

MINUTES
NORTHEAST OHIO REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
OCTOBER 16, 2025

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

I. Roll Call

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

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 October 2, 2025 Board Meeting. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

I. Public Session

There were no items.

II. Chief Executive Officer's Report

Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells, Chief Executive Officer, advised the Board of Trustees that On October 4th, NEORS joined colleagues from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Lake Erie Commission, and Cleveland Metroparks for Sturgeon Fest 2025. More than 1400 people attended the event at Rivergate Park to release 750 juvenile lake sturgeons into the Cuyahoga River. This is a significant milestone to celebrate the recovery of the river which is now clean enough to support this endangered fish species. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells read a quote that John Navarro of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources gave at the event: "The biggest thing (it led to) was the Clean Water Act, and that's exactly why we're here because we're not dumping our sewage into rivers anymore. I really appreciate wastewater treatment plants. Unsung heroes because that's why this thing is so clean". In total, more than 2,000 juvenile sturgeons were released across three Cuyahoga River locations. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells expressed appreciation to the Cleveland

Metroparks for organizing the event and to NEORSD's Water Quality and Industrial Surveillance staff that participated in the event.

On October 7th NEORSD hosted its annual Service Awards in recognition of current and former employees for their dedication and service. NEORSD recognized 22 recent retirees and 83 current employees for their milestones ranging from 5 to 35 years of service. Additionally, Constance Haqq, Chief Administrative Officer, received the Lifetime Achievement Award for her work with NEORSD since 2005. Ms. Haqq's work has shaped NEORSD's role in the community as she continues to advocate for engagement ensuring that employees and customers understand the work of NEORSD in the community.

The Service Awards also provided an opportunity to recognize the passing of Jacqueline Muhammad, who served as Director of Government and Customer Relations. NEORSD was honored that Ms. Muhammad's family attended and her husband, Minister Roland Muhammad, spoke about her powerful force.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells thanked C'yona Edwards, Wastewater Operator In Training, and Bruce Haughawout, Assistant Superintendent of Plants, for MCing the evening, Angela Smith, Employee Engagement Specialist, and the Service Awards Committee for organizing the event, and the Board for their attendance.

Last week was Customer Service Week, recognized nationwide, to highlight the work of customer service staff. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells acknowledged Pauletta Hubbard, Senior Manager of Customer Relations, and her staff for their efforts. NEORSD's Customer Relations Department has a one-call resolution rate of 87% and 90% of all calls are answered within the first 20 seconds. The Customer Relations staff not only answers the phones but attends community events and assists customers during the monthly Saturday hours and at each Utility Assistance Resource Fair.

Action Items

Authorization to Advertise

Resolution No. 235-25	Authorization to publish notice calling for bids, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 6119.10, for the purchase of one watercraft vessel, with an estimated probable cost of \$200,000.00.
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MOTION – Ms. Dumas moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 235-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Enter Into Agreement

Resolution No. 236-25 Authorization to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with Ohio Council 8 and Local Union 2798, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO (AFSCME), substantially in the form presented, to temporarily suspend certain language in Article 20.2, *Hybrid Shifts/Combination of Permanent Shifts*, of the current collective bargaining agreement between the District and AFSCME, and to temporarily address staffing challenges by providing an alternative crew structure at all District wastewater treatment plants.

Resolution No. 237-25 Authorization to award the following agreements for 2026 employee benefits, with two additional one-year options to renew the agreements for 2027 and 2028:

- MedMutual Life Insurance Co: \$1,000,000.00 for Group Life, Accidental Death & Dismemberment, and Short-Term Disability Insurance;
- Medical Mutual of Ohio: \$1,900,000.00 for Administrative Fees and Stop-Loss Coverage;
- Medical Mutual Services, LLC: \$14,000,000.00 for Medical, Prescription, Vision, and Hearing Claims Projection;
- Delta Dental: \$485,000.00 for Dental Claims and Administration Fees Projection,

For a total amount, for all agreements combined, not-to-exceed \$17,385,000.00.

MOTION –Ms. Chambers moved, and Mr. Sulik seconded to adopt Resolution Nos. 236-25 through 237-25. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

President Brown requested an explanation as to the necessity of the scheduling changes related to Resolution No. 236-25. Frank Foley, Director of Operation and Maintenance, explained that prior to 2024, all wastewater treatment plants had a shift arrangement of four crews, each on a permanent rotating shift schedule. During negotiations for the last collective bargaining agreement, NEORS D agreed to a hybrid schedule where there would be one straight night crew, one straight day crew, and two rotating crews at each plant. The crews are assigned by seniority, which has led to the more senior operators tending to be on the straight shifts and the less senior operators tending to be on the rotating shifts. Additionally, it seems that the more senior operators are more willing to accept overtime for open shifts. The proposed revision does not change the

number of operators; rather, it is an attempt to spread out seniority. Rather than having four crews at each plant, there will be eight smaller crews. Mr. Foley provided a graphic demonstrating the proposed changes.

President Brown asked, regarding Resolution No. 237-25, whether there is anything to note in terms of changes to coverage. Jeremy Short, Director of Human Resources, explained that the benefits team regularly reviews the benefits to ensure that NEORSD's offerings to employees are competitive. It was determined that no substantive changes were necessary for 2026, and the overall cost increase is \$85,000 from the prior year, which is consistent with the market. Mr. Short invited Kyle Cooke, Director of Health and Benefits for Willis Towers Watson, to provide additional explanation.

Mr. Cooke provided a brief presentation explaining the bidding process for NEORSD's various benefits programs and after review, it was determined that it was most advantageous to remain with the incumbent carriers in terms of cost and member disruption. Rate guarantees were secured for the following three years, if NEORSD chooses to opt in for years two and three, with the exception of stop-loss coverage, which is typically a 12-month contract.

