

**MINUTES--NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD MEETING held Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at the City of Green Community Hall at Central Park.**

**1a. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Regula at 8:34 a.m. in the presence of a quorum.

**1b. Approval of the Agenda**

A motion was made by Mr. Tatum, seconded by Mr. Peetz, 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.

Mr. Regula welcomed to the Board meeting Stephan Wilder, Mayor, City of North Canton. Mr. Regula stated that Mr. Wilder will be a new board member in 2024 appointed by the Stark County Commissioners.

**2. Consideration of the draft minutes of the regular meeting of the NEFCO General Policy Board on November 15, 2023**

A motion was made by Mr. Tatum, seconded by Ms. Chistian-Bennett, to accept the November meeting minutes. The motion carried.

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

Mr. Hadley said that \$86,439.08 was received as income during November, receipts to date were \$244,437.37, disbursements to date were \$221,071.67, and cash on hand at the end of November was \$232,892.02.

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

**3a. November Bank Reconciliations**

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

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

**4. Request to approve the FY2024 Clean Water (208) Plan Facilities Planning Area (FPA) update**

Mr. LaPlante said that the FY2024 Clean Water (208) Plan Facilities Planning Area (FPA) update process began in March 2023. He stated that the Board released the draft update, for public comment, in September 2023. No public comments were received. He said that the sewer authorities reached out to the affected management agencies (MAs) and communities, who expressed no objections to any requested changes to the 208 Plan update. He said that the attached maps reflect the updates changes. He said that the text only updates are also attached. He said that on December 6<sup>th</sup> the ERTAC recommended that the NEFCO Board approve the update; which, if they are approved by the Board, will be submitted to Ohio EPA for state certification. He said that he is requesting Board approval of Resolution No. FY2024-003.

A motion was made by Ms. Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mr. Vinay, to approve the FY2024 Clean Water (208) Plan Facilities Planning Area (FPA) update; Resolution No. FY2024-003. The motion carried.

**5. City of Hudson requests letter of support for its EDA Public Works/Economic Adjustment Assistance grant application**

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the City of Hudson requested a letter of support for its EDA Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance grant application (Nicholson Waterline Project). He said that the City of Hudson provided some additional information after the board mailout; which was incorporated into the memo and letter of support (attached). He said that the Nicholson Waterline Project includes construction of a 6,500 lineal foot, 12-inch diameter water transmission line along State Route 303; Streetsboro and Barlow Roads in the City of Hudson. He said that the City of Hudson indicated that this connection would maintain water operations to improve the water system, as a whole. He said that this project benefits the entire water system, which includes the Villages of Boston Heights and Peninsula, and Boston Township. The project will also retain businesses in other areas of the City. The total project cost is approximately \$2.6 million, the City of Hudson is requesting 50 percent of the total, through the EDA grant. He said that as per the EDA PW/EAA program, the project must be located within an area that is economically distressed according to EDA's metrics, which are 80 percent or less than the per capita median income of the national average, or an unemployment rate of one percent or greater than the national average. The project must also have a job creation or retention component, and must foster a private investment. He noted that the City of Hudson is aware of these criteria. However, the City is still interested in pursuing the grant application.

Mr. Nau asked how likely does Mr. Lautzenheiser think that this project will get funded? Mr. Lautzenheiser admitted that this isn't a strong application, but the City wants to submit the application anyway and is seeking NEFCO's support. He said that with any EDA application, the EDA requires the applicant to seek a letter of support; also called letter of alignment. That letter of alignment means that the EDA would like the applicant to reach out to the pertinent economic development district (EDD), which is NEFCO, to show how that particular project aligns with the regional CEDS. He said that in this case, the project doesn't necessarily directly align with any of the seven goals in NEFCO's CEDS, however, it is consistent with the CEDS in the fact that upgraded infrastructure fosters economic development. He said that staff is recommending that the General Policy Board consider the attached draft letter of support for the City of Hudson's EDA Public Works/Economic Adjustment Assistance grant application. He stated that a project summary is also attached. Ms. Sumego said that she is concerned with NEFCO providing support to an applicant knowing that the application will not get funded. Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the attached support letter is not a strongly worded letter in the sense that it doesn't directly call out a correlation between any of the CEDS' goals; like NEFCO would normally indicate. Mr. Hadley said that staff and the City of Hudson have had multiple discussions with the Economic Development Representative (EDR) regarding this project. He stated that this funding source was suggested to the City of Hudson by Senator Vance's office. He said that staff doesn't know what other decisions are made by the Chicago Regional Office on the submitted applications. He stated that even though Mr. Lautzenheiser has reviewed the project, and discussed with the City of Hudson the challenges of moving forward with the application, the City wishes to continue to submit the application to the EDA for funding with NEFCO's support. Mr. Hadley said that his advice to the chair would be when someone asks for a letter of support, staff tries to support their application. He stated that staff will not recommend support for something that is illegal, or something that already exists in the region. He said that this is the City of Hudson's first try for this grant. Ms. Sumego said that there are many other entities in the NEFCO region that are eligible for this grant and NEFCO shouldn't be focusing on an applicant that knowingly will not get funded. Mr. Lautzenheiser said that he has had conversations with Ellen Heinz, EDR, Chicago Office, and the EDA cannot tell an applicant not to apply for this grant program. He said that NEFCO is in the position where the

