

MINUTES--NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD MEETING held Wednesday, February 15, 2023, 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. Hofstetter, 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 January 18, 2023

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

3. Financial Status Report - month of January

Mr. Hadley said that \$2.32 was received as income during January, receipts to date were \$293,728.80, disbursements to date were \$353,561.76, and cash on hand at the end of January was \$297,224.27.

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

3a. January Bank Reconciliations

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

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

4. Appointment of NEFCO representatives to the Vibrant NEO Brownfields Steering Committee

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) on behalf of the NOACA-Vibrant NEO Brownfields Coalition was awarded a \$1 million USEPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) grant. He said that as part of this RLF a Brownfields Steering Committee was created to review loan applications and subgrants; conduct all standard due diligence normally undertaken by lending entities; draft loan and subgrant agreements, including determination of loan or subgrant, dollar amount, interest rate, and payback period, subject to Vibrant NEO and NOACA approval; and recommend projects, based on the criteria developed by Vibrant NEO. He stated that the proposed Brownfields Steering Committee structure will include five representatives from the Eastgate Council of Governments, nine representatives from NEFCO, and fifteen from NOACA. He said that NEFCO's representation will include one General Policy Board member from each of the four NEFCO counties, a subject matter expert from each county, and NEFCO's Executive Director, who will serve as a non-voting member. He listed the NEFCO region representatives for this committee:

Portage County: Todd Peetz, Director, Portage County Regional Planning Commission; Dan Morganti, Executive Director, Portage County Land Bank

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Stark County: Bob Nau, Executive Director, Stark County Regional Planning Commission; Sarah Peters, Land Bank Manager, Stark County Land Bank
Summit County: David Messner, Development Manager, City of Akron; Patrick Bravo, Executive Director, Summit County Land Bank
Wayne County: Jonathan Hofstetter, Commissioner, Wayne County; Vaughn Anderson, Director of Environmental Health, Wayne County Health Department
NEFCO Executive Director (non-voting): Joseph Hadley, Executive Director

He stated that these appointments must be confirmed by March 1, 2023. Staff recommends approval of the NEFCO region representatives to the Vibrant NEO Brownfields Steering Committee pursuant to Resolution No. FY2023-008.

Mr. Hofstetter said that the creation of the Wayne County Land Bank is still in progress. He stated that he will be the member of the Brownfields Steering Committee until the land bank is created.

A motion was made by Mr. Mazzola, seconded by Mr. Malik, to approve Resolution No. FY2023-008. The motion carried.

5. Consideration of a renewal of authorization to provide meeting amenities to volunteer members or citizens who attend NEFCO meetings

Mr. Hadley said that the meeting amenities is a recurring request that is made annually to the Board. He stated that the State Auditor's office requires that local dues be used for refreshments at NEFCO meetings. He asked for approval of Resolution No. FY2023-009 approving the use of local funds for refreshment expenditures, with a cap of \$850.

A motion was made by Mr. Tatum, seconded by Mr. Hofstetter, to approve Resolution No. FY2023-009. The motion carried.

6. NEFCO FY2023 Work Program – status

a. Economic Development

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the 2023-2028 *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs)* was submitted to the EDA. This plan is prepared every five years, the next five-year plan will be due in 2028. He stated that an annual update will still be done to assess and evaluate the region's progress on the goals and strategies.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Economic Recovery & Resiliency (ER&R) Implementation Committee held its first meeting on February 13th. He said that this committee discussed the strategies that were listed in the ER&R Plan.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the EDA issued a request for information (RFI) looking for comments and information on the program design, structure, and evaluation of the Tech Hubs program. He stated that the EDA was appropriated \$500 million for the Tech Hubs program as part of the FY2023 Omnibus Appropriations Bill. He said that the EDA is seeking input on the program's design structure and evaluation. This is all about accelerating evolutions, technology innovation, and establishing Tech Hubs across the country. He stated that all comments must be submitted to TechHubs@eda.gov by March 16, 2023.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the EDA Chicago Regional Office (CRO) will be transitioning away from the Grants.gov grants portal. The last day to apply to EDA using Grants.gov is March 31, 2023. He said that the new portal is called Economic Development Grants Experience (EDGE). He stated that the EDA is the only federal agency that will be using the EDGE program. The

EDGE portal has already been soft-launched, but will be completely online starting April 1, 2023. Please contact NEFCO with any questions on the new platform.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Vibrant NEO-Brownfields Steering Committee will meet quarterly, or as needed. He said that the first round of applications could be approved in the second or third quarter of 2023. He stated that Vibrant NEO released a request for proposals for marketing and community engagement for a qualified consultant to advertise the program.

