

MINUTES
NORTHEAST OHIO REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
APRIL 17, 2025

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS D) was called to order at 12:30 p.m. by Darnell Brown.

I. Roll Call

Present: Darnell Brown
Ronald Sulik
Timothy DeGeeter
Jack Bacci
Samuel Alai
Sharon Dumas
Marjorie Chambers

The Secretary informed the President that a quorum was in attendance.

II. Approval of Minutes

MOTION – Mayor Bacci moved, and Ms. Chambers seconded, to approve the Minutes of the March 20, 2025 Board Meeting. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

III. Public Session

There were no items.

IV. Chief Executive Officer's Report

Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells, Chief Executive Officer, informed the Board that on March 27th and 28th NEORS D staff attended the 40th Annual Ohio State Bar Association Environmental, Energy and Natural Resources Law Institute in Columbus. The event featured discussions regarding water reuse, PFAS, wetlands, and various regulatory changes in the state. Event speakers included four former Ohio EPA directors, current directors of Ohio EPA and ODNR, as well as attorneys, academics, and industry representatives. Tamar Gontovnik, Assistant General Counsel, co-chaired the event and was part of the extensive organization and leadership that helped to organize the event. Christine Umerley, Engineering and Construction Project Manager, participated in a panel titled "Environmental Justice: Navigating Spears of Influence" where she spoke about how NEORS D performs projects across the service area with consideration for all of the communities which NEORS D serves. The conference was well attended, with approximately 220 attendees

including staff from Ohio EPA and the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells thanked Ms. Gontovnik and Ms. Umerley for their work related to the event.

President Brown asked if there was an outcome with respect to the treatment of environmental justice as a guiding principal in the current environment. Ms. Umerley explained that she and Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells met prior to the event to discuss NEORSD's approach, the primary of which was that environmental justice is best practice. Best practice is being in contact with NEORSD member communities to understand the various needs across the service area. NEORSD will continue to do the work inherent to its core mission.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells asked Ms. Umerley to discuss the experience of the other attendees. Ms. Umerley explained that there were some questions as to navigating how to continue performing work with the happenings on the federal level and the overall discussion was that the situation will be monitored while the work is ongoing. President Brown added that NEORSD will adapt as needed. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells added that Ms. Umerley and Ms. Gontovnik brought the discussion back to NEORSD's work and its respect for its member communities.

On April 10th, Constance Haqq, Chief Administrative Officer, joined Wise Women Radio to discuss her many achievements over her career as well as NEORSD's job training and hiring programs. This opportunity arose from NEORSD's partnership with HHW, formerly known as Hard Hatted Women, which works to expose women to nontraditional careers in male dominated fields, such as wastewater and stormwater management. Ms. Haqq shared career opportunities at NEORSD and discussed how NEORSD supports and encourages women and all of its employees to achieve their career aspirations. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells thanked Ms. Haqq for her participation.

April 7th through April 10th was the National Water Policy Fly-In in Washington, DC, which brings together clean water professionals, elected officials, and regulators from across the country. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells and Danielle Giannantonio, Sr. Manager of State and Federal Affairs and Grants, attended several days of meetings with congressional delegation staff and regulators. Jessica Kramer, who is the current senior advisor to the administrator of the US EPA and is the nominee for the Assistant Administrator of Water, presented. Ms. Kramer highlighted the importance of the state-revolving fund, as well as advocating for a polluter-pays approach to PFAS regulation, and the need for ongoing technical assistance to the entities which the US EPA regulates. During meetings with the Ohio Delegation, the need for permanent funding for the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) was discussed as well as support for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the SRF Program, and several other legislative priorities.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells reminded the Board that at the March 4th meeting, the request to reject and re-bid for 2025 to 2026 grounds maintenance service bid was granted. The Board also authorized NEORSD to award and execute contracts with the lowest and best bidders, provided that the total contract amount was less than \$170,000. Accordingly, three suppliers were awarded contracts with a combined total of \$140,909.

