

MINUTES--NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD MEETING held Wednesday, August 18, 2021, at the Raintree Golf and Event Center.

1a. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Moeglin at 8:33 a.m. in the presence of a quorum.

1b. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Marion, to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

1c. Pledge of Allegiance

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

1d. Audience Participation (members of the public)

Mr. Moeglin 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 July 21, 2021

A motion was made by Mr. Tatum, seconded by Mr. Judge, to accept the July meeting minutes. The motion carried.

3. Financial Status Report - month of July

Mr. Hadley said that \$64,170.86 was received as income during the month of July, receipts to date were \$64,170.86, disbursements to date were \$62,034.57, and cash on hand at the end of July was \$342,408.73.

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

3a. July Bank Reconciliations

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

A motion was made by Mr. Zizka, seconded by Ms. Foster, to accept the July bank reconciliations. The motion carried.

4. Consideration of approval of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for virtual trainings held at ERTAC meetings to meet Ohio EPA's contact hour requirements for drinking water and wastewater operators

Mr. LaPlante said that since at least 2003 staff has provided professional presentations to assist wastewater and drinking water operators in obtaining contact hours through the Ohio EPA. He said that even with the virtual meetings held June 3, 2020, until July 7, 2021, staff continued to provide the training. He stated that staff received some guidance from the Ohio EPA which is represented in the attached standard operating procedures (SOPs), on how to conduct the meetings during the pandemic. He said in order to meet Ohio EPA's requirements for future virtual meetings, if and when needed, Ohio EPA has requested that NEFCO implement the SOPs. Providing this training, especially virtually during the pandemic, serves as an attraction for ERTAC members and other potential entities to attend the ERTAC meetings. He discussed the following SOPs: All such virtual presentations and trainings will be interactive and not static or pre-recorded; NEFCO staff will document attendance. This documentation can easily be

emailed to Ohio EPA; NEFCO staff will document periodic interactivity between the operators in attendance and the presenter or instructor through the use of quiz questions that will be given at least every 15 minutes throughout the presentations or trainings; NEFCO staff will document that an operator has spent a minimum of ninety percent screen attentiveness with the virtual presentation or training as the active window on the computer; and for each operator in attendance who qualifies, NEFCO staff will produce and provide a completion certificate.

Mr. LaPlante stated that at the August 4th ERTAC meeting, the ERTAC considered and unanimously recommended that the NEFCO Board formally adopt the SOPs as NEFCO's SOPs for any virtual trainings that is provided to drinking water and wastewater operators.

A motion was made by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. Judge, for the approval of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for virtual trainings held at ERTAC meetings to meet Ohio EPA's contact hour requirements for drinking water and wastewater operators. The motion carried.

5. NEFCO FY2022 Work Program – status

a. Environmental Planning

Mr. LaPlante stated that staff presented the edited draft Chapter 3 Policy 3-6a and 3-6b to the full ERTAC on August 4th for public notification consideration. At the meeting, NEFCO's Executive Director and the committee chair discussed several reasons why more time by staff and ERTAC members is needed prior to releasing the draft Policy for public comment. The ERTAC chair suggested that staff compare NEFCO's draft Policy with similar policies of the other Areawides and with Ohio EPA's and US EPA's similar policy, if these exist. After this discussion, the ERTAC's consideration of releasing the draft Policy for public comment was tabled by consensus to allow for more time by staff and ERTAC members. He stated that he will follow the recommendation of the ERTAC chair, to perform an internal review of the draft Policy and compare it to similar policies used by the other Areawides. He will then present it again to the ERTAC for consideration of public notification. This will only be presented when a speaker/presentation hasn't been scheduled for that month's meeting.

Mr. LaPlante said that the Areawides and the Ohio EPA met on July 29th to discuss some clarifications about the sewer and unsewered areas project. He stated that the H2Ohio funding is different from the HB168 funding. He said that the Ohio EPA is only asking for management agencies' sewer line data. The sewer line data, which staff needs to provide to Ohio EPA no later than December 31, 2021, should identify any sewer lines that are force mains or private sewers, which are typically inaccessible for new connections.

