

MINUTES--NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD MEETING held Wednesday, July 16, 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 8:30 a.m. in the presence of a quorum.

1b. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Martin, 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 June 18, 2025

A motion was made by Mr. Regula, seconded by Mr. Taylor, to accept the June meeting minutes. The motion carried.

3. Financial Status Report - month of June

Mr. Hadley said that \$0.38 was received as income during June, receipts to date were \$478,709.20, disbursements to date were \$566,407.35, and cash on hand at the end of June was \$54,368.87.

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

3a. June Bank Reconciliations

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

A motion was made by Ms. Kiper, seconded by Mr. Vinay, to accept the June bank reconciliations. The motion carried.

Mr. Hadley thanked Board members for submitting their first-half dues payments.

4. Authorization to submit letters to NEFCO's Congressional Representatives urging support for the funding of the U.S. Economic Development Administration in FY2026

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that Congress passed the Water Resources Development Act 2024, signed into law in early January; which included the EDA reauthorization. He said that with that reauthorization, funding levels were increased for its core programs like public works, economic adjustment assistance, and partnership planning grants. He stated that this funding jumped from \$27 million to \$90 million per year, and would grow steadily to \$130 million through FY2029. Also included in the new reauthorization is a higher percentage of the federal share, which is a lesser burden on the local entities. Although, the EDA reauthorization called for an increase in funding levels, these levels still have to be approved by Congress through the appropriations process. He said that the White House's budget proposal for FY2026 calls for the elimination of EDA. He stated that eliminating the EDA would have a detrimental impact on the NEFCO region. He noted that NEFCO has received nearly forty grants since 1980, totaling over \$90 million. The funded projects were public works projects, with the biggest project being the Tech Hub project in the greater

Akron area for \$51 million. He said that the elimination of EDA would eliminate these programs. Losing funding for EDA programs means that there wouldn't be any funding for planning grants, which includes a big portion of NEFCO's economic development (ED) work program, including project development and technical assistance, and support on grant applications. He mentioned that NEFCO's EDA Partnership Planning grant is safe for the next three years. NEFCO will submit its next EDA Partnership Planning grant application in FY2028, unless EDA is eliminated. He noted that the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), which NEFCO is a member, suggested that its members reach out to NEFCO's congressional delegation to ask for urgent support of EDA at the funding levels that were authorized in the reauthorization. He said that a draft support letter is attached. Staff is requesting authorization to submit the attached letter to Representatives Miller, Joyce, Rulli and Sykes to encourage support for funding at the reauthorization levels of \$595 million for EDA, including \$100 million for the partnership planning grant in FY2026. He asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Regula asked what bill is the EDA reauthorization under? Mr. Lautzenheiser said that this is for funding appropriations through Commerce, Justice, and State. Mr. Hadley said that this is the Commerce, Justice, and State annual appropriations process. He said that the President has set his parameters to zero out EDA, as an example, and it's up to Congress to put funding back into these programs which it has historically done; since at least the 1990s. Mr. Vinay stated that he believes that Congress has to have all the spending bills passed by September 30th. He said that another continuing resolution will probably have to be passed in order to continue the spending bills. He said that there is also legislation in front of Congress to zero out the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program as well. He said that CDBG plays a large role in a lot of communities. He urged everybody to get ahold of their representatives to talk about EDA, CDBG, and other funding cuts that the President has proposed, to keep those spending packages in the 2026 budget. Ms. Tomic said that writing letters is great, but she suggested inviting the representatives to visit and see some of the work that is being done with these funds. She stated that seeing it is definitely different than just getting a letter. Mr. Maley asked if both the House and Senate have to approve this funding? Mr. Lautzenheiser said yes, both the Senate and the House have to approve the funding. Mr. Maley asked why the support letter is only being sent to the House of Representatives? Mr. Lautzenheiser said that NADO suggested starting with the House and then doing a second round of letters targeting the Senators. Mr. Maley asked if the letter should also be sent to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Appropriations Committee? Mr. Lautzenheiser said that Representative Joyce is on the Appropriations Committee, which is a good thing for our district and region. He said that liaisons from both offices of Joyce and Sykes suggested it is possible that these representatives could sign on to support this funding and this would be communicated to the Appropriations Committee. Mr. Maley suggested sending the support letter to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Appropriations Committee. Mr. Lautzenheiser said that he will make sure the letter gets sent to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Appropriations Committee. Mr. Regula asked if anyone present at the Board meeting lives in Representative Joyce's district? Mr. Peetz said that he does. Mr. Regula asked Mr. Peetz if he could hand deliver the support letter to Representative Joyce's office? Mr. Peetz said that he could deliver the letter; he stated that his and Representative Joyce's office are in the same building. He stated that he periodically stops by Representative Joyce's office, so he could discuss this issue with him.