Mr. Cooke provided a graphic demonstrating the costs of the various coverages for 2025 and 2026 and explained that rates went down during the RFP process, with a decrease of \$55,000 in administration fees, medical, vision, hearing and stop-loss, for an overall increase of \$85,000 for all coverages for 2026.

Mr. Cooke further discussed the types of coverage and their associated costs as well as future projections. Willis Towers Watson is projecting a 9.9% increase in healthcare costs from 2025 to 2026, and a 1.5% decrease in dental coverage costs over the same period.

Authorization to Enter Into Contract

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| Resolution No. 238-25 | Authorization to enter into a two-year requirement contract with Ohio Bulk Transfer Co., Inc. for grit and screenings removal services in an amount not to-exceed \$1,244,841.45. |
| Resolution No. 239-25 | Authorization to enter into eighteen-month requirement contracts with Henderson Contracting for snow removal services at GJM (Bid Group 1) and EMSC (Bid Group 2) in an amount not-to-exceed \$88,000.00 and with Pirc Company for snow removal services at pump stations and outlying facilities (Bid Group 3) in an amount not-to-exceed \$132,677.40, for a total amount not-to-exceed \$220,677.40 for both contracts. |

MOTION – Mr. Sulik moved, and Ms. Chambers seconded to adopt Resolution Nos. 238-25 through 239-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Amend Agreement

Resolution No. 240-25 Authorization to amend Agreement No. 3887 with Cuyahoga County for the County's disposal of grit at the Southerly Wastewater Treatment Center to extend the term of the agreement by one year through October 31, 2026, and to decrease the disposal rate paid to the District from \$179.98 per ton of grit to \$172.78 per ton of grit, effective November 1, 2025, and to \$175.00 per ton of grit effective January 1, 2026, with no change to the total agreement amount.

MOTION – Ms. Chambers moved, and Mayor Alai seconded to adopt Resolution No. 240-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Close Out Contract

Resolution No. 241-25 Authorizing the Final Adjusting Change Order to close out Public Improvement Contract No. 23003332 with Mark Haynes Construction, Inc. for the West Creek Stabilization in Brooklyn Heights project to decrease the contract amount by \$1,374,925.47, thereby bringing the total contract amount to \$13,504,068.03.

MOTION – Mayor Bacci moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded to adopt Resolution No 241-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Grant Credit

Resolution No. 242-25 Authorizing the District to issue a credit adjustment in the total amount of \$38,248.87 against sewer charges on the account ending in 6113 to Karen Butler Banks, 4823 East 135th Street, Garfield Heights.

MOTION – Ms. Dumas moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 242-25. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

III. Information Items

Robin Rupe, Director of Engineering and Construction, provided the Capital Improvement Program update for September 2025, beginning with cashflow. Cashflow is at 90% of planned for the year, with a total expenditure of \$169.1 million to date.

As for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the Southerly Regulators and Relief Sewers project met both of its design KPIs with the lowest three bids within 10% of the engineer's estimate and the construction contract was awarded within 60 days of planned.

The Pearl and Jennings Storage Tank and Pump Station Upgrades project did not meet the KPI of closing within 95% of the original contract; however, the Business Opportunity Program (BOP) goals of 15% MBE/WBE and 5% SBE were exceeded at 18.99% and 5.17% respectively. Change orders for the project totaled \$3.2 million, primarily due to differing and unforeseen site conditions.

The Southerly Chemically Enhanced High-Rate Treatment Facility project construction contract was closed within 95% of original meeting that KPI. The BOP SBE goal was not met but the MBE/WBE goal of 15% was exceeded with an actual of 15.94%. Work orders for the project were primarily due to owner requested changes, in attempt to right size the existing system.

Ms. Rupe provided a video skit demonstrating a very large crane at the Southerly WWTC, which is visible from I-77 and I-480. The crane is in place for the Southerly Primary Heat Exchange Replacement project, providing improvements to the Renewable Energy Facility (REF).

Ms. Rupe provided photographs of the three existing fluidized bed incinerators (FBI) within the REF, as well as the primary heat exchanger, which preheats the fluidized air before it enters into the wind box and then into the fluidized bed incinerator. On this project, the primary heat exchanger at FBI#1 is being replaced along with some fittings and piping. The intent is that the old primary heat exchanger will be refurbished and reinstalled. This process of removing and replacing equipment is challenging, as there is only a small hatch in the roof of a 12-square-foot room from which to remove and repair the equipment. Ms. Rupe provided additional photographs of the project area and explained that some of the equipment is very large, weighing up to 30 tons.

NEORS will request permission from the Board next year to approve a contract for the construction contract to reinstall the refurbished equipment.

IV. Open Session

There were no items.

V. Public Session (any subject matter)

There were no items.

VI. Executive Session

Mayor Bacci, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22 (G)(1) and (G)(3), moved, and Mayor DeGeeter seconded, to enter into executive session to consider the appointment, employment or compensation of public employees, and to consult with the District's legal counsel concerning disputes involving the District that are the subject of pending and imminent court action. By roll call vote, the Board voted unanimously to enter into executive session at 1:00 p.m.

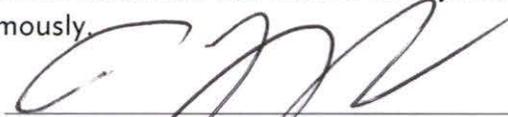
The Board returned to open session at 2:01 p.m.

VII. Approval of Items from Executive Session

There were no items.

VIII. 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 2:02 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