	X	A	X	X							
CITY OF CANTON												
Doug Harris (John Highman Jr. and Chris Barnes)	X	X	X	X								
COUNTY OF SUMMIT												
Jim Balogh	X	X	X		X							
Alan Brubaker (Stephanie Diebel and Chuck Hauber)		A	A		A							
Caitlin Elrad	X		X		X							
David Kohlmeier (Zak Kaczor)		X	X	X	X							
Sam Scaffide	X		X									
Ilene Shapiro (Joseph Eckenrode)	A	A	A	A	A							
Dianne Sumego	X		X	X								
James Taylor	X	X	X	X	X							
Michael Vinay (Matt Calcei)	A		X	X								
CITY OF AKRON												
Tina Boyes		X	X									
Jan Davis (May 5, 2025)												
Kyle Julien (Dylan Garritano)			A	A	A							
Chris Ludle (Michelle DiFiore)	A	A		A	A							
Shammas Malik (David Messner)	A	A	A	A	A							
Margo Sommerville (Joan Williams & Sara Biviano)												
Helen Tomic (Kurt Mulhauser)	A			A	A							
WAYNE COUNTY												
Matt Martin (Dave McMillen)	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	A							
OHIO EPA-NEDO^a												
David Emerman (Allen Tyler)												
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 21, 2025 meeting
Jason Segedy, City of North Canton (Alternate)