

MINUTES
NORTHEAST OHIO REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
JULY 20, 2023

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 Ronald Sulik.

I. Roll Call

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

Absent: Darnell Brown
Marjorie Chambers

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

II. Approval of Minutes

MOTION – Ms. Dumas moved, and Mayor Alai seconded to approve the Minutes of the July 6, 2023 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 that on June 28, NEORS hosted a tour of the Edgewater CSO and the Westerly Wastewater Treatment Center for the ACE Mentor Program students. The program prepares students for careers in architecture, construction, and engineering and NEORS has partnered with the program for 12 years. Staff from the Sewer System Maintenance and Operation, Engineering and Construction, and Government Affairs departments joined the students on the tour.

Last week, Robin Halperin, Manager of Environmental Health and Safety, and Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells attended the NACWA Utility Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting in Louisville. The conference discussions focused on the need to communicate with customers about the ongoing infrastructure maintenance needs and expense, efforts by some regional EPA offices to include

climate resiliency topics in NPDES permits, as well as the Supreme Court's recent ruling on Waters of the U.S. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells and Ms. Halperin had conversations with the EPA's Office of Wastewater Management staff who attended the meeting. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells was elected as Secretary of NACWA's Executive Committee. NEORS D continues its efforts as part of NACWA's Affordability Taskforce to promote the need to permanently fund the Low-Income Household Water Affordability program (LIHWAP). The program was temporarily funded through the COVID-19 pandemic, however, with the debt ceiling agreement, there is no permanent funding for the next two years. The NACWA Affordability Taskforce is analyzing information from states that were successful in distributing the funding to their customers and the impact of the funding, versus those states that did not take full advantage of the LIHWAP money. These efforts are ongoing and there is discussion about potentially moving to a state-by-state basis for LIHWAP funding.

NEORS D hosted two utility assistance resource fairs on Friday, July 14th and Saturday, July 15th in the cities of Cleveland Heights and University Heights. This is the second year of hosting the fairs to assist customers with financial assistance for water, sewer, stormwater, gas, and electric bills. Friday's event was the third fair for 2023, and the first held during the week for those who could not attend on a weekend. There were 74 customers in attendance on Friday and 178 customers attended on Saturday. The next utility assistance resource fair will be held July 29 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the Gunning Recreation Center. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells thank District staff for their participation and great customer service.

Mr. Sulik noted that Constance Haqq, Chief Administration Officer, will continue working on programs to help those in the community that are in need.

V. Action Items

Authorization to Advertise

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| Resolution No. 189-23 | Authorization to publish notice calling for bids, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 6119.10, for a 12-month requirement contract for the delivery of up to 7,441,500 wet pounds of sodium hypochlorite solution to all District Wastewater Treatment Plants with an anticipated expenditure of \$990,000.00. |
| Resolution No. 190-23 | Authorization to publish notice calling for bids, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 6119.10, for the George J. McMonagle East Side Second Floor Carpet Replacement project with an anticipated expenditure of \$70,000.00. |

Resolution No. 191-23 Authorization to publish notice calling for bids, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 6119.10, for the purchase of a deaerator tank package for the Easterly Wastewater Treatment Plant headworks building boiler system with an anticipated expenditure of \$130,000.00.

Resolution No. 192-23 Authorization to publish notice calling for bids, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 6119.10, for the REF Steam Sample Panel Replacement project with an anticipated expenditure of \$650,000.00.

Resolution No. 193-23 Authorization to publish notice calling for bids, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 6119.10, for construction of the Mill Creek Culverted Stream Rehabilitation Package 1 project with an anticipated expenditure of \$1,203,000.00.

Resolution No. 194-23 Authorization to publish notice calling for bids, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 6119.10, for the Southerly Skimmings Decant and Storage Facility AHU Replacement project with an anticipated expenditure of \$750,000.00.

