

MINUTES--NEFCO GENERAL POLICY BOARD MEETING held Wednesday, September 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 8:30 a.m. in the presence of a quorum.

1b. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Diorio, 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 August 16, 2023

A motion was made by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Vinay, to accept the August meeting minutes. The motion carried.

3. Financial Status Report - month of August

Mr. Hadley said that \$123,960.63 was received as income during August, receipts to date were \$157,995.00, disbursements to date were \$90,859.14, and cash on hand at the end of August was \$276,662.18.

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

3a. August Bank Reconciliations

Mr. Hadley stated that the funds from the listed 'vacant' bank account have been transferred into the general savings account. He asked for acceptance of the August bank reconciliations.

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

4. SPEAKER: "Elevate Greater Akron (EGA): Bringing the Economic Development Ecosystem Together...and Delivering for Local Companies!"; Gregg Cramer, Vice President of Economic Development, Greater Akron Chamber

Mr. Lautzenheiser provided some background history and introduced Gregg Cramer, Vice President of Economic Development, Greater Akron Chamber.

Mr. Cramer discussed Greater Akron Chambers' business retention and expansion (BRE) efforts. He said that today's comments are not just about the Greater Akron Chamber, they are about Greater Akron Chamber working with the County of Summit, City of Akron suburban jurisdictions, University of Akron, and the Akron Urban League bringing together the collective resources to benefit these companies. He provided a brief overview of 'Elevate Greater Akron' (EGA) which is an economic development initiative that was started in 2017. He stated that there has been lots of changes in the communities, both with elected officials, and private sector CEO leadership. Every two years EGA is reevaluated, not only the results, but as the economy changes in a post COVID environment, how can EGA change? The goal of EGA is to transform the culture of economic development to expand opportunity for all residents and reposition the greater Akron region in an era of rapid global change. He said there were eight key findings from the original EGA research

that are still relevant 5-6 years later. He provided a brief description of each finding listed: the regional economy is neither distressed nor dynamic; Akron faces strong headwinds; traditional economic development approaches are proving incapable of effectively confronting these headwinds; Akron's regional economic development system is fragmented and outdated; need to focus on potentially transformative opportunities and to grow companies already here; the region lacks the workforce skills to fulfill demand for digitized and mid-tech occupations; much of Akron – particularly its black population – is excluded from economic opportunity; and, anemic growth in downtown Akron – and other job hubs – hinders the economic growth of the entire region. He described the five strategies that were used to address the eight key findings: new business retention and expansion (BRE); Spark Akron; Opportunity Akron; refocus on downtown (Akron); and Lead Greater Akron. He stated that when the EGA does business retention and expansion, it's not just him going out to a company and asking, "What's going on? or How can we help you?". Mr. Kramer said that when he meets with a company, he also invites the mayor and economic development director of that community, and local colleges or universities to build a better relationship between the community and company. He described how he helps employers find employees that are qualified for a specific position. He stated that he knows that if a company is searching for commercial driver's license (CDL) drivers he must involve Stark State College because the college has a great CDL program and students who are CDL certified. He said that once he knows more about a company, he tries to involve communities and organizations that can provide additional expertise to help the company evolve. He said that EGA has created a database of information that helps companies with workforce skills, helps with grant/loan assistance, and marketing. He said that every Wednesday EGA holds a weekly BRE meeting to discuss every lead, every project, and every PR visit for the week. The ultimate goal is nothing falls through the cracks. All the information collected for the week is entered into the database, which is accessible by all the partners. He stated that every time a BRE is done, a follow-up survey is sent out to the main point of contact to find out if the BRE was helpful, would the company do it again, and to rank EGA. He said that EGA was ranked 65-66 last year, and when compared to Apple's ranking which was in the low 60s, EGA's ranking is pretty good.

