

DC Flood Task Force Meeting Minutes



DC Flood Task Force
Kick Off Meeting
November 17, 2021
Virtual WebEx Meeting
2:00 – 4:00 pm

Meeting Attendees

Attending Voting Members and Support Staff

Deputy Mayor for Operations and Infrastructure (DMOI)

1. Lucinda Babers | Deputy Mayor and Voting Member
2. Jonathan Rogers

District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water)

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| 1. David Gadis Co-Chair, and Voting Member | 7. Salil Kharkar | 15. Alireza Parhami |
| 2. Lisa Barton | 8. Alexandra Lampson | 16. Matt Ries |
| 3. Vahid Bilvardi | 9. John Lisle | 17. Sheryl Ude |
| 4. Tanya DeLeon | 10. Dusti Lowndes | 18. Greg Vernon |
| 5. Nadine Headley | 11. Brian McDermott | 19. Kirsten Bowden Williams |
| 6. Maureen Holman | 12. Getachew Melsew | |
| | 13. Barbara Mitchell | |
| | 14. Apera Nwora | |

District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)

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| 1. Tommy Wells Co-Chair, and Voting Member | 3. Martin Koch | 7. Victor Ukpolo |
| 2. Nicholas Bonard | 4. Nicole Rentz | 8. Meredith Upchurch |
| | 5. Joshua Schnitzlein | |
| | 6. Jeffrey Seltzer | |

District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA)

1. Melissa Deas | Voting Member
2. Vermechia Alsop

District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT)

- | | |
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| 1. Ravi Ganvir Voting Member | 2. EJ Simie |
| | 3. Stephen Varga |

District of Columbia Office of Planning (OP)

- | | | |
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| 1. Andrew Trueblood Voting Member | 3. Rogelio Flores | 6. Imania Price |
| 2. Andree Entezari | 4. Stephen Gyor | 7. Elisa Vitale |
| | 5. Tim Maher | |

District of Columbia Department of Insurance, Securities, and Banking (DISB)

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Karima Woods (VM) | 2. Philip Barlow | 3. Philip Edmonds |
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District of Columbia Office of Risk Management (ORM)

1. Jed Ross | Voting Member
2. Jane Waters

District of Columbia Department of General Services (DGS)

1. Matt Floca | Voting Member

District of Columbia Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)

1. Delano Hunter | Voting Member
2. Brent Sisco

District of Columbia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

1. Drew Hubbard | Voting Member
2. Danilo Pelletiere
3. Richard Livingstone

District of Columbia Department of Public Works (DPW)

1. Christine Davis | Voting Member
2. Andrew Gerst
3. Camille Glover
4. Timothy Spriggs

District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)

1. Christopher Bailey | Voting Member

Attending Consulting Members and Support Staff

District of Columbia Director of the Office of Racial Equity (ORE)

1. Amber Hewitt

District of Columbia Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services (MOCRS)/Executive Office of the Mayor (EOM)

1. Julia Irving
2. Robert Preston
3. Tomas Talamante

District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA)

1. Thor Nelson

District of Columbia Office of the People's Counsel (OPC)

1. Sandra Mattavous-Frye
2. Stephen Dudek
3. Karen Sistrunk
4. Grace Soderberg

District of Columbia Commission on Climate Change and Resiliency (DC CCR)

1. Uwe Brandes

National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)

1. Julia Koster

Apartment and Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington (AOBA)

1. Margaret Jeffers
2. Glenn Hugo
3. Eric Jones

District of Columbia Building Industry Association (DCBIA)

1. Cell Bernardino

Federal City Council (FCC)

1. Kevin Clinton

National Park Service National Capital Region (NPS-NCR)

1. Tammy Stidham

Federal Emergency Management Agency Region III (FEMA RIII)

1. Maggie Dunn

United States Army Corps of Engineers Baltimore District (USACE)

1. Stacey Underwood

Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO)

1. David Velazquez

Washington Gas

1. Manny Geraldo

Facilitation Team - Monash Advisory Group

1. Monte Monash
2. Kimberly Manning
3. Adria Anderson

Other Attendees

There were 19 unidentified call-in participants.

Meeting Minutes

2: 07 pm | Welcome and Opening Remarks

Facilitator Monte Monash welcomed all attendees to the Kickoff DC Flood Task Force providing the background on how the Task Force was established, and by whom. Monte also explained the purpose and function of the Task Force, its compliance with the Opening Meetings Act, identified the active members, and explained the flow of the day's meeting.

Deputy Mayor Babers expressed support for the goal of ensuring that the District has the necessary infrastructure in place to deal with future flooding. She characterized the risk as "It's not a matter of 'if', it's a matter of when we're going to get another flood." She emphasized the importance of making sure that the District can protect property and, most importantly, lives.

