

MINUTES--NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD MEETING held Wednesday, December 21, 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 Ms. Sumego, 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.

2. Consideration of the draft minutes of the regular meeting of the NEFCO General Policy Board on November 16, 2022

A motion was made by Ms. Petsko, seconded by Mr. Eckenrode, to accept the November meeting minutes. The motion carried.

3. Financial Status Report - month of November

Mr. Hadley said that \$90,346.91 was received as income during November, receipts to date were \$179,812.15, disbursements to date were \$251,733.68, and cash on hand at the end of November was \$285,135.70.

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

3a. November Bank Reconciliations

Mr. Hadley pointed out an error on the bank reconciliations page. He stated that the amount under 'General Savings' should be \$233,439.92 instead of \$223,439.92; which brings the 'Total NEFCO Funds' to \$285,135.70. He asked for acceptance of the corrected November bank reconciliations.

A motion was made by Ms. Smail, seconded by Mr. Eckenrode, to accept the corrected November bank reconciliations. The motion carried.

4. Election of CY2023 General Policy Board officers: Recommendation from the Nominating Committee

Mr. Hadley said that the Nominating Committee met on December 16th to discuss the CY2023 Board Officers. The Nominating Committee recommends the following slate of CY2023 officers:

Chairman: Richard Regula, Commissioner, Stark County

First Vice-Chair: Thomas A. Tatum, Manager, Housing and Community Services Division, City of Akron

Second Vice-Chairman: Jonathan Hofstetter, Commissioner-elect, Wayne County

Secretary: Todd Peetz, Director, Portage County Regional Planning Commission

Treasurer: Craig Stanley, Director of Administrative Services, Summit County

Mr. Hadley thanked all the individuals who have volunteered their time on the NEFCO Board and its committees. He stated that since this information was not transmitted to the Board at least seven (7) days prior to today's Board meeting, a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those members present is required for passage.

A motion was made by Ms. Sumego, seconded by Mr. Marion, to adopt the CY2023 slate of Board officers. The motion carried.

5. Consideration of salary adjustments for staff: Recommendation from the Personnel Committee

Mr. Hadley said that information was presented to the Personnel Committee regarding present staffing needs, future staffing needs and a request for a staff salary adjustment. He said that the Personnel Committee voted to request action today by the Board for a 3 percent salary adjustment, effective January 1, 2023. He stated that consultant Clemans-Nelson and Associates reinforced the Personnel Committee's stories and offered its own perspective on similar types of salary discussions and contract negotiations with other public entities that the firm represents. He said that the Personnel Committee was open to the possibility of future staffing decisions by the Board. He stated that a Strategic Plan should be in place first. He said that the FY2023 budget already includes funds for the Strategic Plan. He noted that the Strategic Plan was suggested by NEFCO's past Chairman Dan Moeglin. Mr. Hadley said that his recommendation is to hire a consultant to prepare this plan. The Personnel Committee recommended that Mr. Hadley move forward on the development of a Strategic Plan. He said that he wants to make sure that the strategic plan represents what the Board wants to have in this document. He said that the Plan will drive what staff is needed for additional areas of work, additional responsibilities, etc. Mr. Hadley asked the Board for approval of a 3 percent salary adjustment for the NEFCO staff. Ms. Sumego stated that she is uncomfortable with discussing the salary adjustments with the staff present. She stated in the past the staff was excused from the room. Mr. Hadley said that if the discussion was for a specific staff member, then yes, the Board would go into Executive Session. But since this is an overall increase there isn't a need to go into Executive Session. He stated that since this information was not transmitted to the Board at least seven (7) days prior to today's Board meeting, a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those members present is required for passage. Mr. Regula asked for a motion to approve the salary adjustments.

A motion was made by Mr. Zizka, seconded by Mr. Conrad, to approve a 3 percent salary adjustment for the NEFCO staff, effective January 1, 2023. The motion carried.