Mr. Kramer said that EGA worked with Team NEO in Cleveland to start the Polymer Industry Cluster Initiative. He presented a map showing the 511 polymer companies in the northeast Ohio region. He stated that Akron, Ohio is the rubber capital of the world. He said that the rubber capital of the world is our past; but it is also our future. He showed where Akron stands today with the major rubber companies in our footprint. Obviously, at the center of it all is the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, of which Cooper is now a division. He listed some companies that are internationally owned: Bridgestone (Japan); Continental (Germany); and Kumho (Korea). He stated that all the companies still have R&D or technical centers in and around the greater Akron region. He said that EGA has reserved an excellent booth at the National Plastics Exposition in Orlando which will be held on May 6-10, 2024. This is the largest plastics and polymer show in North America. The booth is 2,000 square feet and EGA is inviting any jurisdictions within Ohio to attend this expo at \$130-135 per square foot, which is half the cost of going independently. Please contact Mr. Kramer if anyone has any interest in attending this expo. He stated that Elevate Greater Akron is the leveraging of regional resources from both the public and private sector and trying to deliver those resources to our local companies, asking companies what they need, and trying to fill those voids in a realistic way. He asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Hadley asked if the PowerPoint slides could be distributed to the Board? Mr. Kramer said yes. Mr. Hadley asked Mr. Kramer if he has had any experience with employers wanting to share with their employees the cost of daycare facilities? Mr. Kramer said yes, wrap around services are challenging to achieve. He stated that there are so many barriers to address. He said that a lot of companies don't want to get into the daycare business. He said he has discussed transportation issues, maybe getting shuttle vans. It's hard. He said that as the wage rates rise, hopefully more

people will come into the pool of workers. There have been many studies done with Conexus NEO regarding why people are dropping out of the workplace, and how to get people to come back into the workplace. Some of the results were very eye opening. A lot of people just don't want to go back to work, and it includes all ages and all income brackets. Mr. Regula thanked Mr. Kramer for his presentation.

5. SPEAKER: "Brownfield Grant Funding Programs"; John Zampino, Director of Assessment, Remediation, and Revitalization Services, Partners Environmental Consulting, Inc.

Mr. Lautzenheiser provided some background history and introduced John Zampino, Director of Assessment, Remediation, and Revitalization Services, Partners Environmental Consulting, Inc.

Mr. Zampino said that he will start with three grant programs that are offered individually with the Ohio Department of Development, US EPA, and Ohio EPA. He discussed how to deal with each of the programs and how to have a strategy to use all three of the programs in a method which he called stacking your grant money on a project. The US EPA Brownfield Program provides grants and technical assistance to help cleanup brownfield properties, which are properties that are suspected of having environmental issues. He described what is a brownfield site. He said that there is a bipartisan infrastructure law that has \$1.5 billion available over a five-year span. This funds the US EPA program. He described the four types of grants that are available: community-wide assessment, clean up, multi-purpose, and revolving loan funds. He said that the community-wide assessment grant is used to inventory and assess brownfields, and for cleanup planning and community engagement. The clean up grants are strictly for remediations, not assessments, e.g. for asbestos, soil or groundwater contamination, or building demolition; with a funding level up to \$2 million for one site. The multi-purpose grant combines the assessment and clean up into one grant. This type of grant allows flexibility to help with the assessment and clean up with the same grant money. Typical funding for the multi-purpose grant is about \$1 million. The revolving loan funding program provides loans and subgrants for cleanups. Typical funding is \$1 million and could be supplemented, if needed, during the grant period. He said that the best practices for each of these grants are to start the process early, try to use technical assistance with filling out the grant, and focus on environmental justice. He stated that the actual application is very labor intensive. The fees for preparing a US EPA grant can range from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Mr. Zampino briefly described the Ohio EPA Targeted Brownfield Assessment (TBA) Program which provides property assessment services at no cost to the eligible applicant. He said that this program is operated through the Ohio EPA. The applicant receives a full report from the contractor of the work performed which could include a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Asbestos Surveys, Geophysical Surveys, and Limited or Supplemental Phase II Assessments. He also described the eligibility requirements. The Ohio EPA is very helpful with these applications. He stated that the timetable is usually two to four months from beginning to end before receiving the funding. Funding is generally between \$5,000 to \$10,000 which is a function of the number of funded projects and available grants. He mentioned that the last time he checked with the Ohio EPA, there was over \$2 million left for this program. He said that he has completed four of these grant applications this year, all of which were funded.