Ms. Rutledge said that this whole project baffles her. She asked why isn't Ohio EPA requesting the information directly from the management agencies (MAs) to find out its priorities, instead of collecting the data and setting the priorities for the MAs? She said that it seems a little backwards. She stated that she can show on a map where the lines are, but it doesn't show flow direction capacity. So, how can Ohio EPA prioritize that sewer is available?. She said that the sewer lines are already mapped out on the 208 maps. She said that she is the one who knows whether it is potential to extend or what needs to happen. She said that Ohio EPA is telling the MAs what and how to prioritize the sewer lines. She stated that the MAs' sewer data is private information and is not willing to share this information. How would Ohio EPA protect the information? She said that information is only shared based on what the consultants need to extend sewer lines. She said that grant money is needed to extend these sewers because it is too expensive for homeowners to cover the cost. Mr. Hadley said that this idea was suggested by the Ohio EPA's Chief of the Division of Surface Water to the Areawides at a quarterly meeting. He said that the idea was to disperse the funding to areas other than the northwest basin, which is what is normally funded by H2Ohio. He stated that Ohio EPA wants

to collect the information, in no special format. The long-term goal is to use this data as one of their rationales for providing funds for either water or sewer funding from H2Ohio. He said that it's not something that Ohio EPA has been extremely specific about, but Ohio EPA is asking the six Areawide agencies for input on the data and input on the priorities. He said that Ohio EPA is not expecting any of the Areawides to demand data from anyone. If an entity doesn't want to provide the data, then it just won't be included with the other data that is provided to the Ohio EPA. Ms. Rutledge said that NEFCO already has Portage County's priorities, but the report was never finalized. She said that Portage County has applied for multiple grants but hasn't receive any funding to upgrade the sewers. She said that she would like to discuss this more after the meeting. Mr. LaPlante said that he will set up a meeting with Ms. Rutledge. Mr. Vinay asked where should he send Summit County's data? Mr. LaPlante stated that the data should be sent to him.

Mr. LaPlante stated that the ERTAC committee re-elected Mary Helen Smith, Environmental Health Director, Portage County Health District, to serve as its chair. The Committee also re-elected Rob Kastner, Water Management Engineer, Wayne Soil and Water Conservation District to serve as the vice chair.

Mr. LaPlante said that the Friends of the Crooked River (FOCR) requested a second extension of the project end date for the Canal Diversion Dam removal project. The reason for this second extension request, is that the project is still being impacted by manufacturers and shipping delays due to the pandemic. The final stage of this project is the installation of the Archimedes screw pump that will convey water from the Cuyahoga River to the historic section of the Ohio & Erie Canal section in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. It's the fabrication and assembly of the screw pump that is being delayed by the pandemic. He stated that on August 10th, staff formally requested a second grant period extension from U.S. EPA to extend the project end date from October 31, 2021, to March 31, 2022. The U.S. EPA Project Officer responded to staff that the extension is doable and has begun the extension process

Mr. LaPlante said that the Ohio water and wastewater infrastructure grant program deadline for the county engineers to submit their prioritized lists of projects to the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) is August 27th. He said that projects from eligible entities that are not included on the county engineer's project priority list can be submitted separately to ODOD. Mr. Bennett said that it is mandatory that the entities apply on their own to ODOD and to the county engineer's office. He said that there isn't a deadline for submitting the grants to the ODOD. But each county engineer has to have his priority list submitted by August 27th. There will be a rolling application time in case anyone misses the county engineer's deadline, which will continue to run up until all the funding has been dispersed. He stated that he was informed recently that wastewater can now include drainage projects and stormwater is considered wastewater for the purpose of this project. Mr. LaPlante thanked Mr. Bennett for the information. Mr. Vinay stated that these projects will be supported by the Ohio EPA Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance (DEFA). Mr. LaPlante said that DEFA will use the same criteria for low-to-moderate income areas as a priority.

b. Economic Development

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that EDA released six (6) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) notices of funding opportunity (NOFO). The six programs include: the Build Back Better Regional Challenge (\$1 billion, including \$100 million for Coal Communities); Good Jobs Challenge (\$500 million); Economic Adjustment Assistance (\$500 million, including \$200 million for Coal Communities); Indigenous Communities Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation program (\$750 million); and the Statewide Planning, Research, and Networks program (\$90 million). He stated that a funding webinar was held on August 3rd to discuss the six ARPA notices. The EDA