Mr. Regula stated that NEFCO needs a Strategic Plan in place because the Executive Director will not be with NEFCO forever. He stated that it is always good to have a 3–5-year backup plan. He said that the Board appreciates the NEFCO staff for all its hard work. He mentioned that Clemans-Nelson did a thorough study of the salaries and comparables. He stated that the study is hard to prepare because planning organizations can have different amounts of employees with different job descriptions. Mr. Balogh asked if the CEDS implementation and strategies will be included in the Strategic Plan? Mr. Hadley said absolutely, the CEDS document would be included in the Strategic Plan because it is just one aspect of the organization. He said that another question could be 'Would there be other types of economic development on a regional basis that would be useful for NEFCO to do?' Mr. Balogh suggested, making 'Marketing on the contributions that NEFCO makes to the region' as one of the strategies for the Strategic Plan. Mr. Regula mentioned that any member that would like to be part of the Personnel Committee to discuss the Strategic Plan to contact Mr. Hadley. Ms. Smail stated that Clemans-Nelson provided new job descriptions for all the NEFCO staff. She said there was also discussion on the need of hiring a deputy director, in case Mr. Hadley

decides to retire within one or two years. She stated that a Strategic Plan will help the Board and NEFCO on how to move forward.

6. NEFCO FY2023 Work Program – status

a. Economic Development

Mr. Lautzenheiser passed around to the Board a copy of the Draft 2023-2028 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). He said that the completed Draft CEDS is available for public comment on NEFCO's website. He said that this draft represents a full update of the 2018 CEDS document. The document includes an extensive demographic analysis, economic conditions, SWAT analysis, target industry analysis, and a robust action plan with goals, subgoals and strategies. He mentioned that maintenance of the CEDS is a requirement by EDA and maintains NEFCO's status as an EDA-designated Economic Development District and also continues NEFCO and its members' eligibility for applying for EDA grants. He stated that comments will be accepted until January 11, 2023. The CEDS document is due to the EDA by January 31, 2023. He said that he will be seeking adoption of the draft CEDS document at the January Board meeting.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Economic Recovery and Resiliency (ER&R) NEFCO's EDA CARES Act grant will be completed at the end of the calendar year. He stated that an ER&R Implementation Committee will be established to address some of the recommendations that were included in the ER&R Plan. He stated that, so far, there are ten members on the Implementation Committee. He said that the first committee meeting will be held in January or February 2023. Please contact Mr. Lautzenheiser if you would like to become a member on the Implementation Committee.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that although the federal funds have not been appropriated; the EDA is still accepting applications on a rolling basis for the next round of the Public Works/Economic Adjustment Assistance (PW/EAA) program. He said that the EDA anticipates approximately \$5 million for public works projects in Ohio. He mentioned that Ms. Ellen Heinz, Ohio Economic Development EDA Representative, will be presenting at the January Board meeting.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that staff participates in the evaluation of Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) Issue 1 projects for Summit County (District 8). Since the inception of the OPWC, 37 years ago, Mr. Hadley has been a member of the District 8 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC helps review the projects and provides recommendations to the District 8 Integrating Committee. He noted that NEFCO's participation is part of the organization's regional economic development planning program, which is funded in part by the U.S. EDA Partnership Planning Grant.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that staff is in the process of adding a funding opportunities page to its website. He said that the funding opportunities page will include information on many grant and loan programs in seven categories applicable to communities and organizations in the NEFCO region. He said that attached is a hard copy of the grant and loan information that will be listed on the website. He noted that the program categories include: broadband and telecommunications; brownfields, environmental, and abandoned mine lands; community development and planning; public works and economic development; parks and recreation; transportation; and water quality and conservation. He said that this is a great resource page for Board members and other entities in the NEFCO Region. He stated that the funding opportunities listed are for informational purposes only; NEFCO does not guarantee the accuracy of the information listed and encourages communities and organizations to contact the grantor agency for the most current information. He said that this information will serve as a

first-stop hub for communities seeking funding sources for a variety of projects. He said that staff will maintain the list of funding opportunities, updating information as necessary.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has updated the National Broadband Map. He encouraged everyone to access the new map to confirm its accuracy for their respective area. He said that this map is important because the information will affect how the funding will be distributed for broadband development.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the White House Council on Environmental Quality released a Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST). He said that the CEJST is part of President Biden's Justice40 Initiative, which aims to increase benefits to historically overburdened population communities. This tool analyzes eight different categories of burdens. He stated that the mapping application shows some census tracts that are considered overburdened. He said that staff used the tool to develop some of the maps in the CEDS document.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the U.S. Department of Transportation released a notice of funding opportunity for the \$1.5 billion Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program. He said that the RAISE grant program supports surface transportation infrastructure projects that will improve safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, mobility and community connectivity, economic competitiveness, and opportunity. He stated that the deadline for this grant is February 28, 2023. He noted that a 20-percent local, non-Federal match is required.

