

MINUTES
NORTHEAST OHIO REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
JUNE 4, 2026

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
Samuel Alai
Jack Bacci
Sharon Dumas

Absent: Marjorie Chambers

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

II. Approval of Minutes

MOTION – Mayor Bacci moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded, to approve the Minutes of the May 21, 2026 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, advised the Board of Trustees that on May 14th two NEORS D Green Infrastructure Grant Program projects were recognized in the 2025 Green Building Challenge, hosted by the Cleveland 2030 District, which honors high performing construction and renovation projects across Northeast Ohio based on energy, water, transportation, and healthy building performance. The Green Infrastructure Grant Program is limited to the combined sewer portion of the Sewer District's service area to reduce stormwater entering the combined system by working with development projects to install permeable pavers and other retention and on-site stormwater management practices.

The Garfield Boulevard Green Infrastructure project received the Water Conservation and Management Award and the University Circle, Inc. Headquarters project on Magnolia Drive

received an honorable mention in the same category. The Garfield Boulevard project is a complete street design with 12 bioretention cells capturing an estimated 1.2 million gallons of stormwater annually in the combined portion of the Mill Creek Watershed. The project spans one mile of Garfield Boulevard between Warner and Turney Roads. The UCI project transformed the existing University Circle, Inc. headquarters parking lot into permeable pavers, disconnected roof drainage and included a fully integrated stormwater management system that is capturing 415,000 gallons of runoff annually in the combined portion of the Doan Brook Watershed.

The total NEORSD investment was \$850,000, and it supported almost \$5 million in public development projects through these two Green Infrastructure Grant Program projects. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells thanked Jessica Cotton, Funding Programs Administrator, and Keith McClintock, Manager of Watershed Funding Programs, for their work supporting these projects.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells invited Mike Uva, Communications Productions Lead, to discuss an upcoming public art partnership with LandStudio, at the Westerly Wastewater Treatment Center.

Mr. Uva explained that in January, LandStudio, a local arts organization, reached out to NEORSD to gauge interest in collaborating on a public art project. The Ohio Historical Society asked LandStudio to commission a mural honoring the historic Hulett iron ore unloaders, electric powered machines which were invented in Ohio and revolutionized iron ore transport on the Great Lakes. Cleveland had four Huletts operating along the shore of Lake Erie at Whiskey Island for much of the 20th Century before they were decommissioned in 2000.

Several locations were explored for the mural project and NEORSD's Westerly WWTC was appealing due to its proximity to Lake Erie, its visibility from the Memorial Shoreway, and because before the Huletts were demolished, they were visible from Westerly. Additionally, the building has existing frame mounts from an earlier banner. The mural will not be painted directly on the building but rather mounted on the frames.

An internal selection committee selected Cleveland native Jerome T. White, whose art can be seen around the City, including at Hopkins International Airport, to create the mural, which will be on display for a minimum of three years at no cost to NEORSD. Mr. Uva thanked Travis Pitts, Superintendent of Plants, and his team at Westerly for their input and assistance in the process.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells thanked Mr. Uva and noted that he leads many of NEORSD's public art conversations and has many partnerships in the community.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells then invited Matt Scharver, Director of Watershed Programs, to address the issues raised at the prior Board meeting.

Mr. Scharver began by providing a map outlining the location of the Doan Brook Watershed and the three featured problem areas of University Circle, Lower Shaker Lake, and the Doan Brook

Restoration Project area at Horseshoe Park, followed by a graphic demonstrating the 42% impervious surface area contained within the watershed. This impervious surface area creates a tremendous amount of stormwater runoff, which impacts NEORSD's decision making process in attempting to address the existing stormwater problems in the area.

Mr. Scharver shared renderings of the Doan Brook Restoration at Horseshoe Park project and explained that the Cities of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights are responsible for the approximately \$7.1 million in park amenities included in this project. NEORSD's project will deliver 7,662 feet of stream restoration, approximately 5,700 feet of which is perennial stream, combined with the restoration of 10.61 acres of wetlands, and reconnecting 8.5 acres of floodplain.

Mr. Scharver then provided an update regarding the mechanism change to the project's permitting activities and explained that the Doan Brook Restoration at Horseshoe Park project will now require a Standard or Individual Section 404 Permit, not a Nationwide 27 Permit. This will also require the Sewer District to apply for a State of Ohio individual Section 401 Water Quality Certification Permit from Ohio EPA. A public notice was issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on May 26th, and public comments are due June 25th for the Section 404 Permit with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Ohio EPA will also be issuing a public notice and a public comment process shortly.

