

February 1, 2023
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Executive Committee
Meeting Summary - AMENDED

Attendance

Mary Helen Smith	Portage County Health District
Wesley Carder	City of Canton
Dom Disalvo	City of Ravenna
Ron Etling	Portage County Board of Commissioners Appointee
Gail Gifford	Portage County Regional Planning Commission
Kevin Givins	City of Orrville
Eric Gorczynski	City of Kent
Genny Hanna	City of Akron
Bob Hempel	Wayne County Health Department
Patrick Jeffers	City of Twinsburg
Dan Joseph	City of Akron
Rob Kastner	Wayne SWCD
Jennifer Kiper	Wayne County Planning Department
Ross Nicholson	Summit County Department of Sanitary Sewer Services
Julie Reis	Summit County Public Health
Tia Rutledge	Portage County Water Resources
Patricia Vanah	Ohio EPA
Pat Gsellman	Environmental Design Group
Doug Darrah	ECS Midwest
Max Herzog	Cleveland Water Alliance
Joe Hadley	NEFCO
Tom LaPlante	NEFCO

Chairwoman Smith called the meeting to order.

Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

Meeting Summary

The January meeting summary was accepted as transmitted.

Discussion Item

“Lake Erie Volunteer Science Network: Engaging Communities in Credible Water Quality Monitoring”; speaker: Max Herzog, Program Manager, Cleveland Water Alliance
Mr. Herzog gave an overview of recent impacts to Lake Erie from anthropogenic activities/climate change. He indicated that these impacts include:

- Rising water temperatures
- Microbial-contaminate concerns, e.g., increase in high *E.coli* counts that close beaches
- Phosphorus loading that cause an increase in harmful algal blooms (HABs)
- Rising water levels
- Significant fluctuations in dissolved oxygen (DO) levels
- Legacy industrial pollution
- Emerging Contaminates

He discussed the gaps in needed data across the Lake Erie Basin to adaptively manage these water quality challenges. He explained that Cleveland Water Alliance’s (CWA’s) Lake Erie Volunteer Science Network has a solution to these water quality impacts and that is to transform Lake Erie into a “smart” Lake by the network deploying its 200+ sensors and data sondes

mounted on existing towers along Lake Erie's shoreline and by deploying smart buoys in the Lake. He also stressed that remote sensing and satellite imaging needs to be incorporated into the water quality monitoring network along with credible grab samples taken by CWA's network of trained volunteer citizen scientists. He explained how the deployed sensors and data sondes and smart buoys can provide robust, real-time data on wind speed, air temperature, wave height, water temperature, water turbidity, dissolved oxygen, specific conductivity, and chlorophyll levels to help predict HABs, allowing regulators to take action to prevent them, and to protect public health. He noted that this initiative makes Lake Erie the largest digitally connected freshwater body in the world, with respect to water quality monitoring. He added that as a next step and important goal to address HABs, real-time phosphorus detection by the deployed sensors and data sondes and smart buoys are being explored by CWA. He indicated that members of the network include but are not limited to many watershed groups and soil and water conservation districts along Lake Erie's south shoreline, Cleveland and Toledo Metroparks, and the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG). He further indicated that funding sources for the Lake Erie Volunteer Science Network and its credible Lake Erie water quality monitoring network include the state of Ohio, Kent State University, Cleveland State University, public utilities, such as Cleveland Water, foundations, and CWA membership.

Mr. Herzog's presentation concluded with him fielding many questions from the ERTAC.

NEFCO FY2023 Work Program

Draft 'Clean Water (208) Plan annual update guidelines' revised on January 25, 2023
(transmitted with agenda mailout); *continued discussion*

Mr. LaPlante went over the third revision of the draft annual FPA update guidelines. He noted that the draft guidelines:

- State the purposes of having a voluntary annual Plan update;
- Provide a timeline for initiating an annual update;
- State the process, procedures, and guidelines for NEFCO to initiate an annual update; and
- State the procedures for update-requesting MAs, in three steps.