Mr. Lautzenheiser stated that the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development released its new Agriculture Innovation Center Grant Program. He said that the purpose of this program is to establish and operate Agriculture Innovation Centers that would provide technical and business development assistance to agricultural producers looking to develop business and marketing strategies. He mentioned that the application deadline is March 6, 2023. He also said that the matching funds must equal at least one-third of the total project costs.

Mr. Lautzenheiser provided some information on the FY2022 HOPE VI Main Street Grant Program; deadline January 31, 2023, and the Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grants through HUD; deadline January 11, 2023.

Mr. Regula thanked Mr. Lautzenheiser for putting together the funding opportunities list. He stated that there is so much grant money available and encouraged Board members to browse the list and contact Mr. Lautzenheiser with any questions. Mr. Hadley stated that when the Issue 1 program was first organized, the NEFCO staff asked the Board to seek the staff's assistance with the Issue 1 program. He stated that Summit County reached out to NEFCO and NEFCO has been on the committee ever since. He said that he hasn't been "the" member. Other members of the committee have been NEFCO economic development staff members.

b. Environmental Planning

Mr. LaPlante said that under NEFCO's SFY2023 Water Quality Management Planning contract with Ohio EPA that utilizes the state biennium funds, NEFCO will initiate an annual Clean Water (208) Plan update process. He said that the process will include opportunities for the wastewater management agencies (MAs) to make changes to the FPA boundaries and/or wastewater treatment prescriptions. He said that this is an advantage to the MAs, local governments, Ohio EPA, because this process will allow them to make the FPAs 'permit (PTI)-ready' and 'loan-ready' in advance of a pending PTI or loan. He noted that staff has been working on procedures and steps for the process to be initiated. He said that the Environmental

Resources Technical Advisory Committee (ERTAC) continues to discuss the guidelines or 'ground rules' that are needed for an annual Plan update to proceed efficiently. He said that any of the entities that are proposing an FPA modification when there is no pending PTI, or pending loan, will have its proposed changes handled as an annual update, not as an amendment. He stated that at the December ERTAC meeting, staff presented the draft 208 Plan Annual Update procedures and steps that the MAs should follow. Mr. Hadley said that these procedures and steps aren't anything new. This is something that the members have requested be done on a regular basis to be better able to synchronize Plan changes with Ohio EPA's annual update request. The guidelines are just clarifications of the existing procedures, so that at the beginning of the process everyone knows what staff needs to receive regarding the geographic information system (GIS) layers to avoid delays in the review of the FPA update.

Mr. LaPlante said that as authorized by the NEFCO Board at last month's Board meeting, on November 30th staff sent a budget amendment and formal written request to the USEPA Region 5 Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) requesting a close out of the federal grant for the Canal Diversion Dam Removal project. He said that the GLNPO Project Officer confirmed on December 2nd that the request had been received. He stated that the project/budget period end date for this grant will continue to be October 31, 2022. The final closeout report that is required by the programmatic conditions of the grant will be due no later than January 31, 2023. He mentioned that the final report will include the budget amendment, once GLNPO has finished processing it.

Mr. LaPlante stated that Governor DeWine and Ohio EPA Director Stevenson announced that the state will contribute \$25 million to support the Cuyahoga River Gorge Dam Removal Project.

Mr. LaPlante mentioned that Ohio EPA Director Laurie Stevenson and Ohio EPA-NEDO District Chief Kurt Princic announced their retirements, effective December 31, 2022.

Mr. LaPlante noted that Ohio EPA will be holding a webinar on December 19th, 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. regarding the Triennial Review of the State's Water Quality Standards. He also stated that a public hearing to present oral and written comments on the water quality standards rules will be held on January 18, 2023, 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., at the Ohio EPA Conference Center.

