MINUTES
NORTHEAST OHIO REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
SEPTEMBER 4, 2025

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSD) was called to order at 12:30 p.m. by Ronald Sulik.

I. Roll Call

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

Absent: Darnell Brown

The Secretary informed the Vice 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 August 21, 2025 Board Meeting. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

I. Public Session

John Barber addressed the Board and provided the following statement:

"Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the NEORSD Board this morning. I'm John Barber, the cofounder, with Peggy Spaeth, of the Friends of Lower Lake. We both grew up in Shaker Heights and are residents of Cleveland Heights. The Friends of Lower Lake is a self-administered volunteer program of the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership. Our group is up to 20 volunteers on Sunday mornings comprised of people in ages from 17 to 85 from four cities, alarmed by the lack of care of the vegetation around Lower Lake. We have contributed over 11,000 volunteer hours since 2017 removing invasive plants and planting hundreds of native trees, shrubs and flowering plants.

Our work is stewardship of watershed habitat. Watershed habitat, that's what we're all about. And our volunteers are unanimous in supporting NEORSD's recommendation to restore a free-flowing Doan Brook at Lower Lake. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve the ecological health of the Brook and the cities in our watershed.

Emotions are running high. It's difficult to change emotions with data, with science, but we must. Historic preservationists do not have perspective about ecological history. Only human history. For example, a brook that existed for 10 to 14,000 years prior to the arrival of European settlers preceded the 189-year-old dam and lake. We are dismayed by preservationists' call for somebody else to fund more studies to forestall any action.

NEORSD is called the Sewer District, but we know that it is much more. The Northeast Ohio Watershed District would be a more accurate name. In that spirit, please take more credit, public credit, for the good work that you've done and publicize dramatically the many accomplishments in watershed, in habitat improvement.

At the District your website should be a wash with photos of completed projects and projects in progress. Today we see a beautiful Lower Lake on its surface, but it is heavily contaminated with road salt, silt, infused with chemicals, lawn chemicals and fertilizers, and in the summer starved of oxygen because of temperature. No frogs or salamanders live in or around it. Only a few native species of fish are there in small numbers overwhelmed by introduced invasive common carp.

The lake is very shallow due to silt accumulation from upstream. Trash litters the bottom, as seen when the lake is drained. Primarily thousands of broken glass bottles that make wading in the lake dangerous. Abandoned fishing debris of barbed hooks, lead sinkers, tangles of line and plastic bobbers must be cleared regularly by volunteers to avoid endangering humans, pets and wildlife. The cities don't want to be dam keepers. They're in the maintenance of liability required for having a dam in the middle of a free-flowing brook. All over the world governments are voluntarily removing dams and finding that rivers and brooks recover quickly, both ecologically and aesthetically.

Lastly, post-project maintenance is critical to project success. In today's world, habitat cannot be left; nature to take its course. We can't do that. So, we're on nature's side of the debate. Let's restore a free-flowing brook at Lower Lake. Thank you."

Mr. Sulik thanked Mr. Barber for his comments and thanked his organization for their support. Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells, Chief Executive Officer, echoed Mr. Sulik's sentiments and added that these discussions have been very informative to NEORSD in helping to better understand the issues associated with Lower Lake.

Chief Executive Officer's Report

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells advised that the Ohio Water Environment Association and the Ohio Section of the American Waterworks Association held their annual One Water Conference in Cleveland August 12th through 14th. NEORSD's Operations Challenge team included Dustin Bellanger, Systems Utility Maintenance Person, Greg Lawrence, Plant Utility Maintenance Person, John

McGinnis, Plant Operations Lead Instructor, and Dan Wilkinson, Wastewater Plant Operator C1, and earned second place. The team will compete in the national competition at the Water Environment Federation's Technical Exhibition and Conference (WEFTEC) next month. The Operations Challenge tests wastewater operations and maintenance skills across collection systems, laboratory, process control, and maintenance and safety. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells and Mr. Sulik congratulated the team for a job well done. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells also acknowledged Stephan Janosko, Project Manager III, Steven Schneider, Asset Reliability Manager, and Christine Umerley, Project Manager I, for their presentations at the conference.

