

**MINUTES--NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD MEETING held Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at the City of Green John Torok Community and Senior Center.**

**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. Bennett, seconded by Ms. Kiper, to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

**1c. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Marion said that since there is no flag present the Pledge of Allegiance will be dispensed this month. He stated that staff will make sure there is a flag at the Torok Community Center for the July Board meeting.

**1d. Audience Participation (members of the public)**

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

Mr. Marion welcomed to the Board meeting Darnell Moses, Business Retention, Expansion and Attraction Manager, City of Akron, Ohio Office of Integrated Development. Mr. Moses was attending as an alternate for Mayor Malik.

**2. Consideration of the draft minutes of the regular meeting of the NEFCO General Policy Board on May 21, 2025**

A motion was made by Mr. Vinay, seconded by Mr. Martin, to accept the May meeting minutes. The motion carried.

**3. Financial Status Report - month of May**

Mr. Hadley said that \$23,334.05 was received as income during May, receipts to date were \$478,708.82, disbursements to date were \$521,482.08, and cash on hand at the end of May was \$99,293.76.

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

**3a. May Bank Reconciliations**

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

A motion was made by Mr. Wilder, seconded by Mr. Wearstler, to accept the May bank reconciliations. The motion carried.

**4. Adoption of the FY2026 Revenues and Expenditures Budget, and Work Program; Recommendation of the Budget and Work Program Committee**

Mr. Hadley said that Joe Eckenrode, Summit County Administrative Office, Budget Committee Chair, had a conflict and couldn't attend the Board meeting. He thanked the Budget Committee members for their input at the budget meetings. He said that the Budget Committee is recommending Table 3 for adoption of NEFCO's FY2026 budget. He said that this includes a recommendation of a one cent increase in dues per capita, shown in Table 2. He said that the Committee wants staff to institute a method to ensure that funds are allocated to the Employee Liability line item, shown under Administrative Expenses in Table 3.

Mr. Hadley said that the Economic Development Administration (EDA) finally approved NEFCO's three-year Partnership Planning Grant. The grant will be in the amount of \$210,000 with a required 40 percent local match. He said that this is shown in Table 1. He said that unfortunately, because the budget meeting was held on the Friday before the Board meeting, staff weren't able to include the budget information with the board mailout. He stated that since this was not transmitted to the Board at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting, as required in the Bylaws, a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those members present is required for passage.

Mr. Hadley said that the revenues shown in Table 1 are essentially what the members are used to seeing. He stated that the budget does reflect an increase in the pass-through funding from USEPA. He said that the budget commits the EDA to \$210,000 for the three-year grant. He discussed the dues options shown in Table 2. He noted that the Budget Committee recognized that a one cent dues increase was probably what their respected officials could support. This is roughly a little less than a \$12,000 increase to the budget. He said that Table 3 shows the proposed FY2026 budget in the far-right hand column. The dues increase of \$11,900 was added to the contingency; bringing the total budget amount to \$602,148, which hasn't changed from what was emailed to the Board on Monday. He said that the Budget Committee suggested that he do some investigation regarding the NEFCO staff's paid time off. There was a survey done for each of our dues-paying members to establish a range for payouts of accumulated or accrued sick leave and vacation leave for the two longest serving staff members when/if they consider retirement. He said that the Budget Committee recognized that it wasn't their purview to recommend a specific approach. He said that he will be scheduling a meeting with the Personnel Committee to further discuss paid time off options. The Budget Committee was adamant that the employee liability line item be capitalized and receive the funding on a regular bimonthly basis. He asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Regula asked when was the last time the dues were increased? Mr. Hadley said that the dues were increased by two cents in June 2024. He stated that before last year's increase the dues hadn't been increased in 20 years. Ms. Tomic said that the Committee discussed a larger increase but there are currently a lot of communities struggling with funding, so the Committee settled on a one-cent increase for FY2026.

Mr. Marion asked for a motion to adopt the FY2026 budget noting that a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those members present is required for passage.

A motion was made by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Ms. Sumego, to adopt the FY2026 budget and work program. The motion carried.

