

**GREEN BROOK FLOOD CONTROL COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

LOCATION: Plainfield

DATE: December 7, 2016

MEETING CONVENED: 7:30PM

NOTE: Adequate notice of this meeting was provided informing the public of the time and place according to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975).

IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard O'Connor - Engineer, GBFCC  
George Ververides -Middlesex Cty Planning  
Paul Leso . Union County  
Theodore Bassman . Scotch Plains  
Raymond S Murray . GBFCC Chairman  
Diane Toliver - Plainfield City Council

Rob Zucker . Winning Strategies  
John J. Sweeney . Middlesex Boro  
Frank McArdle . North Plainfield  
Bill Crosby . North Plainfield  
Robert Greco - USACE

MINUTES

The minutes from the October 5, 2016 meeting were approved. A copy of the approved minutes is available on the GBFCC website.

CORRESPONDENCE

The GBFCC maintains a correspondence file that is available for inspection as may be necessary and upon request.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Crosby reported that the bills have been reviewed by the Finance Committee and are found to be in order. Motion was made for bills to be paid. Motion carried.

Mr. Crosby also reported that the 2017 budget, which is flat, was introduced at the last meeting. Motion was made to adopt the budget. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report and budget is available on-line and available for inspection upon request.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - 2017

**Engineering** – Mr. Murray reported that one, and only one, proposal was received and that was from Grotto Engineering Associates, which is our current engineering firm. The fee is the same. Motion made to renew Grotto for 2017. Motion carried.

**Consulting Services for Federal Government Regulations** – Mr. Murray reported that two proposals were received:

- 1) Winning Strategies Washington, our existing firm, at a rate of \$5,500 per month.
- 2) Van Scoyoc Associates at a rate of \$6,000 per month and annual expenses not to exceed \$500.

Motion made to accept bid from Winning Strategies for 2017. Motion carried.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Nominating Committee met and recommends the same officers remain in place for 2017:

Raymond Murray as Chairman  
John Sweeney as Vice-Chairman  
Bill Crosby as Treasurer  
Frank McArdle as Chair of Legislative Committee

Comment: Concern was expressed that the same committee has been in place for several years now. Mr. Crosby & Mr. Murray each responded, saying there has been no interest to take on any positions so things have remained the same only in the interest of keeping the Commission going. The Committee is open to new people and new ideas if anyone has interest. There was no further comment.

Motion made to keep same slate of officers. Motion carried.

## WINNING STRATEGIES

Mr. Zucker reported the following:

Looking at the resolution of current FY17 federal appropriations process, I had a discussion with the Chairman last week. With Republicans having control in House and Senate, and now with an incoming Republican President, they have made the determination they would rather operate the funds into a spending bill after President-Elect Trump is inaugurated in January rather than negotiate under the potential veto of President Obama. Current interim spending bill issued as a Continuing Resolution expires this Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. Congress is in process of releasing another interim bill that will run through April 28, 2017.

In FY17 bill with the House & Senate, as per the \$10 million pending for our project, I don't have any reason to believe our project, or the water project generally, is subject to cuts. This project is funded at \$7.5 million.

Congress likely to try to pass FY17 sooner than April but, especially in Senate, they have other items as part of the transition, such as cabinet confirmations, that may cause delay but have nothing to do with the appropriations process.

As any time there is a presidential transition, it is normal for incoming president to delay release of the budget so they can have their say from a policy and budgetary perspective. Since nothing we have seen about incoming President Elect Trump has been conventional, it's hard to predict.

Our firm is still reaching out to Senate and members of Congress, as we usually do at this time of year, to urge them to weigh in for a robust amount of funding. At our last meeting in October, the Army Corp of Engineers was not able to give a preliminary cost update. When that is available that will help guide members.

A separate note worth mentioning. You may have seen that, for the first time in the history of the Congress, NJ is going to have a chair on the House Appropriation Committee. Rodney Frelinghuysen was put forth by the steering committee as next chairman and was not contested. He has seen parts of our project throughout his career and has familiarity with it. He is also a member of the Energy and Water Appropriations Committee which specifically funds our project and brings that level of expertise.

## ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Mr. Greco, Project Manager, reported the following:

*Budget* - I was asked by North Atlantic Division how much funding we would require through March 31, 2017 on the Continuing Resolution. I said we could use the full \$10 million of the budgeted amount by March. I now need to obligate that amount by end of March which will include Segment B2, A/E Contract for Segment C2 & H, and several smaller non-structural demolition contracts.

*Bound Brook* – Nothing to report.

*Segment B2* . Draft Confidentiality Agreement and an Offer to Sell was reviewed by the Dept of Justice last week. DOJ is in process of sending those documents to Muniz and their attorney. Original attorney dropped out so hope that doesn't delay things. Once the owner and attorney sign off on the documents, the Baltimore Real Estate district will be able to issue Real Estate certification so we can open bids. Bid Opening now will be Jan. 19, 2017 (prior date was Dec. 15, 2016) and Award Date will be Feb. 2, 2017.