Mr. Zampino said that the General Assembly passed the FY2024-2025 operating budget that includes \$350 million for the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) Brownfield Remediation Program. There will be \$175 million allocated per year with \$1 million set aside for each Ohio county. The grants are first-come, first-served. It is anticipated that applications will be accepted starting January 2024. He said that the application process is very simple. The applicant must be a government entity. He said that counties with a population of less than 100,000 must have the County Commissioner's Board recommend a lead applicant. The County Land Bank will serve as

the lead applicant for a county with a population of 100,000 or more. If a county doesn't have a land bank, then the County Commissioner's Board will recommend a lead applicant. There is a 25 percent match for this program; which can be used for assessment or remediation projects. This is a very flexible program. All applicants should have their projects identified before January 2024. He stated that potential applicants should have an Ohio VAP Phase I Property Assessment and an Asbestos Survey done before January 2024. As soon as the website starts accepting applications it is first-come first-served, and these documents must be uploaded as proof that they were completed. Once all the money has been distributed the website will close. He encouraged everyone to not miss this opportunity. He provided an example on how to stack grant money and get the most out of the application. Mr. Nau asked if the set aside county money for the ODOT program would be 75 percent or 100 percent local allocation? Mr. Zampino said that he wasn't sure how much would be set aside for each demolition and environmental portion. Mr. Regula thanked Mr. Zampino for his presentation.

6. City of Akron requests letter of support for EDA Recompete Pilot Program grant application

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the City of Akron requested a letter of support for its EDA Recompete Pilot Program grant application. The City of Akron is looking to apply for this program for its Key Employment Strategies in Transportation, Opportunity, Neighborhoods, and Education (KEYSTONE) Program. The KEYSTONE Program aims to reduce the prime age employment gap in the City of Akron through planning and targeted investments in transportation, childcare and other workforce development strategies to connect people with good jobs. The Recompete Program is a two phase \$200 million program about fostering economic activity in geographically diverse and persistently distressed communities. He stated that the first phase is the strategy development portion, so applicants can apply for a Strategy Development Grant to formulate strategies and planning to help reduce the employment gap. Or, the applicant can apply for a Recompete Plan approval. He said that the city is applying for both. He said that the city is applying for \$500,000 in Strategy Development dollars. No local match is required for this program. He said that if the City is successful in getting the Recompete Plan approved they would be eligible for Phase II. He said that Phase II is a higher amount of funding, which will be released this winter. He said that the attached summary is still a work in progress. The grant application is due October 5th. The city is still developing the application. He stated that the project is consistent with three goals of NEFCO's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). He mentioned that "and housing" was removed from the second bulleted item. Staff have and continue to provide technical support and assistance to the City of Akron on this application. He asked for approval of the attached letter of support.

A motion was made by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Benekos, to approve the City of Akron's letter of support for an EDA Recompete Pilot Program grant application. The motion carried.

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that he forgot to mention was the entire city of Akron was not eligible for the Recompete Program, only 29 census tracts located within the city are eligible. The City's proposal will focus on those 29 distressed census tracts that have the high prime age employment gap.

7. Stark Economic Development Board (SEDB) requests letter of support for EDA Recompete Pilot Program grant application

Mr. Lautzenheiser said that the Stark Economic Development Board is requesting a support letter for its EDA Recompete Pilot Program grant application Reconnecting Canton. He stated that the entire City of Canton is eligible for this program. The Stark Economic Development Board through its Strengthening Stark Network and in conjunction with the City of Canton is applying for this funding. The SEDB is looking to reduce that prime age employment gap through planning and targeted investments in workforce development strategies, transportation, childcare and other

critical infrastructure to remove the barriers to employment and to connect those individuals with jobs. The SEDB will be focusing on the southeast portion of Canton, which is the most distressed section of the city. He said that this project will target the Madison and Lathrop neighborhoods. The Stark Economic Development Board is applying for both a Strategy Development grant and the Recompete Plan approval. He stated that the SEDB will be seeking approximately \$500,000 for the Strategy Development grant. He said that the project is consistent with three goals of NEFCO's CEDS. He mentioned that "and housing" was removed from the second bulleted item. He said that attached is a summary of the SEDB project. He asked for approval of the attached letter of support.

A motion was made by Mr. Benekos, seconded by Mr. Nau, to approve the Stark Economic Development Board's letter of support for an EDA Recompete Pilot Program grant application. The motion carried.

