

**GREEN BROOK FLOOD CONTROL COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

LOCATION: Virtual Meeting

DATE: December 6, 2023

MEETING CONVENEED: 7:30 PM

Chairman Murray opened the meeting and took role call along with leading the Pledge of Allegiance. He recited compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Raymond Murray . GBFCC Chairman - GB  
Paul Woska . GBFCC Vice-Chair-Middlesex  
Edward Wrocenski . USACE NY District  
Valerie Bogart . Somerset County  
Rich O'Connor . Engineer, GBFCC  
Rob Zucker . Winning Strategies  
Jerry Searfoss . Green Brook  
Mark Kranz . Middlesex

John Ferguson . South Plainfield  
Jeff Varnerin . Berkeley Heights  
Clare Levourne . Middlesex  
Linda  
Natalie Chin/Angus Chen  
Richard Leister  
Oren Dabney, Plainfield

THE PASSING OF BILL CROSBY

Chairman Murray asked for all to observe a moment of silence in remembrance of the passing of Bill Crosby, the Commission's Treasurer and last remaining original member. Bill served his community as a representative to the Commission for 50+ years, since before the Commission was officially recognized by the State of New Jersey.

Chairman Murray has asked Bill Picard to join the executive board and serve as treasurer for the balance of 2023, and for permission to place his name forward during the nominating portion of tonight's meeting, to continue as treasurer in the new year. Mr. Picard has agreed. Chairman Murray also announced the retirement of Alice Temple, Commission from South Plainfield. Miss Temple has served as a commissioner for many years, and Chairman Murray expressed an appreciation for her service, especially as it related to environmental concerns.

MINUTES

The October minutes were approved. A copy of approved minutes is available on the GBFCC website.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Commission received the NEPA notice, which USACE is required to distribute announcing acceptance on comments from December 4 to January 19 for the scoping of Upper Basin Alternatives.

The Commission also received notice of a Public Meeting which was held in Scotch Plains on December 5, as well as two scheduled meetings in North Plainfield on December 12 and Plainfield on December 14.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Chairman Murray reported that the usual three bills have been presented for payment. Additionally, the bill list includes reimbursement for sympathy baskets sent on behalf of the Commission to the Zucker and Crosby families. A motion was made approved that the bills be paid.

#### 2024 BUDGET

The budget has been posted on the Commission website since October. Expenses are in line with projections. We have been using more surplus over the past couple of years, so the budget includes a 2% increase for the members and municipalities. A motion to approve the introduced budget was made and approved.

#### NOMINATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chairman Murray presented the slate of officers for 2024 to be as follows:

- Chairman . Raymond Murray (Green Brook Township)
- Vice-Chairman . Paul Woska (Middlesex Borough)
- Treasurer . Bill Picard (Scotch Plains Township)

Chairman Murray solicited other nominations, but none were made. The slate of officers for 2024 was moved and approved.

#### ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS . Edward Wrocenski, Project Manager

**Upper Basin:** Started the scoping process. From December 4<sup>th</sup> to January 19<sup>th</sup>, we will get input from the local municipalities. The study will continue for two years into the Fall/Winter of 2025. We are working our way through the alternatives to be ready in early Spring of 2024 to work toward the selected plan. A scoping meeting was held in Scotch Plains last night and two are scheduled for next week on December 12<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>. Both will be virtual because we couldn't pin down a venue. Two more scheduled in January in Plainfield & North Plainfield. Dates need to be confirmed with the Municipalities but looking like January 9<sup>th</sup> & January 11<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Lower Basin:**

Segment C2 & H: Construction continues on the floodwalls and gate by South Lincoln Avenue. Working through the real estate issues to be able to do more work there. Ray reminded everyone the road is closed now.

*Question:* How long will South Lincoln Avenue remain closed?

*Mr. Wrocenski:* The contract runs through late 2024, but it looks like the contractors will be done in late summer. I will confirm and follow up. The gates are being manufactured offsite. They are working on the support system for the walls, driving piles into the rock in the ground. Rebar will be next and then the footings. Still have a lot to do.

*Question:* Any update on the 207 Pond property?

*Mr. Wrocenski:* The condemnation package for the 207 Pond property went up to our National Headquarters in Washington in late September. I don't have a date for when they will push that on to DOJ. I was just told these things take a while. That is the key piece of property that is holding up several segments for us to continue on the construction progress.

#### COMMENTS FROM THE COUNTIES

**Somerset County – Valerie Bogart** – I attended the scoping meeting last night in Scotch Plains. I wanted to commend the Army Corps for their presentation. I believe the Mayor and citizens were happy to see the Corps representatives there discussing what is happening in the Upper Basin.

**Middlesex County** – No representative present.

**Union County** – No representative present.

GBFCC ENGINEER . Rich O'Connor  
Nothing to report.

WINNING STRATEGIES . Rob Zucker

Congress is tied up in some knots right now in terms of the Federal Appropriations process. Since we last spoke, they agreed for the first time to a staggered Continuing Resolution for when the money runs out in January and February, two different milestones. This would give the House & Senate more time to continue negotiations and come to an agreement on the final spending levels to be put in place for this year. I say this mostly because of the ongoing discussion regarding the Upper Basin and the GRR that was referenced earlier. It is also a test to see if this configuration of the White House & Congress can implement the kind of agreements which were made in May on the debt limit. We are in the midst of that period right now. The purpose of setting a January time frame instead of the end of December was to avoid Congress feeling jammed heading into a holiday period. By the next time we meet in February, I would expect to know more and for the first time we may be heading into a full year resolution.

ANY QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: None.

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:05

**Upcoming GBFCC meeting dates:**

February 7, 2024, 7:30 pm . via Zoom

April 3, 2024, 7:30 pm . via Zoom

June 5, 2024, 7:30 pm . via Zoom

August 3, 2024, In person Memorial Service in Middlesex Borough

October 9, 2024, 7:30 pm . via Zoom (*not typical schedule due to religious holidays*)

December 4, 2024, 7:30 pm . via Zoom