Action Items

Authorization to Advertise

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| Resolution No. 79-25 | Authorization to publish notice calling for bids in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 6119.10, for a two-year requirement contract for fuel delivery and monitoring services at all District facilities with an estimated probable cost of \$750,000.00. |
| Resolution No. 80-25 | Authorization to publish notice calling for bids in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 6119.10 for maintenance and repair services for District-wide fire suppression systems with an estimated probable cost of \$200,000.00. |

MOTION – Mayor Alai moved, and Ms. Chambers seconded to adopt Resolution Nos. 79-25 through 80-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Issue Request for Proposal (RFP)

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| Resolution No. 81-25 | Authorization to issue an RFP for janitorial services at the George J. McMonagle Administration building, Environmental and Maintenance Services Center and Fleet Services facilities. |
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MOTION – Mr. Sulik moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded to adopt Resolution No. 81-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Purchase

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| Resolution No. 82-25 | Authorization to purchase annual renewal of software licenses, maintenance, and support services from sole source vendor Diligent Corporation for risk and audit application support for the period April 16, 2025 through July 15, 2028, including the addition of a Risk Management Essentials add-on module at no additional cost for the period April 16, 2025 through July 15, 2025, in a total amount not-to-exceed \$315,620.42. |
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MOTION – Mayor Bacci moved, and Ms. Chambers seconded to adopt Resolution No. 82-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Enter Into Agreement

Resolution No. 83-25 Authorization to enter into a professional services agreement with the consultant discussed in the privileged and confidential security memo provided to the Board, for an information security project, including software subscriptions, for the period May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026 in an amount not-to-exceed \$462,722.16, with a District option to renew the agreement for an additional one (1)-year period in an amount not-to-exceed \$531,790.92, and including a general allowance of \$15,000.00, and further authorizing exercise of the renewal option at the CEO's discretion, for a total amount for the initial year, the option year, and the general allowance not-to-exceed \$1,009,513.08.

MOTION – Ms. Dumas moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 83-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Enter Into Contract

Resolution No. 84-25 Authorization to enter into a public improvement contract with Marra Services, Inc. for construction of the MCT-3 Shaft 13 Flow Drop project in an amount not-to-exceed \$2,380,000.00.

Resolution No. 85-25 Authorization to enter into a public improvement contract with The Smith & Oby Company for the Easterly VRF Condensing Unit Replacement project in an amount not-to-exceed \$156,159.30.

MOTION – Mr. Sulik moved, and Mayor Alai seconded to adopt Resolution Nos. 84-25 through 85-25. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

President Brown requested additional information regarding the project associated with Resolution No. 84-25. Robin Rupe, Director of Engineering and Construction, explained that the project will allow NEORSD to improve the hydraulic capacity in the Mill Creel Interceptor located along Broadway Avenue. Once the project is completed and the structure is modified, additional monitoring will be performed in the area to determine if the flows decrease as anticipated, and if successful, the pump station and four local grinder pumps will be eliminated, reducing maintenance and associated costs. Additionally, this project will provide ability for a future relief connection to the Mill Creek Tunnel for Maple Heights to address some inflow and infiltration issues.

Authorization to Amend Agreement

Resolution No. 86-25 Authorization to amend the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement with Dell Marketing, LLP for Office 365 license subscriptions and maintenance and Windows/SQL Server software maintenance under the State of Ohio Cooperative Purchasing Program, to perform a licensing true-up as part of the close out of the 2022-2025 agreement term in an additional amount of \$157,060.82, thereby bringing the total agreement amount not-to-exceed \$1,279,060.82.

MOTION – Ms. Chambers moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded to adopt Resolution No. 86-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Property Related Transaction

Resolution No. 87-25 Authorization to acquire one parcel in fee simple known as PPN 489-14-016, located at 4731 Oakridge Drive, in the City of North Royalton, owned by Vivian Luther, necessary for the construction and maintenance of the Big Creek Flood Mitigation Near Oakridge Drive project, and to enter into an Assignment and Assumption Agreement with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, and to enter into a six-month no-cost lease agreement with Vivian Luther, and to allow for the entirety of the payment to be disbursed to Ohio Real Title Agency, LLC, with total consideration of \$400,000.00 plus closing costs.

