

**GREEN BROOK FLOOD CONTROL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

LOCATION: Virtual Meeting

DATE: February 7, 2024

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
Bill Picard . GBFCC Treasurer-Scotch Plains
Edward Wrocenski . USACE NY District
Tom Slowinski . NJDEP
Frank Farrell . Engineer, GBFCC
Rob Zucker . Winning Strategies
Linda Weber . Middlesex County
Anthony Panzarino . Middlesex County
Valerie Bogart . Somerset County
Tom Genova . Bridgewater

Crisol-Iris Lantz - Dunellen
Mark Kranz . Middlesex
Harry Allen . N Plainfield
Oren Dabney . Plainfield
John Ferguson . South Plainfield

Bob Kramer . Berkeley Heights
Richard Connolly . Green Brook
Jim Mesaros . Green Brook
Clare Levourne . Middlesex

MINUTES

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

CORRESPONDENCE

The Commission received notice of the appointment of members from Bridgewater, as well as some internal emails regarding real estate acquisitions and some inquiries from residents regarding their specific properties.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Chairman Murray noted that the treasurer's report is available on the Commission's website and reported that the usual three bills have been presented for payment, as well as the annual dues to the NJ Alliance for Action and postage from mailing commission invoices and purchase orders. A motion was made approved that the bills be paid.

Chairman Murray also noted that the Commission has reappointed Grotto Engineering and Winning Strategies for 2024. These existing service providers were the sole respondents to the Request for Proposals last fall, and their submission were at the same rates as 2023.

ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS . Edward Wrocenski, Project Manager

Mr. Wrocenski reported on the ongoing construction in the lower basin, which includes segments C2 & H in Middlesex Borough. South Lincoln Avenue is presently closed as work progresses across the roadway in that area. Work on the segments is moving slightly ahead of schedule.

Mr. Wrocenski also reported that the study of the upper basin continues, and that any construction that would take place in those areas would likely be ten years out. Scoping meetings were held virtually and in person in January, with comments still being received, for consideration for incorporation into plans.

Chairman Murray asked for an update on the status of plans for the segments I-J-K, which extend from roughly from the area near the Green Brook Baptist Church to the east beyond Rock Avenue. Mr. Wrocenski stated that work on those plans has slowed, as the agreement between USACE and NJDEP altering the cost share is not yet signed by both parties. He noted that although \$496 million in disaster relief funds has been allocated to the project, those funds cannot be accessed until such time at the agreement is in place. Chairman Murray expressed concern when it was noted that failure to get this agreement executed could slow construction completion by two years.

North Plainfield Commissioner Harry Allen expressed concern that interim smaller measures might be needed to mitigate flooding until permanent measures are in place.

NJ DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION . Thomas Slowinski

Mr. Slowinski expressed disappointment at the length of time that the property acquisition for 207 Pond Avenue in Middlesex is taking. The condemnation packet has been returned to USACE by the Department of Justice, for corrective changes. Chairman Murray likewise expressed concern that this real estate matter has taken far too long, and is slowing and causing greater segmenting of work through contract options.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY . Linda Weber, Planning Director

Chairman Murray welcomed Middlesex County's Planning Director to the meeting, and expressed gratitude for the County's continued support of the Project.

SOMERSET COUNTY . Valerie Bogart

Nothing new to report.

GROTTO ENGINEERING-GBFCC Consulting Engineers . Frank Farrell

Nothing new to report.

WINNING STRATEGIES-GBFCC Government Relations Consultant . Robert Zucker

Mr. Zucker reports that WSW will follow up with the Congressional delegation to determine the implications of the slow real estate progress on the project. He will also work with the delegation to determine what assistance may be available to move the project agreement forward, to loosen restrictions on the use of the disaster funding.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Green Brook resident Jim Mesaros asked about the status of work near his home, which is located in Green Brook, along the western length of Greenbrook Road (segment D). Chairman Murray noted that work on segment D cannot proceed as it would induce upstream flooding, until segments I-J-K are completed. R. Mesaros expressed gratitude for the years of effort in continuing to push this flood protection measure forward.

MEETING ADJOURNED: The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Upcoming GBFCC meeting dates:

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

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