

MINUTES
NORTHEAST OHIO REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
NOVEMBER 21, 2024

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
Ronald Sulik
Timothy DeGeeter
Jack Bacci
Samuel Alai
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 November 7, 2024 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 that on November 12th, NEORS hosted Hard Hatted Women and members of its Wise Pathway Program for an evening tour of the Southerly Wastewater Treatment Center. Hard Hatted Women supports women in technical and STEM careers, and their Wise Pathways Program is a free career development program in what are traditionally male-dominated occupations and industries. In addition to the tour, Assistant Superintendents Cathy Glisic and Kate Rybarczyk spoke about skilled trade career pathing at NEORS. Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells thanked Ms. Glisic and Ms. Rybarczyk for their participation as well as John McGinnis, Plant Operations Lead Instructor; CeCe Edwards, WWP Operator IT; Jason Peskar, Manager of Talent Acquisition; Shannon Gallagher, Early Talent Program Specialist II; and Andrea Harris, Talent Acquisition & Employment Specialist I for their assistance in managing the event.

On November 14th, NEORSD joined Cuyahoga Community College’s (Tri-C) Workforce Division to celebrate the ten-year partnership with Tri-C’s Career Advancement Competitive Edge course. Under the leadership of Marquita Rockamore, Director of Health Industry Solutions at Tri-C, this course focuses on enhancing essential workplace skills such as self-management and customer service in a supportive environment while introducing people to all of the other opportunities available through Tri-C. NEORSD has partnered with Director Rockamore to provide this course to each cohort of Good Neighbor Ambassadors since the program began, 91 people to date.

During this event, Constance Haqq, Chief Administrative Officer, discussed the history of the Good Neighbor Ambassador program. Tracey Phelps, Deputy Director of Operation and Maintenance, and Crystal Davis, Government Affairs Program Manager, participated in a panel discussion led by Tri-C President Dr. Michael Baston.

NEORSD hosted its 17th Utility Assistance Resource Fair at the Tri-C East campus. There were more than 250 customers in attendance, as well as Congresswomen Shontel Brown, and Tri-C East’s President, Dr. Todd Kitchen.

Ms. Dreyfuss-Wells invited Ken Duplay, Chief Financial Officer, to discuss the October 24, 2024, cash bond defeasance.

Mr. Duplay advised that the cash defeasance was a component of the bond resolution passed on September 5, 2024, which authorized up to \$35 million to be used for that purpose. Working with its financial advisors, NEORSD identified a component of the 2045 maturity of its 2020 bonds as the best candidate for the use of funds for defeasance. NEORSD used \$34.9 million to retire \$42.2 million of those outstanding 2020 bonds, with a \$12.4 million net present value savings in debt service for ratepayers. Combined with the savings from the 2024 bond refinancing of \$4.1 million, NEORSD achieved a total of \$16.5 million net present value savings through capital financing activities in 2024.

V. Action Items

Authorization to Advertise

Resolution No. 279-24 Authorization to publish notice calling for bids, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 6119.10, for a public improvement contract for the Kingsbury Run Consolidation Sewer project with estimated probable construction costs of \$105,000,000.00.

MOTION – Mr. Sulik moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded to adopt Resolution No. 279-24. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

President Brown noted that the description of the project indicates that it will result in reduction of CSO by 280 million gallons per year and requested additional information.

Devona Marshall, Director of Engineering and Construction, explained that the project is part of the larger Southerly Tunnel System, which as a whole, will control 760 million gallons of CSO. This project will account for 280 million gallons, via one 7.5-foot diameter and one 10-foot diameter consolidation sewer which will pick up flow from multiple regulator structures that are tributary to the largest CSO discharge to the Cuyahoga River. Although they are sometimes referred to as tunnels because they are constructed through micro-tunneling, they are in fact consolidation sewers. The duration of the project will be 3.5 years.

President Brown reflected on a time some years ago when he went underground to view the Kingsbury System during the initial construction process and was amazed by the network of tunnels beneath the city and noted that while this project will have significant costs, it will also have significant results.

Authorization to Purchase

Resolution No. 280-24 Authorization to purchase Avaya software support and maintenance services from ConvergeOne, Inc. under The Interlocal Purchasing System, a national purchasing cooperative program, for the period January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027, in an amount not-to-exceed \$259,554.01.

MOTION – Mayor Alai moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 280-24. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Enter Into Agreement

Resolution No. 281-24 Authorization to enter into a professional services agreement with Covalence Consulting, Inc. for mobilization, discovery, documentation, project management, and technical support for the HR Business Process Analysis and Improvements project in an amount not-to-exceed \$93,750.00.

MOTION – Mr. Sulik moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded to adopt Resolution No. 281-24. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Enter Into Contract

Resolution No. 282-24 Authorization to enter into a public improvement contract with Thomarios for the Southerly Tunnel Pipe Painting project in an amount not-to-exceed \$272,327.50.