Mr. Lautzenheiser stated that Governor DeWine announced that his administration has decided to apply for federal funding to study the feasibility of expanding rail service in Ohio. The application deadline is March 27, 2023.

Mr. Lautzenheiser noted the attached updated funding opportunities with upcoming deadlines.

Mr. Regula asked about EDA Representative Ellen Heinz's presentation and visit at last month's board meeting. Mr. Lautzenheiser said that Ms. Heinz did a great job on presenting her slides. He stated that there weren't any requests from members for site visits in the region.

b. Environmental Planning

Mr. LaPlante said that under NEFCO's SFY2023 Water Quality Management Planning contract with Ohio EPA, NEFCO is initiating an annual revision process or "update" process for wastewater management agencies (MAs) that wish to voluntarily update the boundaries and/or wastewater treatment prescriptions of their respective 201/208 facilities planning areas (FPAs) found in the 208 Plan's Chapter 3 Appendices. He said that seven years had passed between 208 Plan updates before the NEFCO Board approved the last Plan update in 2020. Some of the larger MAs had suggested that NEFCO initiate Plan updates more frequently to help ensure that projects (Permit-to-Install (PTI) or infrastructure loan) are not delayed because they need to be consistent with NEFCO's 208 Plan. He stated that under the Ohio Revised Code, Ohio EPA cannot issue a PTI permit or grant an infrastructure loan when either conflict with the 208 Plan. Thus, it is advantageous for the MAs to anticipate areas under their wastewater jurisdiction which may not be consistent with the 208 Plan, and to recommend 208 Plan updates in those area(s) to make them compliant with the Plan's wastewater options. He discussed the purpose of NEFCO having an annual FPA update process. He said that the Environmental Resources Technical Advisory Committee (ERTAC) will continue discussing the update guidelines. ERTAC will consider the update process guidelines at its March 1st meeting, including a possible recommendation for the Board to consider approving them at the March 15th Board meeting.

Mr. LaPlante said that on January 19th, at the request of Ohio EPA, staff submitted to the agency for state certification, Board approved 208 Plan amendments from February 2022 through January 2023. He said that Ohio EPA will have a public review period and public hearing beginning next month before submitting NEFCO's submitted 208 Plan amendments and the other Areawide's submitted 208 Plan amendments and updates to the governor for state certification in May.

Mr. LaPlante mentioned that at the February 1, 2023 ERTAC meeting, Mary Helen Smith, ERTAC chair and NEFCO Board alternate to Portage County Health Commissioner Joe Diorio, announced her retirement effective March 1, 2023.

Mr. LaPlante said that the Ohio EPA Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance (DEFA) announced that the Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) project nominations for Program Year 2024 will be accepted through March 3, 2023.

Mr. LaPlante noted that Stephanie Deibel, Watershed Coordinator, Summit Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will present at the March 1st ERTAC meeting.

Mr. Regula asked how far out is the water being monitored from the East Palestine train derailment accident? Mr. LaPlante said that the area is being monitored upwind and downwind, and downstream. He said that he believes that the impact on water quality affected Ohio tributaries for at least seven miles. Thousands of wildlife have died from this accident. He said that according to the Beacon Journal there were some concerns in Summit County and other areas west of East Palestine. He stated that any place upwind and west of the accident shouldn't be affected by the accident. He said that he doesn't know the radius of the area, but it is all related to how the wind blows and the flow of the water. The radius will be drawn further in the downwind and downstream direction. Mr. Regula asked if he knows who is responsible for the cleanup? Mr. LaPlante said that the USEPA and Ohio EPA are the regulatory agencies involved. He said that these agencies will be looking into Norfolk-Southern, which is owner of that section of the rail line.