Regarding the Lower Shaker Lake, as to the entities involved, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) is the dam regulator responsible for enforcing dam compliance; the Cities of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights are the dam operators and are required to comply with ODNR's standards; City of Cleveland is the property owner and has provided a long-term lease to the Cities of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights; and NEORSD provides some resources to address the public safety issues through its Regional Stormwater Management Program.

The Lower Lake Dam has been out of compliance since 1979, inasmuch as it does not pass the probable maximum flood event, only passing 2% of the required 100% per ODNR standards. This dam presents a significant public safety hazard. A catastrophic failure would cause significant property damage and most likely loss of life in the downstream area. Accordingly, ODNR's requirement is that the dam must either be reconstructed or removed.

Although in 2021 NEORSD's recommendation was to reconstruct the dam in order to meet ODNR requirements, NEORSD changed its recommendation in 2025, to instead remove the dam and restore Doan Brook within the Lower Lake park area. The updated recommendation was a result of better data, a more complete understanding of the watershed's hydrology, and the improved conveyance opportunity that NEORSD is working to achieve through its partnership with the Cleveland Museum of Art as the landholder entity, via a culvert to address flooding in University Circle and improve conveyance in the watershed overall.

The next steps going forward include continued outreach and discussion regarding the Lower Lake Dam with the Cities of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights; continued predesign activities for

the University Circle Culvert at the Cleveland Museum of Art; and to complete the permitting process for the Doan Brook Restoration at Horseshoe Park before beginning that project's construction in Q1 2027.

V. Action Items

Authorization to Issue Request for Proposal (RFP)

Resolution No. 89-26	Authorization to issue an RFP, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Chapter 6119, to implement the 2027 Green Infrastructure Grant Program for the Combined Sewer Area.
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MOTION –Mayor Alai moved, and Mr. Sulik seconded to adopt Resolution No. 89-26. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

President Brown requested additional information regarding the Green Infrastructure Grant (GIG) Program and its allocation of funds.

Mr. Scharver explained that since its inception, \$18 million has been invested, resulting in the capture of 41 million gallons of stormwater annually, across the nearly 100 GIG projects completed, across 71 square miles of combined sewer area. These projects are separate from the Consent Decree projects such as the large tunnel projects completed by the Engineering and Construction Department; however, they are very important to the reduction of stormwater runoff into the combined sewer system. NEORSD partners with an array of municipal, private, and community development corporations in the City of Cleveland to award funds for these projects.

The program has continued to evolve since its inception in 2014. It allows for the first-year maintenance to be paid for under the GIG program. Available 2027 project funding is \$2 million. Year over year totals of annual stormwater runoff treatment or reduction have been averaging close to 2 million gallons of annual runoff reduction. Generally, the schedule is to release the RFP in June and return to the Board in December to award the grants.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells added that there has been misinformation circulating that there is a connection between NEORSD's work on the Doan Brook Restoration at Horseshoe Park project and green infrastructure. They are completely unrelated. The Doan Brook Restoration at Horseshoe Park project is a stream restoration project funded through NEORSD's Regional Stormwater Management Program and has no combined sewer overflow control connection and is in no way related to NEORSD's Green Infrastructure Grant Program or NEORSD's green infrastructure requirements under the CSO Consent Decree.

Authorization to Purchase

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| Resolution No. 90-26 | Authorization to purchase as-needed replacement parts used in Moyno equipment repairs at all District wastewater treatment plants and collection systems, from sole source supplier Schultz Fluid Handling, in a total amount not-to-exceed \$350,000.00. |
| Resolution No. 91-26 | Authorization to purchase annual software maintenance and support services from sole source vendor UKG, Inc. for the Integrated Human Resources Information System, for the period July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029, in an amount not-to-exceed \$1,568,179.21. |

MOTION – Mr. Sulik moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded to adopt Resolution Nos. 90-26 through 91-26. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

President Brown requested additional information regarding the contract associated with Resolution No. 91-26.

Mohan Kurup, Director of Information Technology, explained that UKG has been in use at NEORSD for a number of years and while NEORSD has been paying for it on an annual basis, it is switching to a three-year contract term. The program provides several services to the Human Resources Department, including payroll, money management, and position management. The UKG platform is undergoing an upgrade, and HR has been happy with the platform's improvements. Moving to a three-year enrollment period provides cost savings with a 0% increase in fees for 2027, followed by a 5% annual cost increase thereafter.