#### **5. Consideration of the continuation of the part-time employment position for: Watershed Planner/Geographic Information System Specialist**

Mr. Hadley said that seeking consideration of the continuation of part-time employment is something that is approved by the Board annually for NEFCO's part-time employees. He said that this memo is specifically for Maia Peck who has been with the agency since 2003. He stated that Ms. Peck has been a part-time and full-time employee. He noted that Ms. Peck is happy to continue to work \*part-time and doesn't want to go full-time. Those Board members that are part of government know how important it is to have geographic information system capability and staff fluency in the software. He said that because of NEFCO's 208 responsibilities, staff has had to concentrate Ms. Peck in GIS work, working with the local government members and county members. He stated that Ms. Peck also has a lot of capability as a watershed planner. Ms. Peck also occasionally attends watershed meetings to provide this expertise. Mr. Hadley asked for approval to continue the part-time employment position.

A motion was made by Mr. Vinay, seconded by Ms. Tomic, to continue the part-time employment position for: Watershed Planner/Geographic Information System Specialist. The motion carried.

## **6. NEFCO FY2025 Work Program – status**

### **a. Economic Development**

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that staff learned that the Economic Development Administration (EDA) three-year Partnership Planning Grant was approved, although an actual letter or email hasn't been received yet from the EDA. He said that staff found the notification on EDA's website. He said that usually NEFCO receives a letter from an elected official; such as a member of Congress or a Senator.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that a couple of days prior to learning that ENFCO would be receiving the EDA grant, staff sent out letters to members of Congress and to the Ohio Senators seeking their support for the grant. He noted that attached is a sample copy of the letter. He stated that sending these letters was encouraged by the Chicago Regional Office of EDA. He said that he received some positive feedback from the Representatives regarding the EDA grant.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that he has prepared a one-page of highlights for NEFCO's economic development planning program. He noted that these economic development highlights will be used for discussions with congressional representatives and in general outreach.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that there is a new funding opportunity that was announced by the EDA: Disaster Supplemental. He said that this notice doesn't really have a lot of applicability in the NEFCO region. But the release of the notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) is a good sign that there are NOFOs being released. This NOFO is Disaster Supplemental funding for recovery and support for the areas that were impacted by natural disasters in 2023 and 2024.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the NOACA/Vibrant NEO champion awards banquet will be held July 10<sup>th</sup> at Cleveland State. He said that this banquet was originally scheduled for November 2024, but it was delayed. He said that there are three champion awards being presented. He noted that the Greater Akron Chamber will be presented with a Regional Champion Award for its work with the Sustainable Polymers Tech Hub.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Ohio Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) coalition is asking people to consider signing on as a signatory to a letter that is going to be addressed to Ohio Representatives David Joyce and Marcy Kaptur who serve on the House Appropriations Committee. He said that attached is a copy of the letter.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the State of Ohio Department of Development announced on June 5<sup>th</sup> the next round of brownfield remediation grants. Three projects in the NEFCO region received funding: Portage County Land Reutilization Corporation 200 W. Williams Street Cleanup and Remediation (\$1,315,473); Summit County Land Reutilization Corporation 1025 Switzer Cleanup and Remediation (\$476,280); and Summit County Land Reutilization Corporation Buckley Cleanup and Remediation project (\$334,807).

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that Summit County received a \$1.2 million Brownfields Assessment Coalition grant from the U.S. EPA to assess clean up and revitalize underutilized properties in Summit County. The grant will fund thirty Phase 1 and twenty Phase 2 environmental site assessments. Also, five Comprehensive Areawide Plans will be completed targeting the priority areas, which are the Romic Road corridor, the Akron Airport area, the Cuyahoga Falls and North Akron area, Akron Summit Lake area, and the Innerbelt area.

Mr. Lautzenheiser mentioned a few conferences coming up in the near future: the 2025 Ohio Conference on Freight, July 29-31 in Toledo; the 2025 National Brownfields Training Conference, August 5-8 in Chicago; and the 2025 National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) annual training conference, October 21-24 in Salt Lake City.

Mr. Lautzenheiser discussed some upcoming funding opportunities of interest. He said that if anyone has any questions or requests, to please contact him.

Mr. Moses mentioned that the Ohio Economic Development Association (OEDA) is hosting its annual conference in Akron on October 15-17, 2025. He said that he will provide Mr. Lautzenheiser with the link to forward to the Board. Mr. Lautzenheiser thanked him for the information.