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

Mr. Hadley said that he has included some information on the debt ceiling.

Mr. Hadley said that the USEPA is slowly distributing details related to the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG). Right now, the USEPA is still trying to figure out how to initiate the program. He said that it appears that most governmental entities or local governments will be eligible. The USEPA is still working on the details. He encouraged counties, cities, and regions to submit a grant application as soon as possible.

Mr. Hadley stated that he included some information on the New Proposed Guidance to Boost American-Made Goods in Federal Infrastructure Projects. He said that this was referred to by President Biden in the State of the Union Address. He said that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is proposing new standards to tighten some of the loopholes that existed in past Buy American requirements. He stated that last year Senators Brown and Portman had pushed for this American-made by Americans in the infrastructure law. He said that OMB is detailing what that actually will mean.

Mr. Hadley mentioned that he included some information on Clean Energy Jobs including Ohio. He said that there was an article in *Route Fifty*, referring to an energy report by Climate Power.

Mr. Hadley said that EPA is requesting input on the Environmental and Climate Justice Block Grant Program to finalize definitions and what actions are appropriate and who should be receiving the grants.

8. 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

No one had anything to comment about for their community/county/agency.

9. Other Business

Mr. Regula welcomed to the Board meeting David Lukas, Assistant Director, Summit County Department of Community and Economic Development.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 a.m.

Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant



Todd Peetz, Secretary
NEFCO General Policy Board
March 15, 2023

NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD 2023 ATTENDANCE SHEET

Member (alternate)	1/18	2/15	3/15	4/19	5/17	6/21	7/19	8/16	9/20	10/18	11/15	12/20
PORTAGE COUNTY												
Sabrina Christian-Bennett (Mike Tinlin)												
Daniel Blakely (Tia Rutledge)	A	A										
Joseph Diorio	A	X										
Todd Peetz (Gail Gifford)	X	X										
Susan Riehm (2-9-23)												
Amos Sarfo (Eric Long)		X										
CITY OF KENT												
Kathleen Petsko (Bridget Susel)	X	X										
STARK COUNTY												
Keith Bennett	X	X										
Alfredo Carranza	X	X										
Kirt Conrad												
Athena Ebersole	X											
David Maley	X	X										
Joe Mazzola		X										
Dan Moeglin												
Bob Nau (Curtis Bungard)	X	X										
Richard Regula (Bill Smith)		X										
Jim Troike (Scott Ellsworth and Tom Davis)	A	A										
Vacant (Rachel Hosler)												
Vacant												
CITY OF CANTON												
Jim Benekos (John Highman Jr. and Chris Barnes)	X	X										
COUNTY OF SUMMIT												
Jim Balogh	X	X										
Alan Brubaker (Joe Paradise and Larry Fulton)	A											
David Kohlmeier (Zak Kaczor)	X	X										
David Lukas	A	X										
Sam Scaffide	X	X										
Ilene Shapiro (Craig Stanley & Joe Eckenrode)		A										
Dianne Sumego	X											
Michael Vinay (Matt Calcei)	X	X										
Elizabeth Walters (Mark Potter)		A										
CITY OF AKRON^a												
Ginger Baylor												
Daniel Horrigan (Sam DeShazor)												
Chris Ludle (Michelle DiFiore)	A	A										
Shammas Malik	X	X										
Linda F. R. Omobien												
Thomas A. Tatum (Jim Ashley)	X	X										
Helen Tomic (Kurt Mulhauser)												
WAYNE COUNTY												
Jonathan Hofstetter (Sue Smail)	X	X										
Jenn Kiper (Rob Kastner)	X	X										
Steven Wheeler (Kevin Givins)	A	A										
CITY OF WOOSTER												
Bob Breneman (Jonathan Millea, and Vince Marion)	A	A										
OHIO EPA-NEDO^{ab}												
Vacant (Patricia Vanah)	A											
CITIZENS COUNCIL												
Vacant (2)												

X = member present A = alternate present

^aappointments pending

^bex officio

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

Guests in Attendance at the February 15, 2023 meeting
Meghan Adair, Workforce Areas 2 (Summit and Medina Counties)
Allen Mavrides, Mayor, City of Munroe Falls