Authorization to Enter Into Agreement

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| Resolution No. 92-26 | Authorization to enter into a General Engineering Services – Wastewater Collections (GES-18) professional services agreement with HDR Engineering, Inc. for task-order based, as needed, professional engineering services for the Engineering and Construction Department, in an amount not-to-exceed \$3,000,000.00. |
| Resolution No. 93-26 | Authorization to enter into an Electric Service Extension agreement with The Illuminating Company – A FirstEnergy Corporation (CEI), to provide temporary high voltage electric power at the main mining site for the District's Big Creek Tunnel project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$828,821.56. |

MOTION – Ms. Dumas moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution Nos. 92-26 through 93-26. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

President Brown requested additional information regarding the General Engineering Services (GES) provided under Resolution No. 92-26.

Robin Rupe, Director of Engineering and Construction, explained that this GES contract is for collections system work and focuses primarily on items related to hydraulic modeling, flow monitoring, and improvements for smaller design and construction items in the collections system. The Engineering and Construction Department has identified several items that will be included under this contract and as such, is confident that between issuing the items identified as well as items in the foreseeable future, the Department will be able to work with the consultant to achieve the goal of 25% participation of Small Business Enterprise firms over the course of the three-year, \$3 million contract duration.

Authorization to Distribute

Resolution No. 94-26	Authorization to submit to all Member Communities the proposed changes to Titles I and V of the District's <i>Code of Regulations</i> , reflecting proposed sewer and stormwater rate adjustments for Years 2027-2031 and including several other non-rate changes in Title I, all as presented.
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MOTION – Mayor Bacci moved, and Mayor Alai seconded to adopt Resolution No. 94-26. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

President Brown requested an explanation of the level of effort taken and next steps in making these changes and recommendations.

Ken Duplay, Chief Financial Officer, explained that the rate study process began last fall, with NEORSD staff working with Stantec Consulting Services to develop the proposed rates for the period 2027 through 2031. Those proposed rate increases were presented to the Board at the April 7, 2026 Special Meeting and following detailed discussion, the final proposals were presented to the Board on May 7th.

The proposed rate increases include a 2% annual increase to the sanitary sewer rates, based upon the needs of the wastewater system, inflationary pressures, salaries, wages, and chemicals, as well as the capital program driving the need, including the final years of significant Consent Decree project costs. The stormwater program is completely cash-funded and has slightly different needs, which are more impacted by inflation and construction. The proposed increase for these rates will be 4% for the years 2027 and 2028, followed by a 3.5% increase for the years 2029 through 2031.

This will raise the typical residential customer's bill by approximately \$1.85 per month annually over the five years.

Mr. Duplay introduced Nichole Oocumma, Chief Administrative Officer, to discuss recent outreach activities.

Ms. Oocumma advised that NEORD hosted four in-person and two virtual meetings for the public during the week of May 18th, with staff from across NEORSD departments to be available to answer questions from the public. The in-person meetings were held on the east side and west side, with day and evening hours to accommodate as many people as possible. Additionally, staff from the Finance Department and Business Opportunity Program partnered with Stantec Consulting to offer a session for the industrial users. Finally, employee sessions were held at each NEORSD site to ensure staff had access to information related to the rate setting process and the impact of rates on the budgets. The Communications team promoted the public sessions and shared rate information on social media. Overall, 46 NEORSD staff members from various departments participated in these sessions, including having Customer Relations staff on hand to provide information regarding cost savings programs.

Mr. Duplay summarized that the purpose of this resolution is to request authorization to present the proposed changes to the member communities to Title I and Title V as it relates to the 2027 through 2031 rate changes, as well as the proposed changes to Title I that were presented at the May 21 Board meeting.

Mr. Duplay explained that he and Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells would be presenting an overview of the rate study and recommendations to the Suburban Council of Governments on June 5th. It is anticipated that staff will return to the Board on July 16th to request approval of the rate changes, following the public notice period.

President Brown thanked NEORSD staff for their work throughout the rate study process and expressed appreciation for their being employee sessions at each of NEORSD's facilities to discuss rate setting, as it is important for staff to understand what happens with the funds paid by ratepayers.

President Brown urged NEORSD to remain cognizant of the fact that not everyone understands how funding works at NEORSD and may not understand that a healthy cash balance for sanitary sewer does not equate to funding for stormwater projects, as those are separate budgets and funding sources. For example, there may be \$43 million for stormwater funding in a given year, which seems like a substantial sum, but there is \$1 billion in project needs in the region, necessitating the prioritization of projects. It is important that such information is disseminated to the community.