A motion was made by Mr. Regula, seconded by Ms. Tomic, to authorize staff to submit letters to NEFCO's Congressional Representatives urging support for the funding of the U.S. Economic Development Administration in FY2026. The motion carried.

5. NEFCO FY2026 Work Program – status

a. Economic Development

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that on June 30, staff received an official e-mail confirmation of the EDA Partnership Planning grant award. He said that on July 8th, Mr. Hadley executed the notice of

award. Mr. Lautzenheiser noted that the period of performance is April 1, 2025 through March 31, 2028. He said that NEFCO will receive \$210,000 over a three-year period with a local match of \$140,000. He mentioned that the Partnership Planning grant is not considered a multi-year grant, which means it is not subject to those annual appropriations.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that staff are waiting for the notice of funding opportunity for the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance grants. It is unclear whether or not that will happen before the next budget is approved.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that staff have been participating in the monthly check-in meetings with the Sustainable Polymer Tech Hub project leaders. He said that Greater Akron Chamber and the Polymer Industry Cluster selected Hans Dorfi as the Executive Director and Chief Innovation Officer. He said now that Mr. Dorfi is on board, this project will move forward pretty robustly. He noted that Mr. Dorfi has over 20 years of experience in leadership roles in the polymers, rubber and mobility sectors. Mr. Dorfi's last position was Senior Vice President at Bridgestone Americas.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Greater Akron Chamber was awarded a Vibrant NEO Champion Award for the Sustainable Polymers Tech Hub project. These champion awards recognize outstanding programs, projects, or policies that advance the vision of Vibrant NEO and sustainability to create a stronger, more resilient region.

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

b. Environmental Planning

For the new members and guests present, Mr. LaPlante gave a brief description of the Clean Water 208 Plan update. He said that Ohio EPA uses the 208 plans, prescriptions and boundaries when considering permits-to-install and loans for wastewater improvements and sanitary sewer extensions. He said that when the first guidelines for the update were developed with assistance from the Environmental Resources Technical Advisory Committee (ERTAC). Those guidelines included reasons that these updates are important. The updates have value both environmentally for water quality and for economic development. He said that four participating MAs submitted draft PDF maps to NEFCO by the June 25th deadline. The MAs also submitted the required draft wastewater treatment prescriptions for the appendices that were affected by the 208 prescription changes. He said that staff reviewed all the drafts that were submitted by June 25th. Comments were provided to the MAs with requested revisions. He said that in October, NEFCO's GIS specialist will construct the draft online map that will be used for public notification. He noted that the update is planned to be reviewed by the ERTAC in October with Board recommendation and approval in December. Once the Board approves the update for public review and comment, staff will submit the update to Ohio EPA for state certification and for the US EPA's federal approval.

Mr. LaPlante said that the 208 Plan Chapter 5 update deals with the management of nonpoint source pollution and stormwater runoff. He stated that he attended the May 2025 Ohio Stormwater Conference to gain additional knowledge and to listen to some of the statewide concerns with stormwater regulations. He noted that he also attended Ohio EPA's Early Stakeholder Outreach for Ohio EPA's draft MS 4 general permit which will go into effect April 1, 2026. He said that as reported in the past, Ohio EPA is trying to concentrate on keeping winter salt chlorides out of the watersheds. He said that Ohio EPA's new draft rules are proposing that the MS-4 permittees regulate all of the private companies from spreading salt into the watersheds. He said that this information will be included as part of the Chapter 5 update which is due to Ohio EPA by the end of FY2026.

Mr. LaPlante said that the Ohio EPA has prepared for public notification the 208 Plan updates submitted by the four Areawides. He said that the public notification is expected by the end of this month. Next, Ohio EPA will submit the updates to the Governor for state certification by late September, or early October, and then hopefully have US EPA approval by late October. The FY2025 FPA update was approved by the board on December 18, 2024, and the Sterling FPA amendment approved by the board on April 17, 2024.

Mr. LaPlante said that the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District's (MWCD) water quality funding opportunities PowerPoint slides are available from the July 2nd ERTAC presentation. He discussed some of the available grants and examples of eligible projects.

Mr. Regula asked if a nonpoint source implementation strategy (NPS-IS) plan could help residents tie into sewers? Mr. Troike said that since it is private property, an easement would be needed to be on the property. Mr. LaPlante suggested contacting Rick Wilson with Ohio EPA. He stated that Rick Wilson would know if once an NPS-IS is completed could a 319 grant be used to provide the regional sewer system if the NPS-IS identifies failing systems as a threat to Newman Creek. Mr. Lautzenheiser said that since Stark County is the largest contributor to the MWCD assessment, the county is poised to get the most grants theoretically, from that program. He encouraged Stark and Wayne Counties to apply for these grants.