He went over the purposes of having an annual update, which are to:

- Make FPA updates more manageable than letting needed updates accumulate, then undertaking a massive 201/208 FPA update;
- Alleviate delaying economic and residential development projects with a pending PTI or loan that conflict with the 208 Plan, which can be achieved if the update-requesting MA correctly anticipates the size of future projects and makes the update fit them; and
- Give MAs an opportunity to make changes to their FPAs when there is not a pending PTI or loan.

Mr. LaPlante also went over the timeline for initiating the annual update, which indicates that NEFCO staff will seek the ERTAC's endorsement of the guidelines on March 1st; NEFCO board approval of the guidelines on March 15th; and will send notification of the start of the update process to the MAs on March 21st and provide a 90-day (June 19th) deadline for them to submit their complete draft update application packets to NEFCO. He discussed timeline for the public notification period and date for an anticipated approval of the draft annual update by the NEFCO Board. He noted that the timeline sequences the annual update with Ohio EPA's annual call for the Areawides' submittals of 208 Plan updates for state certification.

Ms. Vanah provided NEFCO staff with suggestions on how to make the guidelines easier to read.

208 Plan amendments approved February 2022 through January 2023 submitted to Ohio EPA for state certification

Mr. LaPlante reported that, on January 19th, at the request of Ohio EPA, NEFCO submitted to agency for state certification the six 208 Plan amendments that the NEFCO Board approved from February 16, 2022 to January 18, 2023. He noted that that these include the amendments for the Mantua FPA, Aurora FPA, Wayne County Lincoln Way FPA, Akron and Fish Creek FPAs, Brewster and Navarre FPAs, and most recently, the Canton-Nimishillen Basin and Massillon FPAs. He further noted that Ohio EPA indicated that the agency would likely release NEFCO's submitted 208 Plan amendments for public comment in March 2023 along with the 208 Plan updates and amendments submitted by the other Areawides. He added that Ohio EPA indicated that it expects the Governor to certify these in May 2023.

Canal Diversion Dam Removal project; federal grant closeout status

Mr. LaPlante reported that on January 31, 2023, NEFCO submitted its final report required under this grant to the USEPA Region 5 National Program Office (GLNPO). The GLNPO Project Officer who has been overseeing this grant from its beginning confirmed receipt of the final report on the same day.

ERTAC Professional Engineer and Operator Continuing Education Credits Tracking 2022

Mr. LaPlante noted that any professional engineer or drinking water/wastewater treatment system operator can contact him if they would like an electronic copy of these continuing education tracking sheets. Mr. Hadley noted that he brought hard copies of these to hand out to those who want them after the meeting.

Reports from ERTAC members (a chance for members to report on activities or problems affecting their communities)

Mr. Kastner reported that on February 16th, Wayne Soil and Water Conservation District will be hosting an in-person and virtual seminar on the installation, operation, and maintenance of septic systems. He noted that Vaughn Anderson, Director of Environmental Health of the Wayne County Health Department, would be the guest speaker.

Chairwoman Smith announced her retirement, effective March 1, 2023. She indicated that she has enjoyed serving as the ERTAC's chair, and after 33 years in the Environmental Health field, she is looking forward to retirement. Mr. Hadley expressed to her that NEFCO staff and the ERTAC have benefited from her strong leadership as the committee's chair since July 2016, and he wished her all the best in her retirement. Mr. LaPlante thanked her for all the guidance she has provided and wished her much happiness in her retirement.

Information items requested

Mr. Etling requested copies of items 1, 5, 14, 16, 17, and 21.

Ohio EPA and Ohio Department of Health Public Notices requested

No Ohio EPA or Ohio Department of Health Public Notices were requested.

Ohio Environmental Legislation Recently Signed or Introduced

There was no Ohio Environmental legislation recently signed or introduced.

Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

ERTAC Contact Hour Course List

Chairwoman Smith drew the ERTAC's attention to the list.

Next Meeting

Chairwoman Smith said that the next meeting would be held at 9:00 a.m. on March 1, 2023, at The Natatorium (Hopewell Room) 2345 4th Street, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.