

**MINUTES--NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD MEETING held Wednesday, November 16, 2022, at the City of Green Community Hall at Central Park**

**1a. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Regula at 8:30 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. Regula led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Mr. Regula asked if there was anyone from the audience who had any comments. He thanked Mayor Neugebauer for hosting the NEFCO Board meetings and asked if the Mayor had any comments.

Mayor Neugebauer said that the City of Green welcomes the NEFCO Board to the City anytime that the Board needs a meeting place. He said that he is known for roundabouts, and there are multiple roundabouts within the City of Green. He stated that currently work is being completed at the Arlington and Greensburg Roads intersection. He also said that the city is looking to build four gym courts, a turf field and studio space so that the community can enjoy this space for events. This project will cost the city around \$15 million.

**2. Consideration of the draft minutes of the regular meeting of the NEFCO General Policy Board on October 19, 2022**

A motion was made by Ms. Foster, seconded by Mr. Vinay, to accept the October meeting minutes. The motion carried.

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

Mr. Hadley said that \$32,995.20 was received as income during October, receipts to date were \$89,465.24, disbursements to date were \$202,351.30, and cash on hand at the end of October was \$244,171.17.

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

**3a. October Bank Reconciliations**

He asked for acceptance of the October bank reconciliations.

A motion was made by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Conrad, to accept the October bank reconciliations. The motion carried.

**4. Authorizing staff to submit a budget amendment to USEPA for the Canal Diversion Dam Removal Project and to request that USEPA initiate a closeout of this federal grant on or before November 30, 2022**

Mr. LaPlante said that staff is seeking authorization to submit a budget amendment to the USEPA for the Cuyahoga River Canal Diversion Dam Removal Project as the first step in requesting that USEPA initiate a closeout of the federal grant on or before November 30, 2022. He said that the dam removal project has a lot of history. The Ohio EPA started working on the

dam removal project in early 2000. He stated that NEFCO became involved when the Ohio EPA requested assistance from NEFCO to be the recipient of a USEPA grant. He said that on December 19, 2018, at the request of Ohio EPA's Northeast District Office and NEFCO's Executive Director, the Board approved the designation of NEFCO as the fiscal agent for the administration of the USEPA grant. He said that the Board also authorized the Executive Director to sign any paperwork that is pertinent to NEFCO's role as fiscal agent. He noted that on September 9, 2019, NEFCO was awarded an \$800,000 grant from USEPA's Region 5 Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO). Of the \$800,000, \$39,100 was allocated for NEFCO to administer the grant and to disperse payments from the remaining \$760,900 for expenditures by the grant's subrecipient and local implementor, Friends of the Crooked River (FOCR). He said that the pandemic caused many direct and indirect delays in the project. At the suggestion of FOCR, NEFCO requested from USEPA multiple grant extensions. NEFCO received four no-cost extensions, with the last end date extension expiring on October 31, 2022.

Mr. LaPlante said that even though the grant is expiring, ninety-five percent of the project has been completed. He noted that the ecological part of the project is 100 percent complete: the 1952 Canal Diversion Dam and adjacent 1827 Pinery Dam were completely removed by the end of June 2020. He stated that the only work to be completed is the historical portion in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP), which is to return the flow of the river water to the adjacent canal feeder ditch, which feeds the historic section of the Ohio and Erie Canal. He said that in addition to the project being funded by the federal Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), FOCR has also been implementing the project by using Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) funds. Those SEP funds are still available to use towards the project's completion. He said that the federal funds from this grant were spent by the end of March 2022. He stated that in FY2023, NEFCO has been using local funds to administer the grant.