CEO Gadis recounted his experiences observing the devastating damage that flooding can cause firsthand. He met with residents whose basements had been flooded after the storm on September 10, 2020. He discussed how DC Water moved as quickly as possible to address damage and promote mitigation in the wake of that event. He highlighted the fact that flooding is only getting worse as climate changes and that it is not a problem that any agency or utility can solve on their own. He characterized the collaborative nature of the work by stating that "It will take a village to address the challenge of flooding in the District."

Director Wells thanked his colleagues in other District agencies. He echoed the sentiment that flooding is a citywide problem that will take a citywide solution. He compared flooding to other extreme weather events and noted that “Just as we became familiar with a derecho, we are now familiar with emergency weather alerts related to flooding.” Director Wells addressed the Integrated Flood Model (IFM) and DC Water Clean Rivers Project as examples of projects that will help protect the District from internal flooding as occurred on 9/10/2020. He referenced the DOEE Climate Ready DC plan to emphasize that the historic 500-year flood is now occurring with a frequency equivalent to that of the 100-year flood and noted that District agencies will have to protect the assets of the city and our residents from increasing flood risk.

2:20 pm | Task Force Member Introductions

Each agency and organization represented described their roles and their vision for success in the following order:

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|----------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. HSEMA | 9. DPW | 17. USACE |
| 2. DDOT | 10. DCRA | 18. FEMA |
| 3. OP | 11. ORE | 19. NPS |
| 4. DISB | 12. MOCRS | 20. FCC |
| 5. ORM | 13. DCHA | 21. AOBA |
| 6. DGS | 14. OPC | 22. DCBIA |
| 7. DPR | 15. CCCR | 23. Pepco |
| 8. DHCD | 16. NCPC | 24. Washington Gas |

2:52 pm | Task Force Structure and Discussion

DOEE and DC Water support staff presented slides and information on the background of the Task Force, the two focused action teams and 9 categories for action (listed below), and the expected timeline for activities and meetings over the next 12 months.

Nick Bonard highlighted the fact that the Task Force is not the first effort to address flood risk in the District and that many studies have already been conducted. Apera Nwora outlined future steps for the Task Force. Public listening sessions will be held in early 2022 and all Task Force meetings will be open to ensure transparency. Within the next 12 months, the Task Force plans to produce an actionable report with plans for each of 9 action categories. These categories may be expanded based on public comment. After November 2022, the Task Force will meet annually for accountability.

Salil Kharkar described the structure of the task force that includes two Action Teams – a "Residential Resilience" Action Team, and a "Governance & Coordination" Action Team. Each Action Team will be charged with developing action plans for four to five action categories. Salil and Nick then presented examples of actions that could be considered in each action category. The action categories are:

Residential Resilience Action Team

- 1) Flood and Sewer Line Backup Insurance
- 2) Repair Flood Damage in Low-Income Homes and Neighborhoods
- 3) Floodproof Individual Homes and Facilities
- 4) Sewer Line Backups and Backwater Valve Installation

Governance & Coordination Action Team

- 5) Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Projects
- 6) Regulations, Legislation, Compliance, and Permitting
- 7) Mapping and Modeling
- 8) Flood Mitigation Planning and Coordination
- 9) Flood Emergency Planning, Response, and Recovery

Meredith Upchurch further outlined the timeline for task force goals. She stated that a goal is to develop both useful products and plans for implementation. A template will be provided for each action plan. The Task Force will meet every other month, while Action Team meetings will occur monthly. The timeline is divided into 3 phases: Goal Setting, Report Production, and Report Finalization. Specific listening sessions for public outreach will occur in late winter/early spring 2022, but the public can provide feedback through the website at any time.

3:21 pm | Closeout

Homework with due dates were communicated to Task Force members, as well as potential dates for action teams to meet December 6-10 in 2021, and the next official Task Force meeting; January 19, 2022. The DC Flood Task Force website address was shared again in the chat for all attendees to access. Co-Chairs CEO Gadis and Director Wells gave farewell remarks to all participating members and attendees.

CEO Gadis noted that another torrential downpour could occur at any time. He believes that “without a doubt” the Task Force will be able to help solve the flooding issue and make Washington, DC a better place for residents.

Director Wells noted that a lot of important work has already been done. He stated that the Task Force roster represents a high-powered and important range of personnel. He emphasized that flooding is an important issue that warrants the participation of everyone involved. He believes that the Task Force can accomplish its goals within the one-year timeframe and expressed confidence that the District will end up with a great blueprint to make the city more resilient at the conclusion of the Task Force’s work.

The Kickoff DC Flood Task Force meeting ENDED at 3:27 pm.

Additional Materials

A copy of the staff presentation used during the meeting, the meeting recording, and a transcript of any in meeting chat comments can be accessed at dcfloodingtaskforce.org.