MOTION – Mayor Alai moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution Nos. 189-23 through 194-22. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Issue Request for Proposals (RFP)

Resolution No. 195-23 Authorization to issue an RFP, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Chapter 6119, for Computer-Based Training Module Design, Development, and Maintenance for OEPA Contact Hour Training Courses.

Resolution No. 196-23 Authorization to issue an RFP, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Chapter 6119, for professional services and equipment for the Westerly Wireless Tunnel project.

Resolution No. 197-23 Authorization to issue an RFP, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Chapter 153, for the Mill Creek Interceptor and Tunnel Capacity Optimization Study.

MOTION – Ms. Dumas moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution Nos. 195-23 through 197-23. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Sulik noted that 196-23, authorization to issue an RFP for the Westerly Wireless Tunnel project, appears to be a safety program for staff working in the tunnels. Mohan Kurup, Director of Information and Technology, explained that this is the first project of its kind because NEORSD does not have good internet, wireless, cellphone, and security walkie-talkie coverage in the tunnels for safety and security, but expanded coverage is also necessary in order for NEORSD staff to properly utilize iPads and other electronic devices.

Mr. Kurup explained that expanded coverage will be achieved with a system called Distributed Antenna System (DAS), and once it works properly at the Westerly Wastewater Treatment Center, it will be implemented in all NEORSD tunnel systems.

Mr. Sulik requested additional information regarding the project associated with Resolution No. 197-23. Doug Gabriel, Deputy Director of Engineering and Construction, explained that the project will assess how to increase the level of service within the Mill Creek system that would then allow the tributary communities to move forward with recommendations that were made in the recently completed Local Sewer System Evaluation Study (LSSES). There is limited capacity within the system due to a collapse in the section of the Mill Creek Interceptor that occurred in 2006. The study will provide a project definition memo that can be utilized to assist the District with the development of future design and construction contracts.

Authorization to Enter Into Agreement

Resolution No. 198-23	Authorization to enter into a professional services agreement with Cuyahoga Community College to administer the District's Maintenance Training Program curriculum for the Cycle 4 cohort through December 2027, in an amount not-to-exceed \$130,000.00.
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MOTION – Mayor Bacci moved, and Mayor Alai seconded to adopt Resolution No. 198-23. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Amend Agreement

Resolution No. 199-23

Authorization to amend Agreement No. 3163, the “*Great Lakes Legacy Act Project Agreement between the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency for the Remedial Design of the Cuyahoga River Gorge Dam GLLA Contaminated Sediment Project*”, to add FirstEnergy Corporation and Ohio Edison Company as non-federal sponsors of the Project, and to add the implementation of certain remedial action to address the contaminated sediment at the Project, and to increase by \$7,300,000.00 the District’s cost share toward the Project through in-kind credit for non-federal habitat restoration work already under design or construction with District Regional Stormwater Management Program funding, for an amended District in-kind credit total of \$8,300,000.00, and to increase the estimated Project costs by \$175,320,624.00 to account for construction costs, for a new Estimated Total Project Cost of \$180,599,905.00, at no direct cost to the District.

MOTION – Mayor Alai moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 199-23. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Sulik requested additional information regarding the project associated with Resolution No. 199-23. Frank Greenland, Director of Watershed Programs, reminded the Board that they had previously authorized the in-kind support for the design of the project. The Gorge River Dam is the last remaining dam on the Cuyahoga River between Lake Erie and upstream. It is an important project with respect to removal of the Cuyahoga River from an area of concern in the Great Lakes. The location of the Gorge Dam creates pooling behind the dam and there is a significant amount of sediment in that area. The project is moving from the design phase into construction to remove the 58-foot-high dam and address excessive sediment. The majority of the cost of the project will be attributed to sediment removal. This is a 35% cost-share, local cost-share project with a Federal contribution of 65%. Because NEORSD does projects in the Cuyahoga River area of concern with the stormwater program that improves stream health, habitat, and fish and bug communities, these projects count toward the in-kind match. The District’s in-kind amount is being raised to reflect the total design and construction costs for the Gorge Dam Removal project and some of the applicable District projects are already underway as a part of NEORSD’s stormwater project schedule. There is no additional cost to NEORSD, and the requested agreement amendment is to memorialize the changes to the agreement.