Mr. LaPlante said that when FOCR notified NEFCO in mid-October 2022 of a possible delay until spring 2023 to receive the needed electrical component for the project's pump, staff contacted the GLNPO project officer for options regarding ending the grant. The GLNPO project officer provided two options: either request an extension to the end of June 2023, or close out the grant on October 31<sup>st</sup> with a budget amendment. He said that GLNPO indicated to NEFCO that an amendment to the grant's budget is needed since FOCR's voluntary match listed in the grant's budget is \$725,000 and, to date, FOCR has expended about \$408,000 or about 56 percent of the voluntary match. He said that on October 26<sup>th</sup>, staff met virtually with the GLNPO project officer, GLNPO AOC coordinator, Ohio EPA, and the Ohio Lake Erie Commission Office's AOC Program Administrator to discuss whether there are project advantages/disadvantages for NEFCO to consider in extending the grant to the end of June 2023 with including additional funding, or closing out the grant on October 31<sup>s</sup>, 2022.

He noted that staff recommends submitting a budget amendment this month and closing out the grant. He said that through the budget amendment, staff will be altering the parameters of the federal grant that the Board approved on December 19, 2018. (The amendment will update the grant's budget to document that the voluntary match is \$408,216.38, not \$725,000.) For this reason, staff requests authorization to submit a budget amendment to USEPA for the Canal Diversion Dam Removal Project and to request that USEPA initiate a closeout of this federal grant on or before November 30, 2022, as expressed in Resolution No. FY2023-004.

A motion was made by Mr. Tatum, seconded by Mr. Wheeler, to adopt Resolution No. FY2023-004. The motion carried.

**5. Adoption of an updated policy for NEFCO staff travel mileage reimbursement**

Mr. Hadley said that a few years ago the Board approved the NEFCO staff's travel mileage reimbursement policy to be consistent with the Internal Revenue Service set mileage rate. He said normally the IRS sets the mileage rate in January of each year for the full 12 months. Recently, staff learned that the IRS updated the per mile rate from \$0.58 cents to \$0.625 cents per mile, effective July 1, 2022. He said that he updated NEFCO's current policy to indicate that in the future if the IRS makes any rate changes, the new rate will be used by the NEFCO staff for travelling.

Ms. Foster asked if the mileage reimbursement for staff would be retroactive to July 1, 2022? Mr. Hadley said yes, employees will be paid at the updated rate of \$0.625 per mile for any travel since July 1, 2022.

A motion was made by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Wheeler, to adopt the updated staff travel reimbursement policy. The motion carried.

**6. Nominating Committee to meet to prepare a slate of CY2023 General Policy Board officers**

Mr. Regula said that a meeting poll was sent to the Nominating Committee to schedule a meeting to discuss the CY2023 slate of officers. Mr. Hadley said that the meeting will be held in early December.