VI. Information Items

Mr. Kurup provided the June 2026 Information Technology Update, beginning with completed projects. Mr. Kurup provided a slide listing nine completed IT projects, including work with the Risk and Assurance Department to implement a risk manager module within the Diligent software platform; the completion of a member community access page with updated information regarding NEORSD's various grant programs; and implementing a hearing request form for customers to request a hearing directly through NEORSD's website.

Mr. Kurup provided a slide listing 16 ongoing projects, which include the ongoing UKG update including upgrading all timeclocks; updates to the programs that weigh trucks hauling waste and track fuel usage; a Cherwell replacement project; and several internal infrastructure projects.

The IT Department continues to assist in community engagements but providing technical support for Utility Assistance Resource Fairs and other outreach events. Additionally, IT has continued its collaboration with Trinity High School for their pre-professional internship program. September 2025, guided student intern Micaiah Hall through the internal infrastructure track, where she was exposed to a wide variety of activities to help her identify her professional interests within IT.

Mr. Kurup went through ongoing projects in more detail including the UKG updates with improved employee app access; a centralized training budget app for the HR Department; certificate of insurance tracking; Wi-Fi expansion at the WWTPs; improved paging systems at the WWTPs; and significant efforts to transition from the Cherwell system to Ivanti.

Regarding technical support, as of May 13th, there were 4,855 service tickets, with approximately 73% being service requests and 27% being incident requests. The volume of tickets is typical.

Mr. Kurup provided a slide demonstrating database system availability performance across NEORSD locations with an average fleet uptime of 99.9%, which is no small feat, given the extensive databases and number of applications.

Customer satisfaction surveys year-to-date are a small data set but have a perfect score of 5.0.

VII. Open Session

There were no items.

VIII. Public Session (any subject matter)

Gail Bromley provided the following statement to the Board:

“Good afternoon, President Brown and members of the Board. Thank you for having us. He’s always helpful, thanks for that presentation, Matt. Is it possible to get a copy of that, of the PowerPoint?”

“I think that you may or may not know that we had significant changes in the lower lake area just recently. The Lower Lake is as low as I’ve ever seen it in the several decades that I’ve lived there and the community is stunned. It’s very concerning. And it’s very concerning for the wildlife.

“Furthermore, there are many trees that have been downed on North Park and Coventry and there are other areas. I’m curious to know if anybody knows anything about that from the Sewer District.

“I’m also intrigued to hear that there will be people from Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights on planning sessions with the Sewer District. Can you share with us who those people are from the respective cities? You mentioned that you’re going to have planning sessions.”

Mr. Scharver explained that NEORSD and the cities are not having planning sessions, but there is ongoing communication as the cities perform their due diligence.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells clarified that the Cities of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights are performing their own internal decision-making process on how to meet their responsibilities to address ODNR compliance issues at Lower Lake dam and NEORSD is supporting the respective mayors and their teams as requested .

Ms. Bromley asked, “...with regard to what is going on, are there plans, are there contracts in place from now until 2027 that are going to be acted on in the historic Shaker Lakes Parkland area?”

Mr. Scharver explained that the Cities of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights are the dam tenders and their responsibilities include monitoring rain events to ensure that the dams operate as intended during rain events. Over the Memorial Day weekend, there was rain in excess of one inch predicted in the weather forecast. Accordingly, the Cleveland Heights Public Works Department operated the dam valve at Lower Lake to lower water levels in anticipation of the rain events to prevent flooding. The valve was closed after the holiday weekend, and the Lake’s level has returned to its normal water elevation.

Ms. Bromley asked who is responsible for the valve. Mr. Scharver explained that it is the Cities of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights. Ms. Bromley indicated that there seems to have been a change in the procedure regarding the valve. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells explained that NEORSD is unaware of any changes to protocols and related questions should be directed to the Cities.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells added that, as was previously discussed, NEORSD does not have any knowledge regarding tree clearing at Lower Lake and has no active projects at that location. NEORSD’s only active project in the area is the Doan Brook Restoration at Horseshoe Park.

President Brown added that the necessity of lowering the lake's water levels in advance of a rain event is to create capacity and prevent overtopping and added that there was much discussion around this topic in the community. Mr. Scharver agreed and added that operation of the valve lowers the surface water elevation to prevent overtopping because it is an earthen dam and once overtopping occurs, there is a risk of erosion of the embankment and failure of the dam leading to a catastrophic flooding event.

IX. Executive Session

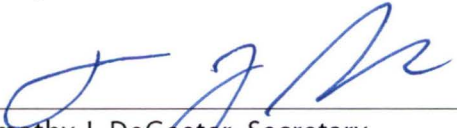
There were no items.

X. Approval of Items from Executive Session

There were no items.

XI. 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 1:33 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