Mr. Sulik further inquired whether Mr. Greenland knew the timeline for the overall project and Mr. Greenland stated that he does not, but that once the project is complete, possibly in 2028, there may be a petition to delist the Cuyahoga River as an area of concern.

Authorization to Enter Into Contract

Resolution No. 200-23 Authorization to enter into a contract with Ohio Paving & Construction Co., Inc. for paving services at the Southerly Wastewater Treatment Center, in an amount not-to-exceed \$182,169.87.

MOTION –Ms. Dumas moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 200-23. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

VI. Information Items

Mr. Gabriel provided the June 2023 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) update, beginning with contract management. NEORS D has 69 active contracts, for a total value of approximately \$766 million, one third of which is in design and two-thirds is in construction. By location, there is about \$70 million District-wide, just over \$200 million in WWTP improvements, and \$492 million to \$493 million in the collection system, including large collection system tunnel projects presently in place and the Southerly Storage Tunnel design.

In 2023, two professional services agreements have been awarded for a total \$5.5 million, including the Kingsbury Asset Renewal project and the General Engineering Services 12 (GES-12) project for architectural, structural, and electrical services. Regarding construction awards, there have been four: the Southerly First Stage Settling Tank Nos. 7-11 Launder Support Concrete Repair project is presently ongoing in the early submittals and procurement phase; the Southerly Training Center Renovation project has issued a Notice to Proceed (NTP), and work will commence in the coming weeks; and the Collections PLC Replacement project was recently awarded and the NTP will be issued later this month. There have been three construction contracts closed this year with the Westerly Storage Tunnel, the Burke Brook Open Channel Improvements project, and the Southerly Second Stage Settling Improvements project.

As for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) at mid-year, the majority of the KPIs have been met, except for construction obtaining substantial completion within 90 days of the original contract substantial completion date for the Westerly Storage Tunnel, which had 638 days of time extension throughout the course of the project associated with COVID-19 as well as differing site conditions encountered during the project execution.

Regarding the Business Opportunity Program (BOP) actuals for the first half of the year, project close-outs have totaled \$165 million of which the BOP value was \$38.7 million, 23.4% of the total. The goal of 16.2% was exceeded.

As for change orders by category, within the jobs that were closed out, total work orders equated to 3.29% of the overall construction value or \$5.43 million worth of work, the majority of which was associated with differing site conditions, as two out of the three projects were underground projects.

As for Project Clean Lake, at mid-year, there are 72 projects that have either been completed or are in progress and 13 of 15 control measures have been completed. Since the start of Project Clean Lake, NEORSD has spent \$1.9 billion and realized over \$500 million in value engineered savings. Presently, there has been 1.7 billion gallons of reduction of CSO within the system and future projects will obtain another 300 million gallons of reduction annually by the end of 2023, with the activation of the Westerly Tunnel System.

Regarding construction progress for Project Clean Lake, construction of the Southerly Secondary Effluent Capacity Improvements project has commenced and will increase the capacity at Southerly by up to 480 MGD. The Shoreline Consolidation Sewer micro tunneling of 5,000 feet of 72-inch micro tunnel was completed in June, resulting in the completion of Control Measures 17 and 19 and 3.3 million gallons of CSO reduction.

Mr. Gabriel continued with a look forward to upcoming milestones including the near completion of design for the Southerly Tunnel, which will come before the Board in September for authorization to advertise for bids. Additionally, the Southerly Tunnel Dewatering Pump Station project design will begin and NEORSD will achieve full operation of Control Measure 14 this year with the Westerly Tunnel System and Pump Station. Cleveland Public Power is working to provide permanent power to the pump station by next week, which will allow the startup of the pump station and then the subsequent activation of the Westerly Storage Tunnel. Lastly, post-construction compliance activities for Control Measure 8, the Doan Valley Tunnel System, will be completed this year.

