

**MINUTES--NEFCO SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING held Thursday, February 24, 2022, at the City of Green Council Chambers.**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Regula at 9:01 a.m.

**2. Audience Participation (members of the public)**

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

**3. Selection of an economic recovery and resiliency (ER&R) planning services consultant**

Mr. Hadley welcomed everyone to the Special Executive Committee meeting to select a consultant for NEFCO's Economic Development Program. He stated that staff requested authorization, at last week's Board meeting, to hold a special Executive Committee meeting to help select a consultant to finish up work for the economic recovery and resiliency planning process. He said that staff wanted to have the consultant selected before the March 16<sup>th</sup> Board meeting so that the work could begin as soon as possible.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that NEFCO received an EDA CARES Act grant in 2020 to provide additional recovery and resiliency planning services for the region. He said that an Economic Recovery and Resiliency (ER&R) Coordinator was hired with the CARES Act funds. The ER&R coordinator worked approximately 14 months on this project. He said that both the EDA and staff agreed with the concept of hiring a consultant to assist the staff with the completion of the planning process and the ER&R planning document instead of hiring another coordinator for a couple months. He said that the Request for Proposals (RFP) was published on January 25, 2022. The submittal deadline was February 14, 2022. He noted that four proposals were received. He said that the need for expediency on hiring a consultant is to complete the ER&R planning document and deliverables by the June 30, 2022 deadline. Staff is strongly considering applying for a six-month no-cost extension from the EDA. This extension, if approved by the EDA, will not affect completing the ER&R planning document by June 30, 2022. He stated that staff will use the extension time to work on the required reporting and meet with communities and organizations to discuss the final approved ER&R planning document. A budget amendment will be submitted to the EDA for this grant. He stated that the RFP listed the consultant fee as \$50,000 to \$60,000. After reviewing the grant budget, based on the remaining balance of this grant, staff is recommending a not-to-exceed \$50,000 budget for the ER&R planning services. He said that there were ten criteria followed to rank the RFPs. He stated that the top two consultants, ms consultants, inc; and Environmental Design Group, LLC were very close in ranking. After a close review of the top two consultants, the NEFCO staff is recommending Environmental Design Group (EDG), LLC for the ER&R planning services contract at a not-to-exceed budget of \$50,000. Since the recommended amount is lower than the bid amount, staff will allow EDG until March 1, 2022 to accept the project with any revisions they feel are necessary to the scope of services. NEFCO staff will then review and approve any revisions made to EDG's scope of services. If EDG declines the offer, then ms consultants will be offered the same not-to-exceed \$50,000 contract and scope revision potential. Mr. Lautzenheiser said that staff is recommending approval of Resolution No. FY2022-010, approving the selection of EDG as NEFCO's economic recovery and resiliency (ER&R) planning services consultant at an amount not-to-exceed \$50,000, and authorizing the Executive Director to sign a contract with EDG with the following four conditions:

1. Environmental Design Group has until March 1<sup>st</sup> to inform NEFCO that it will accept a contract with a not-to-exceed budget of \$50,000, and submit to NEFCO by March 1<sup>st</sup> any revisions to its proposed scope of services;
2. NEFCO staff approves the revisions to the scope, if any;
3. In the event that the Environmental Design Group does not accept items 1 and 2 above, or if NEFCO staff does not agree to the proposed scope revisions, NEFCO is authorized to offer the same budget and scope provisions to the next highest ranked consultant for its consideration; and
4. NEFCO will not provide and sign a contract for economic recovery and resiliency planning services until EDA approves the grant's budget amendment, reflecting a \$50,000 reduction in NEFCO administrative and other costs and the addition of \$50,000 in contractual services.