Mr. Marion asked what is the deadline for the next annual FPA update? Mr. LaPlante said that because there was a seven-year gap from the last update that the Board approved in 2020, the MAs were requesting more frequent updates. Mr. Marion said he thought this will be an annual process. Mr. Hadley said that NEFCO is trying to get its update process in sync with the annual Ohio State Water Quality Management Plan. Mr. LaPlante said that all of NEFCO's Board approved 208 amendments are submitted to the Ohio EPA for state certification. He stated that these amendments are typically submitted in December, but Ohio EPA is requesting that the amendments be submitted in mid-January 2023. He said that once the annual update process is initiated, those updates will be submitted annually along with the Board approved amendments.

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

Mr. Hadley said that there is a pressing need to keep the government open, which leads to another continuing resolution (CR) being passed, which will expire at the end of September 2023. He said that there are lots of programs being funded in this CR including defense spending and funding for Ukraine. President Zelensky will be addressing Congress soon.

Mr. Hadley said that National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) legislation was approved by the House last week, as well as, the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). He mentioned that there are several earmarks in the CR, which were not allowed previously for several years, and are now referred to as community project funding.

Mr. Hadley stated that he had provided information on the proposed Neighborhood Homes Investment Act and the Flood Level Observation, Operations, and Decision Support (FLOODS) Act.

8. Awards to Board members

Mr. Hadley presented awards to outgoing Board members Ms. Becky Foster and Mr. William Judge. He said that Ms. Foster has been a Board member since 2019. He said that Mr. Judge has been a Board member since 2012. He stated that neither Ms. Foster nor Mr. Judge are in attendance, but he will make sure they receive the award. He also presented a perfect attendance certificate to Mr. Potter, representing Summit County Council, for his dedication in attending every meeting in CY2022. Mr. Potter thanked the Board.

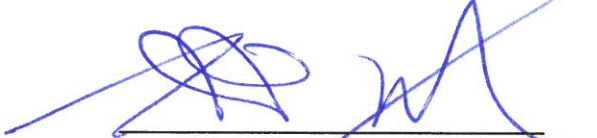
9. For the Good of the Order: an opportunity for members to share news about their community/county/agency/company, or to list a prominent issue affecting them

Mr. Balogh stated that the Twinsburg Township-City of Reminderville Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) will be welcoming two new businesses into the JEDD.

10. Other Business

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting was adjourned at 9:31 a.m.

Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant



Todd Peetz, Secretary
NEFCO General Policy Board
January 18, 2023

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
PORTAGE COUNTY												
Tony Badalamenti (Sabrina Christian-Bennett)				X				X				
Daniel Blakely (Tia Rutledge)		A	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	X
John Zizka	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X
CITY OF KENT												
Kathleen Petsko (Bridget Susel)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
STARK COUNTY												
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	X
Athena Ebersole	X	X	X	X			X			X	X	
David Maley	X		X	X			X		X		X	X
Joe Mazzola		X		X		X			X		X	X
Dan Moeglin (6/8/2022)	-	-	-	-	-			X				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	X
Jim Troike (Scott Ellsworth and Tom Davis)		X		X	X			X			A	
Vacant												
CITY OF CANTON												
Jim Benekos (4/14/22) (John Highman Jr. and Chris Barnes)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	X	A
COUNTY OF SUMMIT												
Jim Balogh	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Alan Brubaker (Joe Paradise and Larry Fulton)				A	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		X
Olivia Marcis (Bryan Herschel)	X	X			X		X	X	X	X		
Ilene Shapiro (Craig Stanley & Joe Eckenrode)	A	A		A					A	A	A	A
Dianne Sumego	X	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	A
CITY OF AKRON												
Ginger Baylor (4/4/22)	-	-	-									
Daniel Horrigan (Sam DeShazor)												
Chris Ludle (Michelle DiFiore)	A		A		A	A	A	A	A			A
Shammas Malik		X			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						
WAYNE COUNTY												
Becky Foster (Sue Smail)	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	A
Jenn Kiper (9/21/22) (Rob Kastner)	A	X	X		A						X	
Steven Wheeler (Kristin Endsley)		X		X			X				X	
CITY OF WOOSTER												
Bob Breneman (Joel Montgomery, Jonathan Millea, and Vince Marion)			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
OHIO EPA-NEDO^a												
Kurt Princic (Patricia Vanah)	A	X	A	A	A			A	A		A	A
CITIZENS COUNCIL												
Vacant (2)												
X = member present A = alternate present												

^aex officio

Date shown for new members

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

Guests in Attendance at the December 21, 2022 meeting

David Messner, City of Akron