Mr. Kurup provided the mid-year IT update with a highlight on the Southerly Overtime Application implementation, realized by Francis Cung, Manager of Data Governance BI, and his team, Jared Shepard, and Jason Huber. Mr. Kurup displayed graphics showing the manual methods by which overtime was previously captured and scheduled, and then described the new application which streamlined and improved the overtime eligibility, approval, and acceptable processes. The Oracle-based application is tied in with NEORSD's HR application, UKG, and pulls data from UKG and the CMMS systems, then implements rules for offering overtime by using an algorithm and the HR data. Operation and Maintenance Supervisors use the application to identify overtime needs and are provided a list of eligible employees based on qualifications, the overtime timeslot, as well as the rules of how overtime should be offered to employees. The application sends a text message

to the selected employees, who then accept or decline the overtime offer. This application will be offered to staff at the Westerly and Easterly plants in the next two months as well. The implementation of the application allows for analysis, reporting, and will help management plan ahead.

Mr. Kurup continued the update with CIP and noted that there are many. First, regarding competed projects, the IT hardware deployment cycle, coordinated by Allan Velez, Manager of IT Service Delivery, and his team, replaces 20% of the laptop and desktop fleet annually, which is approximately 200 machines. Next, Mr. Cung's team also made notable enhancements and upgrades to NOETIX, the reporting tool for Oracle data and the data warehouse, which pulls data from the census, Cleveland Water, and other governmental organizations, consolidates it, and helps our Customer Service Representatives interact with customers and helps the Finance Department with different issues when dealing with rate payers.

Moving on to active projects, Mr. Kurup noted that many of them fall under infrastructure and the replacement of obsolete technologies. Active projects include those for Internal Audit, Finance, and Human Resources, specifically pushing more functionality in UKG for the latter.

As for Information Security, the Security Work Group requires cooperation from many internal District departments, not only IT, and recommends and publishes policies regarding cyber security. The group's work is time-intensive because it requires the approval of the policies by each department that is impacted and to date, 14 policies and a standards document have been published. There are 9 draft policies, and the group expects to publish another 6 this year.

Regarding annual cyber security training, Mr. Kurup detailed the computer-based trainings that every employee is required to take, as well as additional training for those in security-sensitive areas of the business. Currently, 95% of District employees have completed the training and the remainder are expected to complete the training by the beginning of next month.

The IT Department also continues to align and refine its incident response and disaster recovery plans with NEORSD's business requirements and support a host of applications, including bringing lost data back and aligning with the departments' documented data recovery requirements.

Mr. Kurup also detailed IT's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) related activities, most notably the support of NEORSD's Utility Assistance Resource Fairs through technical support, printing/copying availability, and encouraging volunteers to staff the events. Additionally, IT continues to develop reports and tools for NEORSD's DE&I efforts such as demographic reports from UKG and EBS reports relating to employee compensation.

The department has also completed an upgrade on the service and asset management system, Cherwell, bringing it up to date with the latest version to keep track of District laptops and desktops, as well as manage the department's IT service tickets. Regarding the ticket volume, Mr.

Kurup displayed a graph showing the total volume of tickets and noted that there has been a steady increase in the number of tickets, nearly doubling since tracking began in 2019, and specified that the trend is expected to continue. Tracking shows that 20% of the total tickets are related to incidents, indicating that something is broken, and 80% are for enhancements and employee-requested changes. Additionally, the surveys that go out with every service ticket have returned all 5s in all areas, exceeding the department goal of 4.8/5.

VII. Open Session

There were no items.

VIII. Public Session (any subject matter)

There were no items.

IX. Executive Session

There were no items.

X. Approval of Items from Executive Session

There were no items.

XI. 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 1:15 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