agency is supportive of all projects in our region. The applicants know that NEFCO understands the metrics and what is an eligible project. The applicant also understands that NEFCO is in the position where at some point the EDA will ask NEFCO if the project was reviewed by staff or if a letter of alignment was provided for a specific project. He stated that this isn't a strong worded letter of alignment, but if the agency provides a letter for this project, he doesn't see it as a poor reflection on NEFCO, at least in the eyes of the EDA.

A motion was made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Eckenrode, to approve the letter of support for the City of Hudson's EDA Public Works/Economic Adjustment Assistance grant application. The motion carried. Mr. Tatum and Ms. Sumego opposed.

Mr. Balogh observed that the expansion of this waterline would provide more services to the industries associated with Hudson, Boston Heights and Peninsula.

#### **6. Election of CY2024 General Policy Board officers: Recommendation from the Nominating Committee**

Mr. Regula said that the Nominating Committee met on December 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss and develop the slate of CY2024 board officers. He stated that the Nominating Committee recommended the following CY2024 General Policy Board officers:

**Chair:** Vincent A. Marion, Manager, Planning and Zoning, City of Wooster

**First Vice-Chair:** Jonathan Hofstetter, Commissioner, Wayne County

**Second Vice-Chair:** James Benekos, City Engineer, City of Canton

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

**Treasurer:** Joseph Eckenrode, Deputy Director of Administrative Services, Summit County

**Immediate Past Chair:** Richard Regula, Commissioner, Stark County

A motion was made by Mr. Mazzola, seconded by Mr. Nau, to adopt the slate of CY2024 Board officers. The motion carried.

#### **7. Consideration of a recommendation from the Executive Committee regarding the rescheduling of the June 19, 2024 board meeting**

Mr. Regula stated that the Executive Committee recommended rescheduling the June 19, 2024 Board meeting to June 26, 2024, due to June 19<sup>th</sup> being a federal holiday.

A motion was made by Mr. Vinay, seconded by Mr. Hofstetter, to reschedule the June 19, 2024 Board meeting to June 26, 2024. The motion carried.

#### **8. Consideration of a recommendation from the Personnel Committee**

Mr. Regula said that the Personnel Committee recommended a 3 percent salary adjustment for staff effective January 1, 2024.

A motion was made by Ms. Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mr. Tatum, to approve a 3 percent salary adjustment for the NEFCO staff, effective January 1, 2024. The motion carried.

#### **9. NEFCO FY2024 Work Program – status**

##### **a. Economic Development**

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) committee met on November 16<sup>th</sup> to review the 2023 to 2028 CEDS plan. The committee is not recommending any changes to the seven goals of the CEDS for 2024. He said that the annual review process is important for preparing the Annual Performance Report (APR), which is a requirement for NEFCO's partnership planning grant with the EDA. He said that the submittal

deadline for the 2024 APR is January 31, 2024. A draft report is currently under development which will be submitted to the Regional CEDS Committee for review. He stated that staff will be seeking Board support and endorsement of the APR in January.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that last month he stated that EDA Tech Hub Designation and \$400,000 Strategy Development Grant for Sustainable Polymers Tech Hub project had 31 awardees. He said that of the 31 awards, the Greater Akron Chamber was successful in their application for a sustainable polymers tech hub which is a major announcement and accomplishment for the region. He said that those 31 awardees were invited to apply for the Phase 2 part of the grant. He explained that this is such a great opportunity and is only available to the Greater Akron Chamber and its consortium, which includes NEFCO. He said that the grant submittal deadline is February 29, 2024. The EDA anticipates awarding the Phase 2 implementation dollars to 5 to 10 of the 31 Phase 1 awardees. He noted that President Biden talked about three different projects of the 31 awardees and the Akron project was one that he mentioned.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that FEMA has designated new Community Disaster Resilience Zones. These Zones consist of 483 census tracts across the country. The tracts are in distressed areas and have been overburdened by environmental and climatic issues. He stated that there were two tracts identified in the NEFCO region: in the Cities of Barberton and Canton. He noted that there is no funding available at this point, but there will be funding opportunities in the future for these cities.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the NOACA Vibrant NEO Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund has zero percent loans available for projects in communities, nonprofits and even for profit entities as long as they were not a contributor or responsible for any contamination.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Ohio Department of Development released a Brownfield Remediation program. He said that eligible applicants are considered lead entities, and in this case, it's generally land banks in the 88 Ohio counties. He stated that \$175 million is available in this round, with \$1 million set aside for each county. The remaining portion, approximately \$82 million, is set to be offered on a first-come, first-served basis, and will be available April 1, 2024.