8. Consideration to release the Clean Water (208) Plan facilities planning area (FPA) update for a 30-day public review and comment period

Mr. LaPlante said that staff is requesting that the NEFCO Board release the Clean Water (208) Plan facilities planning area (FPA) update for a 30-day public review and comment period. He said that the Board's release of the FPA draft update does not mean that the Board agrees with the updates, only that the updates are in the format that can be reviewed and commented on by the public. He said that at the September 6th ERTAC meeting a technical review was performed of the updates and of the online draft update map. The ERTAC recommended that the Board approve today's action. He said that the update consists of nine relatively small areas in Stark and Summit Counties where the management agencies are proposing FPA boundary updates or prescription changes. He said that the maps and text changes are attached. He asked for Board approval to release the Clean Water (208) Plan facilities planning area (FPA) update for a 30-day public review and comment period.

A motion was made by Mr. Maley, seconded by Ms. Kiper, to approve the release of the Clean Water (208) Plan facilities planning area (FPA) update for a 30-day public review and comment period. The motion carried.

Mr. Regula said that items 9a, 9b, and 10 have been included in the Board packet as "**INFORMATION ONLY**". He said to please contact the NEFCO staff if you have any questions or requests of any items listed.

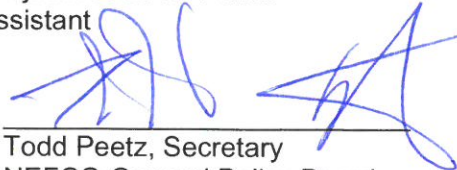
9. For the Good of the Order: an opportunity for members to share news about their community/county/agency/company, or to list a prominent issue affecting them

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

10. Other Business

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m.

Submitted by Rebecca L. Morgan, Administrative Assistant



Todd Peetz, Secretary
NEFCO General Policy Board
October 20, 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)			X	A	X	X	A	X	X			
Daniel Blakely (Tia Rutledge)	A	A	A	A		A	A	A	A			
Joseph Diorio	A	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
Todd Peetz (Gail Gifford)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Susan Riehm (2-9-23)			X	X	X	X		X				
Amos Sarfo (Eric Long)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
CITY OF KENT												
Kathleen Petsko (Bridget Susel)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
STARK COUNTY												
Keith Bennett	X	X				X		X	X			
Alfredo Carranza	X	X							X			
Kirt Conrad			X	X	X			X				
David Maley	X	X	X		X		X		X			
Joe Mazzola		X		X		X	X	X	X			
Dan Moeglin				X	X							
Mike Naso (5-3-23)					X	X	X	X	X			
Bob Nau (Curtis Bungard)	X	X		X	X	X		X	X			
Richard Regula (Bill Smith)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Jim Troike (Scott Ellsworth and Tom Davis)	A	A		X	X		X		A			
Vacant (Rachel Hosler)												
Vacant												
CITY OF CANTON												
Jim Benekos (John Highman Jr. and Chris Barnes)	X	X	X	A		X	X		X			
COUNTY OF SUMMIT												
Jim Balogh	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			
David Lukas	A	X	X	X	X							
Sam Scaffide	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	A	X	X			
Elizabeth Walters (Mark Potter)		A	A	A	A		A	A	A			
CITY OF AKRON												
Ginger Baylor												
Daniel Horrigan (Sam DeShazior)												
Chris Ludle (Michelle DiFiore)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A			
Shammas Malik	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Linda F. R. Omobien												
Thomas A. Tatum (Jim Ashley)	X	X	X	X	X			X	X			
Helen Tomic (Kurt Mulhauser)					X	A	A	A	A			
WAYNE COUNTY												
Jonathan Hofstetter (Sue Smail)	X	X	X	X	X		X		X			
Jenn Kiper (Rob Kastner)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			
Steven Wheeler (Kevin Givins)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A			
CITY OF WOOSTER												
Bob Breneman (Jonathan Millea, and Vince Marion)	A	A	A		A	A	A		A			
OHIO EPA-NEDO^a												
David Emerman (Patricia Vanah)	A		A					X				
CITIZENS COUNCIL												
Vacant (2)												

X = member present A = alternate present

^aex officio

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

Guests in Attendance at the September 20, 2023 meeting

Meghan Adair, Summit/Medina Workforce Development Area
--

Chuck Hauber, Summit County Engineer's Office

Doug Lane Ohio District 13 Congresswoman Sykes
--

John Zampino, Partners Environmental Consulting, Inc.

Gregg Cramer, Greater Akron Chamber