MOTION – Mayor Bacci moved, and Mr. Sulik seconded to adopt Resolution No. 87-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Hearing Officer Findings and Recommendations

Resolution No. 88-25 Authorization to adopt the findings and recommendations of the Hearing Officer regarding the sewer account of DBSL Enterprises LP, LLC ending in 1046, Sewer District Hearing No. 24-007, that no adjustments be made.

MOTION – Mr. Sulik moved, and Ms. Chambers seconded to adopt Resolution No. 88-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Assign Agreement

Resolution No. 89-25 Authorization to assign a portion of Green Infrastructure Grant Program Lease Agreement No. 19002107 with University Circle Incorporated (UCI) to Transplant House of Cleveland, Inc. (THC) for the Cozad-Bates House Green Infrastructure Project, only as related to PPN 121-03-010, with all applicable terms and conditions of the agreement to remain unchanged under the assignment.

MOTION – Mayor Alai moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 89-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

V. Information Items

President Brown indicated that the information items included the certification of direct bill delinquent sanitary sewer and stormwater accounts to the Lorain County Fiscal Officer, and asked Ken Duplay, Chief Financial Officer, to explain how this is different than what was done previously.

Mr. Duplay explained that the March 2025 certification only includes Lorain County, not Cuyahoga County. In the past, certifications were done in both counties twice per year; however, Cuyahoga County has changed its processes to only allow certifications to go forward in September. NEORSRD met with county representatives and expressed its desire to continue certifications in March as well. There is potential for March certifications to be allowed at some point, but not in the foreseeable future. NEORSRD's Customer Relations staff continue to exhaust all options to bring customer accounts up to date and avoid certification.

Ms. Rupe provided the Capital Improvement Program March 2025 status update, beginning with cashflow. The Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for cashflow is lower than target at 71%. It is typical for spending to be slow in the first quarter and should correct throughout the year. As shown on the 2025 Top 7 planned CIP projects, identified in Ms. Rupe's prior update, spending is behind on five of the largest seven projects.

The Kingsbury Run Consolidation Sewer construction contract was awarded, but not within 60 days, missing that KPI due to challenging ground conditions discovered in 2024 that were addressed before issuing the documents for bid. Additionally, the engineer's estimate KPI of being within 10% of the lowest three bids was not met.

The Westerly Sludge Handling Improvements project construction contract also missed the KPI of awarding within 60 days. NEORSRD purposely tried to delay the schedule to align with the Westerly Chemically Enhanced High-Rate Treatment project in an attempt to avoid having two different groups of contractors working in a limited space. The engineer's estimate for this project was within 10% of the three lowest bids, meeting that KPI.

The Westerly Administration Building Roof and Replacement project contract was awarded within 60 days and the engineer's estimate for this project was within 10% of the three lowest bids, meeting both KPIs.

Both the Southerly S-51 Skimmings Decant and Storage Facility AHU Replacement project and the Kingsbury Branch A Repair project achieved substantial completion within 90 days of the original contract date, meeting the KPI.

Ms. Rupe then provided an update regarding the Automation Program, which is a several-year long project to install new fiber and hardware prior to the Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC) upgrades. Under the first phase of the Automation Program which was completed in 2021, the standards were established, hardware and software were purchased, and new fiber was installed at the Westerly Wastewater Treatment Center (WWTC), which was the first facility to receive upgraded PLCs. Additionally, backup batteries were upgraded to ensure stability during outages.

The second phase of the Automation Program is nearing completion. New fiber was installed at the Southerly WWTC and Easterly Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) ahead of the PLC replacements. The Easterly PLC Replacement project has achieved substantial completion. The Southerly PLC Replacement project is in construction and moving along smoothly. The Collections PLC Replacement project is also ongoing.

Ms. Rupe provided photographs demonstrating some of the work done under the Automation Program including replacement of a panel at the Easterly WWTP; a consolidation of panels for primary treatment at the Southerly WWTC; new electrical conduits installed in CVI pump station at the Southerly WWTC; and portable monitors in the collection system, both in creeks and manholes to transmit data.

The third phase of the Automation Program will focus solely on the Renewable Energy Facility (REF). The basis of design report is nearly complete, which will be followed by the design phase, and construction will begin in 2027.