MOTION – Mayor Bacci moved, and Mayor Alai seconded to adopt Resolution No. 282-24. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Modify Contract

Resolution No. 283-24 Authorization to modify Contract No. 24007346 with sole source vendor The Ideal Electric and Manufacturing Company for Turbine Generator Reconditioning Services at the Southerly Wastewater Treatment Center’s Renewable Energy Facility to increase the contract amount by \$75,000.00 for reconditioning additional generator system components beyond the initial scope of the contract, thereby bringing the total amount not-to-exceed \$262,000.00.

MOTION – Mr. Sulik moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded to adopt Resolution No. 283-24. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Close Out Public Improvement Contract

Resolution No. 284-24 Authorizing the Final Adjusting Change Order to close out Public Improvement Contract No. 23008115 with Marra Services, Inc. for the Mill Creek Culverted Streams Rehabilitation Package 1 project to decrease the contract amount by \$165,566.80, thereby bringing the total contract amount to \$872,901.20.

Resolution No. 285-24 Authorizing the Final Adjusting Change Order to close out Public Improvement Contract No. 22005171 with Eclipse Co., LLC for the Upper Ridgewood Basin Improvements project to decrease the contract amount by \$267,701.09, thereby bringing the total contract amount to \$3,065,309.18.

MOTION – Mayor Bacci moved, and Mayor Alai seconded to adopt Resolution Nos. 284-24 through 285-24. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Property Related Transaction

Resolution No. 286-24 Authorization to acquire one parcel in fee simple known as PPN 457-34-010, located at 10813 West Pleasant Valley Road, in the City of Parma, owned by 10813 West Pleasant Valley Rd., LLC, and necessary for the construction and maintenance of the SWMP Project Area 6 – Flood and Erosion Reduction Near York and Pleasant Valley Roads project, and to allow for the entirety of the payment to be disbursed to Ohio Real Title Agency, LLC with total consideration of \$290,000.00 plus closing costs.

MOTION – Mayor Alai moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution No. 286-24. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

Authorization to Adopt

Resolution No. 287-24 Authorization to adopt the Summit County 2024 Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.

MOTION – Mayor Bacci moved, and Ms. Dumas seconded to adopt Resolution No. 287-24. After the following discussion, without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

President Brown asked if there is any impact to NEORSD from adopting the Mitigation Plan. Frank Foley, Director of Operation and Maintenance, explained that there is no impact to NEORSD by taking the action, it makes NEORSD eligible for two broad categories of funding including traditional FEMA-type funding in case of a disaster that impacts infrastructure; and pre-disaster mitigation funding, should it become available, for a number of Stormwater Master Plan projects in Summit County.

Authorization to Approve Employee Pay Increases

Resolution No. 288-24 Approval of adjusted salary ranges of all classifications of non-union salaried employees and the hourly wage ranges for all classifications of non-union hourly employees, including an increase of the minimum hourly wage to \$12.75 for grade Stu 20, an eleven percent (11%) increase of the ranges for grades S09 and S10, and a five percent (5%) increase to the ranges for all other grades of non-union salaried employees and all other grades of non-union hourly employees, all as presented.

Resolution No. 289-24 Authorizing funding for year 2024 Pay for Performance, including base pay increases for non-union employees of up to three and one-

quarter percent (3.25%), effective beginning with the first pay period of 2025, and a budgeted amount not-to-exceed \$726,000.00 for merit pay to eligible non-union employees to be distributed in January 2025, all as determined by the Chief Executive Officer.

MOTION – Mr. Sulik moved, and Mayor Bacci seconded to adopt Resolution Nos. 288-24 through 276-24. Without objection, the motion carried unanimously.

VI. Information Items

Ms. Marshall provided the monthly Capital Improvement Plan update for October 2024, beginning with cashflow. NEORSD paid out \$42.9 million to Business Opportunity Program firms through end of October for their efforts on CIP projects, which equates to 24.76% of the total CIP spending, with a breakdown of \$19.6 million to MBE, \$13.7 million to WBE, and \$9.5 million to SBE firms.

As for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the District-wide Fire Alarm and Security Upgrades Project with an estimated probable construction cost of \$1.5 million; the Westerly Administration Building Roof and Windows Replacement project with an estimated probable construction cost of \$1.25 million; the Easterly Actuator and Skimmings Collection Trough Replacement project with an estimated probable construction cost of \$3 million; and the Kingsbury Run Consolidation Sewer project with an estimated probable construction cost of \$105 million, all achieved design completion within 60 days of planned, meeting that KPI.

The KPI for achieving substantial completion of the Southerly Tunnel Dewatering Pump Station Electrical Service project was exceeded by 72 days. Under this project, NEORSD constructed the necessary electrical infrastructure to provide electrical service to the main mining site at the Southerly Tunnel and Consolidation project, which is necessary for the tunnel boring machine and the permanent power at the site.

Ms. Marshall invited Charles Huse, Project Manager, to present the recommendations for inspections and cleaning of the large diameter deep tunnels.