**7. NEFCO FY2023 Work Program – status**

**a. Economic Development**

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that staff continues to develop the Draft 2023-2028 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). He stated that the completed Draft CEDS will be available to the Board in December. He noted that the CEDS document is due to the EDA by January 31, 2023.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Economic Recovery and Resiliency (ER&R) Plan Implementation Committee is still being assembled. He stated that this committee will address the strategies that were included in the ER&R plan. He said that this committee will also implement some of the goals that are included in the 2023-2028 CEDS Plan.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the National Association of Development Organizations Research Foundation (NADO RF) was awarded a five-year \$5.4 million grant for an Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP). The Research Foundation will be establishing an information sharing, training, and peer-to-peer learning network, and offering some learning and training opportunity resources for EDDs, like NEFCO. As a NADO member, NEFCO looks forward to participating and utilizing the resources that will be available through this grant.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the federal government is still operating under a continuing resolution which means that the EDA cannot officially announce available funding for the FY2023 Public Works/Economic Adjustment Assistance (PW/EAA) grant program. The PW/EAA program supports construction, non-construction, planning, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects. He stated that the EDA will be accepting applications for this grant on a rolling basis once the funding becomes available. He said that the EDA estimates approximately \$5 million will be available for projects in Ohio. Please contact Nick Lautzenheiser at [nick@nefcoplanning.org](mailto:nick@nefcoplanning.org) if you have questions about the PW/EAA program or would like to discuss projects.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that Vibrant NEO and the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) were awarded a \$1 million USEPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) grant. This grant will provide loans to brownfield projects within Vibrant NEO's 18-county region, including the NEFCO Region, in Northeast Ohio. He stated that a Brownfields Steering Committee was created to provide recommendations for the Brownfields RLF to the Vibrant NEO and NOACA Boards of Directors. He said that the Brownfields Steering Committee will review applications submitted for loans/subgrants; conduct all standard due diligence normally undertaken by lending entities: draft loan/subgrant agreements, including determination of loan or subgrant, dollar amount, interest rate, and payback period, subject to Vibrant NEO and NOACA approval. The Brownfields Steering Committee will also recommend projects to the Vibrant NEO and NOACA Boards of Directors or their appropriate committees, based on the criteria developed by Vibrant NEO. He said that the proposed Brownfields Steering Committee structure will have representation from the Eastgate Regional Council of Governments (Eastgate), NEFCO, and NOACA sub-regions, based on a population basis. He stated that there will be a total of 29 members combined, with five members from Eastgate, nine members from NEFCO, and fifteen members from NOACA. The memberships would be determined by each of the organization's Boards. He said that NEFCO's representation will include one member from each of NEFCO's four counties, along with one subject matter expert chosen by the other four NEFCO representatives and a non-voting member which would be the NEFCO Executive Director. Mr. Nau asked if the Brownfields Steering Committee members would be making the funding decisions for the revolving loan fund grant money? Mr. Lautzenheiser said no, the Steering Committee will make recommendations to NOACA's Board who has the ultimate authority in the funding selection. He stated that staff may ask the NEFCO General Policy Board for a recommendation of the NEFCO region's representation on the Brownfields Steering Committee at either the December 21<sup>st</sup> or January 18<sup>th</sup> General Policy Board meeting.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the FY2022 HOPE VI Main Street Grant program is through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). He said that there is about \$1 million available for this grant nationwide. This program provides grants to communities with a population under 50,000. The grant money will be used to convert vacant and underused commercial space into affordable housing units in a central business district, or "Main Street" corridors areas. The application deadline is January 31, 2023.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the FY2023 USEPA Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup (MARC) grant applications are due November 22, 2022.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Choice Neighborhood (CN) Implementation grants are due January 11, 2023. He mentioned that eligible applicants include local governments and public housing authorities

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the U.S. Department of Transportation Thriving Communities Program (TCP) offers two opportunities. This first program is for communities interested in receiving support for capacity building, planning, and technical assistance. This program is for those interested in receiving support; he stated that a letter of interest, including the identification of community partners, is due December 6<sup>th</sup>. He said that the second program is for those communities or organizations that are willing to give the support to others; the deadline for applicants is November 29<sup>th</sup>. He noted that eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, local governments, and philanthropic organizations.

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

Mr. LaPlante said that staff has been discussing with the Environmental Resources Technical Advisory Committee (ERTAC) how NEFCO will initiate an annual Clean Water (208) Plan

update process that includes updates submitted voluntarily by wastewater management agencies (MAs) who wish to modify the boundaries and/or wastewater treatment prescriptions of the respective 201/208 facilities planning areas (FPAs). He said that he explained at the ERTAC meeting the 'ground rules' which will allow the update process to proceed efficiently. He stated that the listed 'ground rules' identify the difference between a 208 Plan update and a 208 Plan amendment.

Mr. LaPlante said that the Portage Lakes Management Study (PLMS) partners met on November 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss the draft document and the lakes management goals and expectations for calendar year 2023. He stated that a draft document was distributed to the partners to review at the meeting.