#### **b. Environmental Planning**

Mr. LaPlante gave a brief description of the Clean Water 208 Plan update for the new members present. He said that the third update was started in February 2025. He stated that the staff completed its review of the internal update map that was reported on last month. He said that staff have reviewed more than 400 parcels or combinations of parcels that have been submitted with changes to the wastewater prescriptions, the options allowable under the federal Clean Water Act Section 208. Staff sent the needed adjustments back to the participating wastewater management agencies. These draft changes are due back to NEFCO by June 25<sup>th</sup> with the final changes due on July 18<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. LaPlante listed some Ohio EPA Division of Surface Water (DSW) announcements: Early Stakeholder Outreach (ESO) meeting will be held at the State Library of Ohio and virtually on June 26, 2025 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.; Early Stakeholder Outreach comments will be accepted until June 30, 2025, for the Beneficial Use Designation – Limited Combined Sewer Overflows Recreation Sub-Use and General Use Attainability Analysis (OAC 3745-1-07 and -37); and comments are be accepted until July 9, 2025, for the Draft Implementation of Water Quality Standards Rules (OAC Chapter 3745-2).

Members were asked to please contact Mr. LaPlante if they have any questions or requests.

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

Mr. Hadley said that the House passed the “big, beautiful bill” late last month and then the bill went to the Senate. The Senate is currently holding hearings. The Cabinet Secretaries are scheduled to defend certain cuts or eliminations of programs. He mentioned that he watched a few of the hearings. It is very challenging for the Senators to have certain things that they want to see preserved in a budget, as well as programs that the Senators believe in and expect answers from the Secretaries when those Secretaries appear before the Senators. He stated that apparently in the process, the Senators, a month ago, were supposed to have received more detailed explanations and analysis of data on various items that are under a particular agency's budget. He explained how the Senators don't have enough details that the Federal departments are required to provide, to enable the Senators to review the information at these hearings and try to ask questions.

Mr. Hadley said that he provided some background information and details about the Department of Housing and Urban Development. He said that there weren't enough details on why the Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) program or the CDBG program should be eliminated (as called for in the President's budget. The problem is that there is not enough detail to understand what is being cut other than the entire program being eliminated.

Mr. Hadley said that the State Revolving Funds for water and wastewater were proposed to be eliminated. He said that he has heard different versions, first, the funds would be just cut back and



then eliminated. The whole thrust from the Trump Administration is to shift a lot of this to the states; which the states are probably not ready to take on this responsibility. He said that the Ohio EPA does a really good job of managing its water and wastewater funding and loan programs.

Mr. Hadley noted that attached is the state legislation that is signed by the Governor and introduced in the House and Senate. He said that the Ohio budget is coming down to the finish line. The Governor has to sign a balanced budget by June 30<sup>th</sup>. The Governor does have line-item veto authority, but he can't take out parts of a line-item's expenditure. He asked members to contact him if they had any comments or requests.

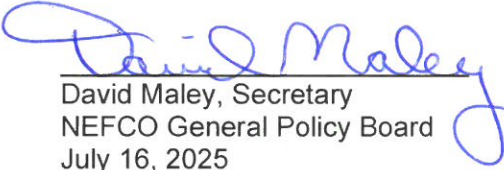
Mr. Regula encouraged everyone to be aware of the State looking to cutting the inside millage, which goes back to around 1822. If this happens, a lot of the municipalities, townships, schools, and counties will take a large financial hit. Mr. Vinay said that for Summit County the inside millage will eliminate \$40 million of county funding. There is an option to raise the sales tax, but this has to be approved by the voters. He said that Summit County has been unsuccessful in raising its sales tax the past few times. He stated that this also affects the cities. He said that this is a very serious situation for the school districts. He mentioned that Executive Shapiro testified last week in front of the House Ways and Means Committee and submitted written testimony. He urged everyone to contact their Ohio Representatives and constituents. Mr. Hadley said that he hadn't seen anything in the media about this, which is surprising. Mr. Vinay said that House Bill 335 is the one that is proposing the elimination of inside millage. He stated that he also heard there was an attempt to also add this item to the budget. Either way it's very costly to all these communities and school districts. Mr. Wilder said that Stark County held a rally to discuss how this will affect the county. He said that North Canton was lucky enough to just pass a half cent income tax. Mr. Hadley asked if the group pushing this is trying to lower the property tax? Mr. Regula said yes and the effort will be tied to school taxes. He said that the inside millage is a property tax which is not voted on by the voters and was put into place in the 1800s. He said that Stark County's increased because the property tax just went up. Mr. Vinay said that there is a very comprehensive letter circulating from the Ohio Bond Council. He said that he will forward the letter to Mr. Hadley. Ms. Tomic asked if it would be appropriate for NEFCO to send a letter? Mr. Hadley said typically the Board has not written letters on controversial issues favoring one way or the other. But he deferred to whatever the Board prefers to do. Mr. Marion said that he thinks it's an interesting point to discuss whether the Board should write a letter or not. He said that he is concerned that with the elimination of the inside millage what hasn't received a lot of discussion is its impact in a community that has a TIF in place. He said that the City of Wooster has several TIFs in place. Mr. Vinay said that with a lot of the general obligation debt or TIFs, these communities and school districts obviously receive a credit rating. A lot of faith in the credit rating is built on the fact that inside millage is guaranteed and revenues are guaranteed, and it goes towards that debt service. Mr. Regula said that he thinks some of the constitutional aspects of this are that the inside millage is obligated toward the debt. He said that this is a huge concern.