Mr. Regula asked how long will the contract run? Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the contract deadline is June 30, 2022. Mr. Regula asked in layman's terms, what would the consultant do for NEFCO? Mr. Lautzenheiser stated that the consultant will assist staff with completing the ER&R planning document. Mr. Regula asked if funding and grant opportunities will be pointed out in this document? Mr. Lautzenheiser said yes, and hopefully also some collaboration opportunities between organizations and communities that can help address issues facing communities around the region. Mr. Marion said that the City of Wooster was in the process of updating its Plan. Mr. Moeglin stated that the City of Canton has worked, without complaints, with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked consultants. He asked Ms. Fercana (EDG) if she knew about the budget reduction and if EDG would still be able to complete the scope submitted with the lower budget amount? Ms. Fercana stated that she did not know about the budget reduction until she arrived at the meeting. She said that she doesn't see any problems with doing the work under the new budget amount. She stated that she will discuss the new budget amount with her team and get back to NEFCO by March 1, 2022 with EDG's decision. Mr. Regula asked Ms. Fercana if EDG will investigate the infrastructure bill, ARPA funding etc.? Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the selected consultant will assist staff with what staff has already completed, for example, NEFCO staff has conducted multiple surveys regarding the pandemic. The consultant will be working with 18-months of data compiled, meeting notes, survey information and other work completed by NEFCO staff. He stated that the consultant will take NEFCO's information and synthesize it into the ER&R planning document. He said that NEFCO is not asking the consultant to start from scratch to complete the document in four months. Mr. Regula asked how the plan will be submitted to the NEFCO members? Mr. Lautzenheiser said that staff will notify the members and offer technical assistance and grant recommendations with any upcoming project. He said that he would like to meet with the municipalities in the NEFCO region so that the information is reached across the region. Mr. Regula asked how soon will the ER&R Plan be ready to assist members? Mr. Lautzenheiser explained the timeline that was described in the RFP. Mr. Regula asked who are the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee members and who is Stark County's representative? Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the CEDS committee has representatives from each of NEFCO dues-paying members and private economic development agencies. He stated that Stark County's representatives are the Stark County Regional Planning Commission (Bob Nau, Executive Director) and the Stark Economic Development Board (Ray Hexamer, President). Mr. Tatum asked if other agencies such as the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority and nonprofits will be contacted and offered the planning document's funding opportunities. He also asked if NEFCO will be making sure that the funding opportunities are not duplicated among agencies. Mr. Lautzenheiser said that staff is hoping to have a draft plan done by June 8<sup>th</sup> for review by the Board. Mr. Hadley stated that Mr. Tatum wants to know who is involved now so that he can see if any agencies/organizations are missing or that he wouldn't endorse to be included in this funding opportunities document. Mr. Lautzenheiser said that there were three subcommittees formed:

workforce development and entrepreneurship; regional business (small) strategies; and community development. These subcommittees met to discuss these topics in the NEFCO region. He said that he would share the list of members for each of the subcommittees with anyone who would like to see the list. Mr. Tatum requested the lists. Mr. Moeglin asked during the proposal process was the NEFCO compiled information provided to the consultants? Mr. Lautzenheiser said no, but he provided some information if the consultants had questions and requested additional information. Mr. Moeglin asked if EDG will be provided with the compiled information so that EDG can have an opportunity to see what needs to be finalized by June 30, 2022. Mr. Lautzenheiser said yes, the information will be provided to EDG. Mr. Regula asked Mr. Lautzenheiser to read the resolution to the meeting attendees. Mr. Lautzenheiser read the resolution and asked for approval of Resolution No. FY2022-010.

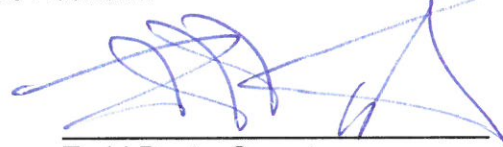
A motion was made by Mr. Marion, seconded by Mr. Moeglin to approve Resolution No. FY2022-010, approving the selection of EDG as NEFCO's economic recovery and resiliency (ER&R) planning services consultant in an amount not-to-exceed \$50,000, and authorizing the Executive Director to sign a contract with EDG with the four conditions:

**4. Other Business**

No other business

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting was adjourned at 9:37 a.m.

Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant



Todd Peetz, Secretary  
NEFCO General Policy Board  
March 16, 2022

**NEFCO SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
ATTENDANCE SHEET**

<b>Member (alternate)</b>	2/24/22			
<b>PORTAGE COUNTY</b>				
Todd Peetz (Gail Gifford)				
<b>CITY OF KENT</b>				
Kathy Petsko (Bridget Susel)	X			
<b>STARK COUNTY</b>				
Richard Regula (Bill Smith)	X			
<b>CITY OF CANTON</b>				
Dan Moeglin (John Highman Jr.)	X			
<b>COUNTY OF SUMMIT</b>				
Craig Stanley				
<b>CITY OF AKRON</b>				
Daniel Horrigan (Sam DeShazior)				
Thomas A. Tatum	X			
<b>WAYNE COUNTY</b>				
Becky Foster (Sue Smail)				
Pete Wearstler (Rob Kastner)				
<b>CITY OF WOOSTER</b>				
Bob Breneman (Joel Montgomery, Jonathan Millea and Vince Marion)	A			

<b>Guests in Attendance at the February 24, 2022 meeting</b>
Terry Fercana, Environmental Design Group
Katrina Suing, ms consultants