In closing, Ms. Rupe provided additional photographs of various PLCs at REF that will be upgraded.

Marie Fechik-Kirk, Manager of Sustainability and Special Projects, provided the Sustainability Update.

NEORSD's Sustainability Plan is a District-wide effort launched in 2021. Under the Plan, NEORSD established a KPI to reach 80% of its sustainability deadlines within one year. NEORSD exceeded that KPI by completing 112 milestones, equating to a 92% completion rate. Some of those goals included reducing electricity consumption by 19%, or 24 million kWh; the creation of additional structures to better integrate sustainability into operations and planning; the creation of a

framework for annual greenhouse gas recording; overall waste reduction; and updating EnergyCAP, a utility software to track use and cost information. NEORSD also has sustainability design checklists for both the Engineering and Construction and Watershed Programs Departments, as well as a sustainable purchasing policy.

As a result of these efforts, NEORSD has saved over \$1 million in electricity, including over \$100,000 in billing and usage issues identified by EnergyCAP. This does not include any of the value engineering savings from the sustainability design checklist, which would make the total well above \$1 million.

NEORSD has earned recognition for its sustainability efforts at the state, national, and global level including US EPA Green Power Partner in 2019; the Ohio EPA Environmental Excellence Silver Award in 2021; the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) Excellence and Management Platinum Award in 2022; and the My Green Lab Silver Certification, which has been awarded to many international labs and very few within the United States, in 2023.

In order to create its new Sustainability Plan, NEORSD first looked to eight other utilities that are part of the US Water Alliance's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Cohort, as they are on par with best practices across the industry. Standard sustainability practices include having sustainability staff, a sustainability strategy, tracking greenhouse gas emissions, resourcing renewable energy, and beneficially reusing its biosolids. NEORSD is ahead of other utilities by having the E&C and Watersheds Design Checklists, Sustainable Purchasing Policy/Guidelines, and with sustainability engagement efforts through the Sustainability Employee Resource Group (SERG).

The US Water Alliance is featuring NEORSD's Sustainable Employee Recourse Group on its website, celebrating its positive impact on creating an innovative and progressive culture.

The next plan will be divided into four categories: conserve resources, maximize efficiency and reduce waste; embrace environmental stewardship; enhance engagement; and plan for the future. Goals will include reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30% compared to 2019, bolstering tree canopy in partnership with the Cleveland Tree Coalition, and investigating grant opportunities. Additionally, Sustainability staff have partnered with Information Technology to improve sustainable purchasing by updating the quoting module to allow suppliers to include their ecolabels to better inform purchases, as well as to devise a tool to track unused furniture and avoid overbuying.

The internal launch of the new plan began on April 4th with a panel discussion with over 100 NEORSD staff. Ms. Fechik-Kirk thanked Jacqueline Williams, Manager of Procurement Services, William Baker, Instrument Technician, Brian Flanagan, Renewable Energy Facilities Superintendent, Stacie Hark, Laboratory Data Analyst, Rick Vincent, Manager of Design, and Cindi Deutschman-Ruiz, Internal Communications Lead, for their participation in the panel.

In collaboration with Ms. Deutschman-Ruiz and Christianna Kretschmann, GIS Project Manager, an interactive web-based version of the Sustainability Plan has been developed and added to NEORSD's website.

VI. Open Session

There were no items.

VII. Public Session (any subject matter)

There were no items.

VIII. Executive Session

There were no items.

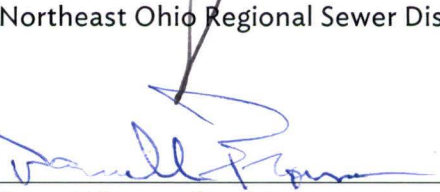
IX. Approval of Items from Executive Session

There were no items.

X. Adjournment

MOTION – President Brown stated business having been concluded, he would entertain a motion to adjourn. Mayor Bacci moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded the motion to adjourn at 1:08 p.m. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.



Timothy J. DeGeeter, Secretary
Board of Trustees
Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

Darnell Brown, President
Board of Trustees
Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District