**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**

Mr. Regula gave an update on the Route 30 project. He said that ODOT signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the RTIP Board. He said that this project would connect Route 30 (Trump Road) to Route 11. He said that the MOU gives the RTIP Board the ability to overbuy the right-of-way. He said that this project would be able to run pipelines, power lines, data lines and anything else in the rights-of-way. He stated that all the utilities would have one right-of-way for at least thirty-six miles. He also mentioned that there is a tremendous amount of crude oil in this area. This is the largest oil field in North America which goes north of Lake Erie and west of I-71. He said that Kenan Advantage Group trucks are collecting the crude oil from well sites and taking the oil to the ports in Wellsville to ship the oil around the globe.

**9. Other Business**

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting was adjourned at 9:26 a.m.  
Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant

  
David Maley, Secretary  
NEFCO General Policy Board  
July 16, 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
<b>PORTAGE COUNTY</b>												
Sabrina Christian-Bennett (Jill Crawford)	X	X	X	X		A						
Daniel Blakely (Tia Rutledge)		A	A	A	A	A						
Rochelle Hartigan												
Becky Lehman (Justin Rechichar)	X	X	A	X	A	X						
Todd Peetz (Amy Reichlin)		X	X	X	X	X						
Amos Sarfo (Eric Long)	X	X	X	X	X	X						
<b>CITY OF KENT</b>												
Kailyn Cyrus (Bridget Susel)	X	X	X		X	X						
<b>STARK COUNTY</b>												
Keith Bennett	X	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 Papezun)		A	A	A		A						
Bob Nau (Curtis Bungard)	X	X	X	X								
Richard Regula (Bill Smith)	X	X	X	X		X						
Jim Troike (Tom Davis and Jeff Lonzrick)	A			A	X	A						
Pete Wearstler		X	X		X	X						
Stephan Wilder (Jason Segedy & Ben Young)	X	X	A	X	X	X						
<b>CITY OF CANTON</b>												
Doug Harris (John Highman Jr. and Chris Barnes)	X	X	X	X		X						
<b>COUNTY OF SUMMIT</b>												
Jim Balogh	X	X	X		X	X						
Alan Brubaker (Stephanie Diebel and Chuck Hauber)		A	A		A	A						
Caitlin Elrad	X		X		X							
David Kohlmeier (Zak Kaczor)		X	X	X	X	X						
Sam Scaffide	X		X			X						
Ilene Shapiro (Joseph Eckenrode)	A	A	A	A	A							
Dianne Sumego	X		X	X		X						
James Taylor	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Michael Vinay (Matt Calcei)	A		X	X		X						
<b>CITY OF AKRON</b>												
Tina Boyes		X	X									
Jan Davis (May 5, 2025)												
Kyle Julien (Dylan Garritano)			A	A	A	A						
Chris Ludle (Michelle DiFiore)	A	A		A	A	A						
Shammas Malik (David Messner)	A	A	A	A	A	A						
Margo Sommerville (Joan Williams & Sara Biviano)												
Helen Tomic (Kurt Mulhauser)	A			A	A	X						
<b>WAYNE COUNTY</b>												
Matt Martin (Dave McMillen)	X	X		X		X						
Jennifer Kiper (Rob Kastner)	X	X	X	X		X						
Steven Wheeler (Kevin Givins)	A	A		A	A							
<b>CITY OF WOOSTER</b>												
Robert Reynolds (Vince Marion & Joel Montgomery)	A	A	A	A	A	A						
<b>OHIO EPA-NEDO<sup>a</sup></b>												
David Emerman (Allen Tyler)												
<b>CITIZENS COUNCIL</b>												
Vacant (2)												
X = member present      A = alternate present												

<sup>a</sup>ex officio

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

Guests in Attendance at the June 18, 2025 meeting	
Jason Segedy, City of North Canton (Alternate)	
Justin Rechichar, Portage County Health District (Alternate)	