Economic Development Representative from Ohio, Ellen Heinz, joined NEFCO staff in providing program information and answered questions from webinar participants. Approximately 70 individuals participated in the webinar. He stated that eligible applicants for the ARPA funding programs include political or a consortium of political subdivisions; councils of government and economic development districts (NEFCO); colleges, universities, or consortium of institutions of higher education; and public or private nonprofits acting in cooperation with a political subdivision. All areas of the U.S. are eligible for funding. He said that eligible applicants must apply at grants.gov. He mentioned that projects must be consistent with the NEFCO Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and EDA Investment Priorities. These grants must be awarded by September 30, 2022, and all projects must be completed by September 30, 2027.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that on August 12, the EDA released the FY2021 STEM Talent Challenge notice of funding opportunity. He said that the STEM Talent Challenge will provide \$2 million nationwide supporting programs to train science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) talent and fuel regional innovation economies across the nation. The application deadline is October 12, 2021. He said that applicants can request up to \$250,000 for implementation of a 24-month workforce program that complements its region's innovation economy.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that on August 13th NEFCO participated in the EDA-administered Economic Development District (EDD) peer review. He said that this evaluation is required at least every three years and is a requirement for the EDA Partnership Planning Grant. He said that NEFCO was paired with the Western Michigan Regional Planning Commission for the peer review. This allows the EDA to perform evaluations, including the review of management standards, financial accountability and program performances. He stated that Todd Peetz (Portage County) and Jonathan Millea (Wooster) participated and provided many supportive comments for the evaluation.

Mr. Lautzenheiser noted that NEFCO submitted the semiannual and annual Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) reports to the EDA as part of the CARES Act grant. The submittal process was different than previous years; both reports were submitted as online questionnaires.

Mr. Lautzenheiser mentioned that on August 13, Alejandra Y. Castillo was sworn in as the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development by Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the unemployment rate decreased from 5.9 percent in June to 5.4 percent in July.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that application materials are now available for the Ohio Residential Broadband Expansion (ORBE) grant program at the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) website. This program will award grants to internet service providers to fund the construction of broadband projects in unserved and underserved areas of the state. He said that applications will be accepted between October 6, 2021, through November 8, 2021.

Mr. Lautzenheiser stated that the U.S. Census Bureau released its 2020 Census redistricting data. These statistics provide the first look at populations for small areas and include information on Hispanic origin, race, age 18 and over, housing occupancy and group quarters. He said that the data will be available on the Census.gov website by September 30, 2021.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Ohio EPA will be holding a free brownfields virtual workshop on August 24-25. This workshop will be targeting entities interested in applying or reapplying for U.S. EPA Assessment and Cleanup grants. He encouraged local governments, land banks, and nonprofit organizations working to promote brownfields and economic development in Ohio to attend this free webinar.

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

Mr. Hadley stated that the House and Senate are currently on recess, but the House will be called back on August 31st to hold a procedural vote on both the infrastructure bill that passed the Senate as well as the \$3.5 trillion human infrastructure bill, which covers a lot of areas. Some of the discussion will be about the 19 Republicans who helped pass the Senate bill. There are 9 Democrats in the House that want a vote right away on the infrastructure bill that the Senate passed. The House speaker, however; is holding firm, so far, at least to have both the infrastructure bill as well as the budget reconciliation spending bill passed, more or less simultaneously.

Mr. Hadley said that details are starting to be released regarding the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. He stated that specifically on August 4th, the White House released updated state fact sheets that highlight the nationwide impact of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. He said that attached is the 3-page summary for Ohio.

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

Mr. Peetz said that as a four-county region he thinks that everyone is missing out on some of the grants and getting support from each other. He asked how does the region collaborate and work together to support one another and share ideas? There seems to be a lot of information that could be shared among the four counties. He suggested doing a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis for the region. He also mentioned that the Build Back Better Regional Challenge grant would be a great regional grant to approach. Mr. Moeglin asked what is NEFCO's direction for the next 20 years? He said that a strategic plan has been discussed at an Executive Committee meeting a couple years ago and has been added to the budget. Mr. Malik said that as he meets with the communities in Summit County over the next few months to set some priorities for the rescue plan funding, he suggested sharing the priorities amongst the region to see if there is any overlapping or common interest. Mr. Lautzenheiser said that NEFCO staff has a lot of this information readily available through the Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan program. Mr. Mazzola stated that strengthening Stark County through the Stark Economic Development Board would be a great resource to contact and meet with to brainstorm ideas within the region. Mr. Peetz said that NEFCO should be the core entity to put a committee together for the region.