Mr. LaPlante said that the Ohio Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) Advisory Board is accepting proposals for projects that mitigate the impacts of PCBs on Ohio soil and waterways and drinking water sources. He said that the deadline for state agencies is January 31, 2023, and other eligible agencies' applications are due June 30, 2023,

Mr. LaPlante said that the Northeast Ohio communities, health departments and districts, and county commissions will receive a combined \$91.6 million in low-interest and principal forgiveness funding from Ohio EPA to improve wastewater and drinking water infrastructure and to make other water quality improvements. He noted that in the second quarter of Ohio EPA's Program Year (PY) 2022, the NEFCO region will receive approximately \$6 million for four projects in Summit County, and the Cities of Akron, Ravenna, and Alliance.

Mr. LaPlante noted a disclaimer is provided to the Board for the final information item: staff makes no claim regarding the validity of the data contained in the report nor does staff acknowledge or endorse Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), as a scientific research group. He said that the PSR, a nonprofit research group, released a report on September 29, 2022 entitled: *Fracking with 'Forever Chemicals' in Ohio*.

#### **8. Confirmation of CY2023 NEFCO General Policy Board meeting schedule and location**

Mr. Regula stated that the Board meetings will continue to be held at the City of Green Community Hall at Central Plaza or Council Chambers on the third Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. He said listed are the 2023 meeting dates.

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

Mr. Hadley said that the race is on for Congress to reauthorize and complete its appropriations for FY2023 or Congress will probably have to do some kind of omnibus legislation to keep the government open. He said there is also a Defense Re-authorization Act that needs to be passed, with the government shutdown looming by December 16, 2022.

Mr. Hadley said that the EPA released a general briefing deck on the *Inflation Reduction Act* which provides a breakdown of climate and energy funding, specific EPA program and funding levels for each program. He stated that he has also provided information on the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act one year anniversary. He mentioned that he has available a copy of the three-part series from *Route Fifty* on how government jobs will change dramatically in the future.

Mr. Hadley said that he has included some information on the Practitioner's Guide to Implementing Resilience that NOAA Released. He stated that if anyone would like additional information on any of the listed items, to please contact the NEFCO staff.

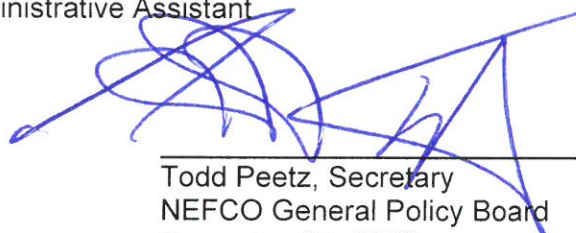
**10. For the Good of the Order: an opportunity for members to share news about their community/county/agency/company, or to list a prominent issue affecting them**

Mr. Regula gave a brief update on the Route 30 project.

**11. Other Business**

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting was adjourned at 9:23 a.m.

Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant



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Todd Peetz, Secretary  
NEFCO General Policy Board  
December 21, 2022

## NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD 2022 ATTENDANCE SHEET

| Member (alternate)  | 1/19 | 2/16 | 3/16 | 4/20 | 5/18 | 6/15 | 7/20 | 8/17 | 9/21 | 10/19 | 11/16 | 12/21 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>PORTAGE COUNTY</b>   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Tony Badalamenti (Sabrina Christian-Bennett)                      |      |      |      | X    |      |      |      | X    |      |       |       |       |
| Daniel Blakely (Tia Rutledge)                                     |      | A    | A    | A    |      | A    |      | A    | A    | A     | A     |       |
| Joseph Diorio (Mary Helen Smith)                                  |      | A    | A    |      |      |      | A    |      | A    |       |       |       |
| Todd Peetz (Gail Gifford)   | X    | X    | X    |      | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X     | X     |       |
| Amos Sarfo (Eric Long) (4/30/2022)                                | A    | A    | A    | A    | X    |      |      | X    | X    | X     | X     |       |
| John Zizka  | X    |      | X    | X    | X    | X    |      | X    | X    |       | X     |       |
| <b>CITY OF KENT</b>   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Kathleen Petsko (Bridget Susel)                                   |      | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |       | X     |       |
| <b>STARK COUNTY</b>   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Keith Bennett   |      |      |      | X    | X    |      | X    | X    | X    | X     | X     |       |
| Keri Burick (Rachel Hosler)                                       | X    | X    | X    |      | X    |      |      | X    | X    |       |       |       |
| Alfredo Carranza  |      | X    |      | X    | X    |      |      |      |      | X     | X     |       |
| Kirt Conrad   |      | X    | X    | X    |      | X    | X    |      |      | X     | X     |       |
| Athena Ebersole   | X    | X    | X    | X    |      |      | X    |      |      | X     | X     |       |
| David Maley   | X    |      | X    | X    |      |      | X    |      | X    |       | X     |       |
| Joe Mazzola   |      | X    |      | X    |      | X    |      |      | X    |       | X     |       |
| Dan Moeglin (6/8/2022)  | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |      |      | X    |      |       |       |       |
| Bob Nau (Curtis Bungard)  |      | X    | X    | X    |      | X    |      | X    | X    | X     | X     |       |
| Richard Regula (Bill Smith)                                       | X    | X    | X    |      | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |       | X     |       |
| Jim Troike (Scott Ellsworth and Tom Davis)                        |      | X    |      | X    | X    |      |      | X    |      |       | A     |       |
| Vacant  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| <b>CITY OF CANTON</b>   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Jim Benekos (4/14/22) (John Highman Jr. and Chris Barnes)         | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | A    | X    | X     | X     |       |
| <b>COUNTY OF SUMMIT</b>   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Jim Balogh  | X    | X    | X    | X    | 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     |       |       |
| David Kohlmeier (Zak Kaczor)                                      | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | A    | A    | X    | X    | X     |       |       |
| Olivia Marcis (Bryan Herschel)                                    | X    | X    |      |      | X    |      | X    | X    | X    | X     |       |       |
| Ilene Shapiro (Craig Stanley & Joe Eckenrode)                     | 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    |       | X     |       |
| Elizabeth Walters (Mark Potter)                                   | A    | A    | A    | A    | A    | A    | A    | A    | A    | A     | A     |       |
| <b>CITY OF AKRON</b>  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Ginger Baylor (4/4/22)  | -    | -    | -    |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Daniel Horrigan (Sam DeShazor)                                    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Chris Ludle (Michelle DiFiore)                                    | A    |      | A    |      | A    | A    | A    | A    | A    |       |       |       |
| Shammas Malik   |      | X    |      |      | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X     | X     |       |
| Linda F. R. Omobien (4/4/22)                                      | -    | -    | -    |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Thomas A. Tatum (Jim Ashley)                                      | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |      | X    | X    | X    | X     | X     |       |
| Helen Tomic (Kurt Mulhauser)                                      |      |      | X    |      |      | X    |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| <b>WAYNE COUNTY</b>   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Becky Foster (Sue Smail)  | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    | X    |      | X    | X    |       | X     |       |
| Jenn Kiper (9/21/22) (Rob Kastner)                                | A    | X    | X    |      | A    |      |      |      |      |       | X     |       |
| Steven Wheeler (Kristin Endsley)                                  |      | X    |      | X    |      |      | X    |      |      |       | X     |       |
| <b>CITY OF WOOSTER</b>  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Bob Breneman (Joel Montgomery, Jonathan Millea, and Vince Marion) |      |      | A    | A    | A    | A    | A    | A    | A    | A     | A     |       |
| <b>OHIO EPA-NEDO<sup>a</sup></b>                                  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |       |       |
| Kurt Princic (Patricia Vanah)                                     | A    | X    | A    | A    | A    |      |      | A    | A    |       | A     |       |
| <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

Date shown for new members

**Guests in Attendance at the November 16, 2022 meeting**

Gerard Neugebauer, Mayor, City of Green