During the week of August 18th, there were several opportunities for conversation regarding the updated recommendation to remove Lower Shaker Lake Dam in the Cities of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights, and to restore Doan Brook at that location. As Matt Scharver, Director of Watershed Programs, explained during the August 7th Board meeting, NEORSD has revised its recommendation regarding this ODNR Class 1 high hazard dam based on additional data and opportunities.

On August 18th, Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells participated in a Sound of Ideas Community Tour with Penny Allen, President of Friends of Horseshoe Lake, Peter Bode, President and CEO of the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, and Shaker Heights Mayor David Weiss. The following day, the Sewer District held a webinar providing details of the updated recommendations and potential next steps to the more than 150 attendees. Then on August 20th, NEORSD hosted an in-person open house at the Cleveland Heights Public Library with approximately 100 attendees across the morning and evening sessions. Over the weekend, NEORSD participated in the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership's annual Take to the Lake event at Lower Shaker Lake.

These events provided opportunities for NEORSD to engage with the public and hear their concerns. NEORSD has added informational videos to its website to address questions received from the community and going forward, NEORSD will meet with the Cities of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights to understand how they would like to proceed with the updated recommendation. NEORSD is also finalizing construction agreements with both cities for the Doan Brook Restoration at Horseshoe Park project, which should begin construction in 2026.

On August 28th, Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells joined Governor DeWine, US EPA Region 5 Administrator Ann Vogel, and others to initiate the Gorge Dam Sediment Removal project. The Gorge Dam is in Summit County and is the largest remaining impediment to a free-flowing Cuyahoga River. This event was the official start of efforts to remove approximately 850,000 cubic yards of sediment that have accumulated behind the dam. The project is funded in large part through the Great Lakes Legacy Act, which requires a local match, which NEORSD is contributing to through projects within NEORSD's service area under the Regional Stormwater Management Program.

Mr. Sulik thanked Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells and noted the importance of continued communication with city representatives from Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells agreed and added that NEORSD would be meeting with their staff the following Monday.

Action Items

Authorization to Advertise

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| Resolution No. 194-25 | Authorization to publish notice calling for bids, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 6119.10, for a two-year requirement contract for waste heat boiler repair services at the Renewable Energy Facility, with an estimated probable construction cost of $250,000.00. |

**MOTION** – Ms. Dumas moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 194-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Purchase

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| Resolution No. 195-25 | Authorization to purchase software licensing, maintenance and support services from sole-source vendor ESRI, Inc. for the suite of applications tools comprising the District's Geographic Information System, for the period October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2028, in an amount not-to-exceed $1,297,500.00. |

**MOTION** – Ms. Chambers moved, and Mayor Alai seconded to adopt Resolution No. 195-25. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Sulik noted that NEORSD has used these systems since 2002 and requested a brief explanation of the services provided. Mohan Kurup, Director of Information Technology, explained that the software serves many purposes, which have expanded over the years to include supporting Operation and Maintenance in asset inventory; Watershed Programs in calculating stormwater fees; WQIS in managing industrial customers; Customer Relations in their day-to-day operations; and allows external parties to retrieve data using NEORSD's public-facing website. The software serves multiple purposes District-wide. This renewal is for a three-year period.

Authorization to Enter Into Agreement

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| Resolution No. 196-25 | Authorization to enter into a professional services agreement with HDR Engineering, Inc. for design and construction administration/resident project representation services for the CSO-203 Relocation project in an amount not-to-exceed $1,545,960.00. |
| Resolution No. 197-25 | Authorization to enter into a Cooperation Agreement with the City of Brook Park, City of Middleburg Heights and Cuyahoga County for the construction of the Sheldon Road Profile Raising & Bridge Replacement project, also known as the Abram Creek Flood Reduction project, with a District contribution toward project costs in an amount not-to-exceed $5,002,422.50, combined with $277,913.00 from Middleburg Heights, $439,223.50 from Brook Park, and $1,500,000.00 from Cuyahoga County, for a total project cost not-to-exceed $7,219,559.00. |