Mr. Regula gave a brief update on the progress of the Route 30 project. He said that the Route 30 project will extend from Trump Avenue to Route 44. He stated the RTIP received a \$900,000 grant from SCATS for Ohio Department of Transportation to start the Route 30 project. He said that the cracker plant in Monaca, Pennsylvania is still under construction with a timeline of operation in 2022. The cracker plant that was destroyed in the Gulf Coast will not be rebuilt.

Mr. Hadley said that he will be organizing an Executive Committee meeting to discuss a Strategic Plan and what the dues-paying members want to see in this plan. He said that the challenge now is that there wasn't a lot that staff could do for HB168. This was a fast driven process and the county engineers were put in a unique situation. Mr. Hadley said that he can

appreciate what Mr. Peetz has suggested about what NEFCO can do about to try to pull some ideas together as a region. He said that he isn't sure where the infrastructure bill will be but it looks positive for the Route 30 project in Stark County.

8. Other Business

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 a.m.

Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Todd Peetz', written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Todd Peetz, Secretary
NEFCO General Policy Board
September 15, 2021

NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD 2021 ATTENDANCE SHEET

Member (alternate)	1/20 ^a	2/17 ^a	3/17 ^a	4/21 ^a	5/19 ^a	6/16 ^a	7/21	8/18	9/15	10/20	11/17	12/15
PORTAGE COUNTY												
Tony Badalamenti (Sabrina Christian-Bennett)												
James Bierlair (Amos Sarfo)	A	A	A			A	A	A				
Joseph Diorio (Mary Helen Smith)	A	A	A		A	A	A					
Todd Peetz (Gail Gifford)		X	X	X		X	X	X				
John Vence (Tia Rutledge)	A	A	A	A	A	A		A				
John Zizka							X	X				
CITY OF KENT												
Kathleen Petsko (Bridget Susel)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				
STARK COUNTY												
Keith Bennett	X	X	X	X	X	X		X				
David Maley	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Vince Marion	X			X	X	X	X	X				
Joe Mazzola	X	X		X	X	X		X				
Richard Regula (Bill Smith)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Jim Troike (Scott Ellsworth and Tom Davis)					X							
Joe Underwood (Bob Nau)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				
John Weedon												
Vacant												
Vacant												
Vacant												
Vacant												
CITY OF CANTON												
Dan Moeglin (John Highman Jr.)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
COUNTY OF SUMMIT												
Jim Balogh	X	X	X		X		X	X				
Alan Brubaker (Joe Paradise and Larry Fulton)	A		A	A	A	A						
William Judge (Trevor Hunt)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
David Kohlmeier (Bill Dorman)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Olivia Helander (Bryan Herschel)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Ilene Shapiro (Craig Stanley and Brian Clark)	A	A	A	A		A	A					
Dianne Sumego	X	X	X	X	X		X					
Michael Vinay (Matt Calcei)	X	X		X	X	X	X	X				
Elizabeth Walters (Jerry Feeman)		X	X			X	X	X				
CITY OF AKRON												
Sharon Connor			X			X	X					
Daniel Horrigan (Sam DeShazor)												
Chris Ludle (Michelle DiFiore)	A	A	A	A	A		A					
Shammas Malik		X	X	X	X		X	X				
Brad McKittrick												
Thomas A. Tatum (Jim Ashley)	X	X		X	X	X	X	X				
Helen Tomic (Abraham Wescott)	X		X	X	X	X						
WAYNE COUNTY												
Becky Foster (Sue Smail)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Pete Wearstler (Rob Kastner)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Steven Wheeler (Kristin Endsley)		X	X	X	X			X				
CITY OF WOOSTER												
Bob Breneman (Joel Montgomery and Jonathan Millea)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A				
OHIO EPA-NEDO^b												
Kurt Princic (Rich Blasick/Patricia Vanah)	A				A	A	A					
CITIZENS COUNCIL												
Vacant (2)												

X = member present A = alternate present

^aDocumentation exists for those listed

^bex officio

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