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 he is sure everyone is wondering what the details are, of the Big, Beautiful Bill's signing by the President. He said that this is a 10-year mega bill. He noted that he will continue to keep the Board updated on this bill.

Mr. Hadley said that he has included information about the House Energy and Water spending bill. He said that he provided information on the continued implementation by a few of the federal agencies in removing DEI language from existing programs or grants. Information on page 3 is regarding a new \$250 million infrastructure and restoration project program. He said that the US Senate Special Committee on Aging released a bipartisan annual report. Please contact him for the link. The report, Age of Fraud: Scams Facing Our Nation's Seniors, reported that the rising fraud and scams cost seniors \$4.8 billion.

Mr. Hadley said that the balance of his report is related to the many federal programs and progress being made towards a bipartisan surface transportation reauthorization bill for the existing one that is due to expire next year. He included information about the Highway Trust Fund not being fair to states like Ohio and not being sustainable. He mentioned information on improvements in the rail industry. He said that the East Palestinian train derailment is frequently discussed. There are senators who won't let anyone forget about the derailment.

Mr. Hadley noted that attached are several pieces of legislation signed by the Governor or introduced in the Ohio House or Senate.

Mr. Segedy said that he was glad to see information about the electric grid in the report. He said that the electric grid is uniquely outdated and vulnerable. He said that he ordered a power station from Amazon because in the last three years he has had 15 power outages at his home. He mentioned that Mayor Judge, City of Barberton, has been raising issues about outdated electric grids. He stated that without reliable electricity this society will collapse. He encouraged everybody to reach out to leaders on this topic. He said that the condition of the electric grid is honestly shocking.

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

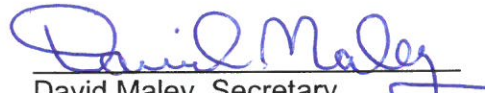
No one at the Board meeting had anything to comment about for their community/county/agency.

9. Other Business

Mr. Hadley said that Summit County is getting ready to embark on a heating, ventilation, air conditioning, paint, and carpet project in the Ohio building. The location of the NEFCO office has been slated for the initial work. He said that he just wanted to let the Board know that the County is in discussion with staff about relocating the NEFCO office. Staff will pack everything in the office for the move. He stated that staff are able to function largely remotely. He said that he will keep the Board updated with additional details about the temporary office situation.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting was adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant


David Maley, Secretary
NEFCO General Policy Board
August 20, 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		A	A					
Daniel Blakely (Tia Rutledge)		A	A	A	A	A	A					
Rochelle Hartigan												
Becky Lehman (Justin Rechichar)	X	X	A	X	A	X	X					
Todd Peetz (Amy Reichlin)		X	X	X	X	X	X					
Amos Sarfo (Eric Long)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					
CITY OF KENT												
Kailyn Cyrus (Bridget Susel)	X	X	X		X	X	X					
STARK COUNTY												
Keith Bennett	X	X	X			X						
Alfredo Carranza				X	X		X					
Kirt Conrad												
Ted Herncane		X	X	X	X		X					
David Maley	X	X	X	X	X		X					
Dan Moeglin (Sarah Buell)												
Mike Naso (Helene Papczun)		A	A	A		A	A					
Bob Nau (Curtis Bungard)	X	X	X	X								
Richard Regula (Bill Smith)	X	X	X	X		X	X					
Jim Troike (Tom Davis and Jeff Lonzrick)	A			A	X	A	X					
Pete Wearstler		X	X		X	X	X					
Stephan Wilder (Jason Segedy & Ben Young)	X	X	A	X	X	X	A					
CITY OF CANTON												
Doug Harris (John Highman Jr. and Chris Barnes)	X	X	X	X		X						
COUNTY OF SUMMIT												
Jim Balogh	X	X	X		X	X	X					
Alan Brubaker (Stephanie Diebel and Chuck Hauber)		A	A		A	A	A					
Caitlin Elrad	X		X		X							
David Kohlmeier (Zak Kaczor)		X	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	X					
Michael Vinay (Matt Calcei)	A		X	X		X	X					
CITY OF AKRON												
Tina Boyes		X	X									
Jan Davis (May 5, 2025)												
Kyle Julien (Dylan Garritano)			A	A	A	A	A					
Chris Ludle (Michelle DiFiore)	A	A		A	A	A	A					
Shammas Malik (David Messner)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A					
Margo Sommerville (Joan Williams & Sara Biviano)												
Helen Tomic (Kurt Mulhauser)	A			A	A	X	X					
WAYNE COUNTY												
Matt Martin (Dave McMillen)	X	X		X		X	X					
Jennifer Kiper (Rob Kastner)	X	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	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 July 16, 2025 meeting	
Tina Ludwig, Ohio Auditor of State Liaison	
Julie Morris, City of Kent	
Megan Pitman, Village of Lakemore	