*Segment B3* – Contract was awarded Oct. 14, 2016. Held a preconstruction meeting with CMS Construction, the low-bidder on contract, on Nov. 21, 2016. CMS is putting together schedules and paperwork so they can start in the field. Need to submit paperwork to Freehold Soil Conservation District. Don't anticipate work will begin prior to January, due to weather.

By Segment B3 there is a garage which we are intending to purchase in order to widen the parking lot for the American Legion. Garage is currently empty. Issue over an oil spill needs to be addressed before the purchase can be completed. Stephanie Hodges is in contact with the owner. Awaiting outcome.

*Segment H* – We purchased home at 225 South Lincoln Ave, Middlesex Borough. Property owners vacated home on Nov 14, 2016. Also vacant is property at 292 Greenbrook Road, Green Brook Township.

### *FY 2017 Plan & Specs Development -*

- \$10 million for FY 2017
- \$2.2 million in federal funds available that can be obligated towards Segment C1-Contract 1 for pump station
- \$6.5 million of non-federal funds
- May obtain additional funds later in year, not sure now.
- Funds available to award C1-Contract 1 plus Segment B2 plus the A/E contract for Segment C2 & H and possibly C3 to C5 which will allow us to plan for FY2018 through FY2021.
- Right now, what is holding us back somewhat is the Right of Entry (ROE) permits for the properties along Segment C1. This is critical. We do have the ROE for the borings along the side of pump station. As soon as we obtain the GP-12 permit we can proceed. E4Sciences submitted application on Nov. 22, 2016 to NJDEP but have yet to hear back.
- Need to move forward with permits in order to get the borings so we can start the design for pump station (C1-Contract 1), levee floodwall system (C1-Contract 2), and the four 10-foot diameter pipe culvert crossings under the NJ Transit Raritan Valley Line (C1-Contract 3)

*FY2018* – Plan to award Segment C1-Contract 2 levee floodwall, Segment C1-Contract 3 pipe culverts, Segment C2 & H. Just received list for C2 from E4Sciences showing the block and lots, borings and rights of entries that we require. Bulk of properties are in Middlesex Borough. Also, need wetlands delineation surveys. This will be done for all the way up to Segment C5, which is up by Middlesex Borough High School. This will be done so we can plan ahead and get the plans and specs ready for four or five construction contracts. Design efforts will be to put together five plans and specs contracts that will take us into FY2021, assuming \$20 million per year. Could see an increase up to \$30 million a year depending on how all the plans & specs come back. It is very ambitious, but in order to make progress will need to start requesting healthy budget amounts starting with FY2018. Critical part now is getting the ROE so we keep the project moving forward at a reasonable pace.

*Demolition Contract* . Scheduling an award for a February / March time frame for:

- 292 Greenbrook Road, Green Brook
- 225 South Lincoln Ave, Middlesex
- 1204 Bound Brook Road, Middlesex (garage pending cleanup of oil spill)

*Non-Structural Flood Proofing in Piscataway* – E4Sciences working on this. Inspected 25 out of 30 structures (one property owner declined involvement, three were unresponsive and one decided to join the program after completion of last inspection). Although there was a kick-off meeting for property owners of Piscataway in September, we are not planning to do the same for Bridgewater due to such a low turnout. Also, when Mr. Murray spoke with Assessor to confirm addresses, E4 had already reached out to property owners. Worst case scenario, we might need to educate the Engineer in Bridgewater in case any question go to him.

*Upper Basin* . Making progress. Received \$200,000 in federal funds under the work plan for FY2017 (general investigation funds). Out of the \$200,000, we can only use \$25,000 to complete the Project Management Plan (PMP) which we started using the CD funds, but need to use GI funds to complete.

Now waiting for matching non-Federal funds, expected mid-December 2016, which needs to go through our processing center. That will be \$50,000 to complete the PMP which should be fine. Will get input from NJDEP into the draft PMP by Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>. Looking to have the draft PMP ready early March 2017.

Right now, the NJ feasibility cost sharing agreement is for \$3 million (\$1.5 million federal & \$1.5 non-federal). Based on this revised PMP, we will see what we can cut it down to. May need to amend. Work will continue as these amendments are made. Plans for Upper Basin are being addressed because it will affect other parts of project. Everything is coming together.

The point was also emphasized that we are well-positioned as the largest civil works project. We need to execute and keep pushing to get work done.

## REPORT FROM COUNTIES

### **Middlesex County**

None.

### **Union County**

None.

QUESTIONS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Ms. Toliver asked for some clarification on the ongoing plans in Plainfield and about flood insurance relief for residents.

Mr. Greco explained that a schedule and feasibility study is being put together for City of Plainfield as part of the Upper Basin. A rough estimate on time frame for study is three to five years for Upper Basin area. Unfortunately, flood insurance relief won't happen in that area for a number of years.

GBFCC ENGINEER

None.

NJ DEP

No report.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

The Chairman thanked Plainfield for their hospitality and reminded of upcoming GBFCC meeting dates:

**February 1 – Green Brook**  
**April 5 – North Plainfield**  
**June 7 – Middlesex**  
**August - Memorial Service**  
**October – Scotch Plains**

A motion was made and approved to adjourn.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:25 PM