Mr. Huse advised that there is an operational excellence goal to develop recommendations for the inspection and cleaning of NEORSD's large diameter tunnels, in order to ensure they meet their 100-year design life. It is necessary to determine the requirements, cost, and frequency to complete the inspections based on industry standards, develop a schedule, and nominate to the CIP.

NEORSD reached out to several wastewater agencies with similar tunnel infrastructure and learned that there is no industry standard regarding the frequency of inspections; however, there was a theme of the tunnels being in good repair at the first inspection milestone and the organizations extending the time to the future inspection. Additionally, the organizations have determined that

post-inspection cleaning may be unnecessary, expensive, and could cause CSO overflows if the systems are taken offline. Presumably, if a tunnel was in need of cleaning, there would be negative performance indicators.

NEORS D also spoke with contractors and learned that they are available to perform differing types of inspections with evolving technology. Mr. Huse displayed photographs provided from other organizations demonstrating their tunnel inspections.

In speaking with the various contractors, the cost for only the inspection for the Mill Creek Tunnel system is expected to range from \$280,000 to \$1.4 million depending on the method of inspection service selected from the traditional confined space entry being the least expensive, then the confined space entry scanning system, and finally the remote operated vehicle.

Mr. Huse reminded the Board that NEORS D has eight large tunnels that are included in the inspection and maintenance plan: seven are within the Project Clean Lake program and one was built before Project Clean Lake. Of these, five are operational; two are under construction; and one is in the design phase.

Recommendations are that the first inspection should be completed within 10 years of introduction of live flow, with subsequent inspections up to 25-years later, depending on the results of the baseline inspection. A professional services agreement is considered the optimal way to complete the work because the tunnels are complicated systems, and the professional services contract could evaluate best methods to access and take systems offline while also containing the necessary structural engineering expertise to evaluate the tunnels. The procurement process would begin in 2026 with an estimated cost for the Mill Creek Tunnel of \$900,000 to \$2 million. In 2029, procurement would begin for the Euclid Creek and Dugway Storage Tunnels, which would likely be performed together as they share an access shaft. In today's dollars, the combined estimated costs for all NEORS D deep storage tunnels are estimated to be \$6 million to \$11 million.

President Brown thanked Mr. Huse for the presentation and noted that the deep storage tunnels function differently than regular sewer or interceptor systems, which are self-cleaning. President Brown noted that presumably, there should not be structural issues with the tunnels for several decades and asked what is necessary in terms of maintenance.

Ms. Marshall explained that there should not be any major maintenance or structural issues, as the useful life for the tunnels is projected to be 75 to 100 years. The need is to be proactive in performing initial inspections to ensure that there are no issues, followed by inspections occurring up to every 25 years. NEORS D has learned from the other agencies that they have not seen a decrease in performance even if there is some buildup within the systems. NEORS D will continue monitoring performance as part of its NPDES permit requirements, which will assist in determining what actions are needed in terms of cleaning and repairs.

Mayor Bacci asked how NEORSD would know if something catastrophic was occurring within the system if it was not inspected for 25 years. Mr. Huse explained that if something catastrophic was to occur, it would likely happen early and be identified, noted, and repaired under the warranty inspections that happen one year after all tunnel projects are completed. For these inspections happening approximately 10-years after that warranty inspection, we would note any defects in the inspection documents, and they would be reviewed by a structural engineer. If it was believed that 25 years is too long to go before the next inspection, the schedule would be adjusted accordingly.

Mayor Bacci asked if debris was impacting functionality, whether NEORSD would be aware. Mr. Huse answered affirmatively. Ms. Marshall added that under the professional services agreement, if there was debris found in the system, hydraulic modeling would be used to evaluate potential impacts to system performance, and if necessary, action would be taken to address the debris before it becomes a problem at the CSO site.

Mayor Bacci asked if there is one central access point or multiple points to remove debris. Rick Vincent, Manager of Design for Engineering and Construction, explained that access points vary by tunnel. This is why a professional services agreement would be beneficial, to have the consultant make a recommendation as to what needs to be done and the best method for access for the inspection and / or cleaning.

Mr. Vincent added that, regarding structural stability, the goal with the professional services agreements is to bring in not only structural engineers, but tunnel engineers who understand how the tunnels were constructed and through that understanding predict whether deficits will be an issue moving forward. It is not anticipated that there will be any structural issues as the tunnels are designed for 100 years useful life.

VII. Open Session

There were no items.

VIII. Public Session (any subject matter)

There were no items.

IX. Executive Session

Mayor Bacci, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G)(1), moved, and Mayor DeGeeter seconded, to enter into executive session to consider the appointment and employment of public employees. By roll call vote, the Board voted unanimously to enter into executive session at 1:13 p.m.

The Board returned to open session at 1:55 p.m.

X. Approval of Items from Executive Session

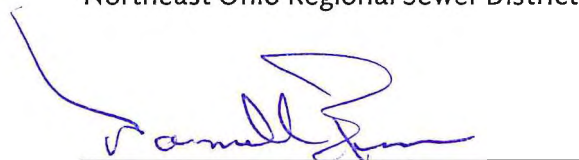
There were no items.

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 1:55 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