**MOTION** – Ms. Dumas moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 196-25. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Sulik requested additional information regarding the project associated with Resolution No. 196-25. Doug Lopata, Program Manager of Planning & Design, explained that the CSO-203 Relocation project will relocate approximately 1,000 feet of corrugated metal pipe from beneath the East 55th Marina and into Lake Erie to a more shallow and easily accessible area along the Metroparks trail south of the marina, while sending flow to the same discharge area as CSO-202, allowing for continued use of the current floatables netting facilities.

Mr. Lopata added that this CSO project itself does not control CSO, that function is performed by the Shoreline Storage Tunnel. Additionally, this project coordinates with the Cleveland Metroparks and Port Authority's CHEERS Project, which is adding fill and soil for their new trails and buildings at the E55th marina.

**MOTION** – Ms. Chambers moved, and Mayor Alai seconded to adopt Resolution No. 197-25. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Sulik asked if the purpose of the project associated with Resolution No. 197-25 is to reduce flooding. Matt Scharver, Director of Watershed Programs, answered affirmatively and explained that there are longstanding flooding problems in the Cities of Brook Park and Middleburg Heights along their municipal split of Sheldon Road. The frequent flooding along Sheldon Road presents a transportation hazard as Abram Creek tries to move past or underneath Sheldon Road.

This project is a collaborative effort between both cities and Cuyahoga County. The project will involve raising the roadway by approximately three and a half feet as well as expanding capacity of the Cuyahoga County-owned culvert crossing, which will now become a bridge crossing. Brook Park will be including additional funding to provide for needed improvements to a local sanitary sewer while the site is under construction. Completion of this project is expected to result in a 100-year flood-resistant level of service.

Authorization to Enter Into Contract

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| Resolution No. 198-25 | Authorization to enter into a three-year requirement contract with Cintas Corporation for uniform services at all District facilities through the Omnia Partners cooperative purchasing program in an amount not-to-exceed $600,000.00. |

**MOTION** – Mayor Bacci moved, and Ms. Chambers seconded to adopt Resolution No. 198-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Amend Resolution

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| Resolution No. 199-25 | Authorization to amend Resolution No. 80-24, adopted March 21, 2024, approving the *"First Amendment to Service Agreement No. 2544 By and Between the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Olmsted Township, and the County of Cuyahoga Providing for the Inclusion of Olmsted Township into the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District"* to amend the District's sanitary service area, to replace the map attached to such resolution as Exhibit "1" with the updated map labeled as "Exhibit 1," as presented. |

**MOTION** – Mayor Alai moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 199-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Hearing Officer Findings and Recommendations

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| Resolution No. 200-25 | Adopting the findings and recommendations of the Hearing Officer regarding the sewer account of Larry Patterson ending in 9161, Sewer District Hearing No. 25-009, that no account adjustments or other actions are necessary. |

**MOTION** – Ms. Dumas moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 200-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Assist Member Communities in Project Nominations and Seeking Funding

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| Resolution No. 201-25 | Authorization to assist member communities Cleveland Heights, Parma Heights, Parma, and East Cleveland in nominating projects to the Ohio EPA for Supplemental Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funding, as presented, and authorization of the CEO to substitute, add to, or remove from the presented projects list, if necessary, all at no cost to the District. |

**MOTION** – Mayor Bacci moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded to adopt Resolution No. 201-25. Without objection, by roll-call vote, with all present members voting yes, and recusal from discussion and abstention from voting by Mayor DeGeeter, the motion carried.

II. Information Items

There were no items.

III. Open Session

There were no items.

IV. Public Session (any subject matter)

There were no items.

V. Executive Session

There were no items.

VI. Approval of Items from Executive Session

There were no items.

VII. Adjournment

**MOTION** – Vice President Sulik stated business having been concluded, he would entertain a motion to adjourn. Mayor Bacci moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded the motion to adjourn at 12:52 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