Mr. Lautzenheiser discussed some upcoming funding opportunities with fast approaching deadlines. He said if anyone has any questions or requests to please contact him.

Mr. Regula asked if the Route 30 project would be eligible for transportation funding? Mr. Lautzenheiser said that arguably it does have a significant regional and local impact. He said that the application needs to make sure equity and sustainability requirements are addressed.

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

Mr. LaPlante said that the City of Akron's third amendment to the Consent Decree was approved on November 28<sup>th</sup> by Federal Judge Adams. He said that the City is still awaiting approval of the proposed fourth amendment. He congratulated the City of Akron for approval of the third amendment.

Mr. LaPlante said that a consultant provided a presentation on PFAS at the December ERTAC meeting. He said that the presentation covered the chemistry, history, uses, and health risks of per- and polyfluoroalkyl compounds (PFAS). He stated that the U.S. EPA anticipates finalizing the regulation for the PFAS maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) by the end of this year, but it could be as late as March 2024 before it is finalized. The presenter went over the treatment costs; which could be thousands of dollars. The most common treatment method is granular activated carbon.



Containers filled with granular activated carbon will need to be changed out and regenerated about every 12 to 18 months. About every three years they must be totally replaced. This process will cost thousands of dollars. Please contact staff if you would like additional information from this ERTAC presentation.

Mr. LaPlante said that Governor DeWine and Ohio EPA Director Vogel announced that the City of Akron and Copley Township would receive \$625,000 each in H2Ohio funds. Mr. LaPlante also announced that Portage County received \$1 million to fund regional sewer improvements for the existing Chinn Residential Allotment. The project will install a new wastewater collection system to address water quality violations cited by Ohio EPA and the Portage County Combined General Health District (PCHD) within the Chinn Allotment. He said that the Chinn Allotment was identified by the PCHD and Portage County Water Resources as a priority unsewered area (PUA) in NEFCO's FY2022 map of PUAs.

Mr. LaPlante said that Governor DeWine announced the new H2Ohio Rivers program that will focus on PFAS, dam removal, land conservation, and more. Please contact him for additional information.

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

Mr. Hadley said that the House closed for the Christmas and New Year's break. The Senate is continuing to meet this week to try to work out some final language that would be acceptable for the funding for the border and Ukraine. There are considerable differences in approach between the Senate and the House and the relatively new speaker of the House, who doesn't want enormous continuing resolutions (CR). He said that January 19<sup>th</sup> is the drop dead date on funding this first approved CR, and when Congress returns on January 8<sup>th</sup>, there are only four days or so to have that actually happen.

Mr. Hadley said that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is a unique situation where the administration has tried to get the money to recipients as quickly as possible. Brookings has studied the actual funding process and how quickly that has happened under the infrastructure law. He said that the article on pages two and three (of board item #10) refers to an interactive map where one can search a particular geographic area and see how/what projects have been funded.

Mr. Hadley said that he has included information on the Bi-partisan Workforce bill. Mr. Hadley stated that a recent piece by the Bi-Partisan Policy Center calls for the permanent authorization of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR). He said that because the program is not authorized, each disaster requires an emergency supplemental appropriation, slowing down HUD's ability to dispense aid. Please contact him for additional details.

Mr. Hadley said that the Northeast-Midwest Institute keeps track of manufacturing related legislation that is proposed for the Midwest. He said to contact him if anyone has any questions on any of the listed pieces of legislation.

#### **11. Awards to Board members**

Mr. Hadley presented perfect attendance certificates to Todd Peetz, Director, Portage County Regional Planning Commission and Kevin Givins, Water Superintendent, City of Orrville Water Treatment Plant.

Mr. Hadley presented awards to retiring or outgoing Board members. He presented an award to Mr. Bob Breneman, Mayor, City of Wooster. He briefly summarized some of Mayor Breneman's

history with NEFCO and stated that the Mayor was always supportive of NEFCO. He asked Mr. Marion to express NEFCO's deepest thanks to Mayor Breneman and to present the Mayor with the clock award. Mr. Hadley presented an award to Mr. Thomas Tatum, City of Akron representative who has been a Board member or alternate for many years. Mr. Tatum was also the Intergovernmental Review Chair and was always available for a NEFCO meeting, even on short notice. He stated that Mr. Tatum had a unique perspective in having the history of the City of Akron in mind. He also has an understanding of the regional importance of Akron to the NEFCO region and to the organization. Mr. Hadley presented an award to Mr. Craig Stanley, Director of Administrative Services, County of Summit. He said Mr. Stanley has been NEFCO's treasurer for the last 10 years, and he was Board Chair in 2009 and 2012. He said that Mr. Stanley will continue as one of the County Executive's alternates.

Mr. Marion presented an award to Mr. Regula, Stark County Commissioner, for his dedicated services as chair the last two years.

Mr. Regula thanked Mr. Tatum for his influence on the NEFCO Board. He congratulated him on his retirement.

**12. 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**

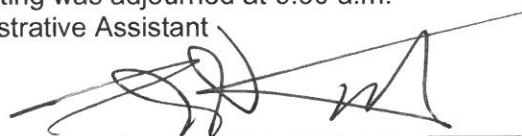
No one at the Board meeting had anything to comment about for their community/county/agency.

**13. Other Business**

- a. NEFCO holiday reception planned for immediately following the board meeting
- Mr. Regula welcomed everyone to stay for a holiday reception.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant



Todd Peetz, Secretary  
NEFCO General Policy Board  
January 17, 2024

# 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
<b>PORTAGE COUNTY</b>												
Sabrina Christian-Bennett (Mike Tinlin)			X	A	X	X	A	X	X	X	X	X
Daniel Blakely (Tia Rutledge)	A	A	A	A		A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Joseph Diorio	A	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Todd Peetz (Gail Gifford)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Susan Riehm (2-9-23)			X	X	X	X		X		X	X	
Amos Sarfo (Eric Long)		X	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	X	X	
<b>STARK COUNTY</b>												
Keith Bennett	X	X				X		X	X	X	X	
Alfredo Carranza	X	X							X			X
Kirt Conrad			X	X	X			X		X	X	X
David Maley	X	X	X		X		X		X	X		X
Joe Mazzola		X		X		X	X	X	X	X		X
Dan Moeglin				X	X							X
Mike Naso (5-3-23)					X	X	X	X	X	X		A
Bob Nau (Curtis Bungard)	X	X		X	X	X		X	X		X	X
Richard Regula (Bill Smith)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Jim Troike (Tom Davis)	A	A		X	X		X			A		
Vacant (Rachel Hosler)												
Vacant												
<b>CITY OF CANTON</b>												
Jim Benekos (John Highman Jr. and Chris Barnes)	X	X	X	A		X	X		X	A	A	X
<b>COUNTY OF SUMMIT</b>												
Jim Balogh	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Alan Brubaker (Joe Paradise and Larry Fulton)	A											
David Kohlmeier (Zak Kaczor)	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
David Lukas	A	X	X	X	X							
Sam Scaffide	X	X		X		X	X		X		X	
Ilene Shapiro (Craig Stanley & Joe Eckenrode)		A	A	A	A	A	A	A		A	A	A
Dianne Sumego	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Michael Vinay (Matt Calcei)	X	X			X	X	A	X	X	X		X
Elizabeth Walters (Mark Potter)		A	A	A	A		A	A	A		A	
<b>CITY OF AKRON</b>												
Ginger Baylor												
Daniel Horrigan (Sam DeShazor)												
Chris Ludle (Michelle DiFiore)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Shammas Malik	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Linda F. R. Omobien												
Thomas A. Tatum (Jim Ashley)	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
Helen Tomic (Kurt Mulhauser)					X	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
<b>WAYNE COUNTY</b>												
Jonathan Hofstetter (Sue Smail)	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
Jenn Kiper (Rob Kastner)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	
Steven Wheeler (Kevin Givins)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
<b>CITY OF WOOSTER</b>												
Bob Breneman (Jonathan Millea, and Vince Marion)	A	A	A		A	A	A		A	A	A	A
<b>OHIO EPA-NEDO<sup>a</sup></b>												
David Emerman (Patricia Vanah)	A		A					X		X		
<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 of appointment is shown for CY2023 members

<b>Guests in Attendance at the December 20, 2023 meeting</b>
Meghan Adair, Summit/Medina Workforce Development Area
Megan Pitman, Village of Lakemore
Kailyn Cyrus, City of Kent
Chuck Hauber, Summit County Engineer's Office
Justin Rechichar, Portage County Health District
Stephan B. Wilder, Mayor, City of North Canton
Gerard Neugebauer, Mayor, City of Green