

DC Flood Task Force Meeting Minutes



**DC Flood Task Force
Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2022
Virtual WebEx Meeting
2:00 – 4:00 pm**

Meeting began at 2:04 pm with the following members, agencies, and support staff in attendance.

VM = Voting Member

Attending Voting Members and Support Staff

Deputy Mayor for Operations and Infrastructure (DMOI)

1. Jonathan Rogers
2. Alan Propp

District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water)

1. Apera Nwora
2. David Gadis
3. John Lisle
4. Kirsten Bowden William
5. Barbara Mitchell

District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Tommy Wells | 4. Andrea Limauro | 6. Victor Ukpolo |
| 2. Nicholas Bonard | 5. Jackie Zidar | 7. Meredith Upchurch |
| 3. Lily Cheng | | 8. Sarah Edwards |

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

1. Vermechia Alsop
2. Anne Graf
3. Andrew Worrell
4. Carolyn Mejia
5. Melissa Deas

District of Columbia Office of Planning (OP)

1. Stephen Gyor (VM)

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

1. Philip Edmonds
2. Angela King

District of Columbia Office of Risk Management (ORM)



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1. Jane Waters
2. Jed Ross

District of Columbia Department of Public Works (DPW)

1. Mike Carter (VM)
2. Andrew Gerst
3. Brent Sisco

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

1. Alex Cross
2. Richard Livingstone

District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT)

1. EJ Simie
2. Stephen Varga

Attending Consulting Members and Support Staff

District of Columbia Mayor's Office of Racial Equity

1. Amber Hewitt (VM)

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

1. Stephen Dudek

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG)

1. Steve Bieber
2. Katie Dyer

District of Columbia Building Industry Association (DCBIA)

1. Cell Bernardino

PEPCO

1. James Pittman

WaterWonks LLC

1. Sandra Knight

Georgetown University

1. Uwe Brandes

Facilitation Team - Monash Advisory Group

1. Monte Monash
2. Rachel Kendrick

Other Attendees

1. Thomas Glassic

2: 05pm | Welcome and Opening Remarks

Flood Task Force Final Report February 2023

- Must have an Action Plan for each of the 9 categories

Flood Task Force Proceedings are Open to the Public

- All Task Force and Action Team meetings

Separate public hearings

Two Action Teams – Governance & Coordination, Residential Resilience

Next meeting will be Wednesday, November 16th

Residential meets every month on the second Tuesday

Governance meets every month on the second Friday

DC Water Opening Remarks (2:08) (David Gadis, CEO and General Manager)

- Recent storms have reminded us that this is a “today” problem
- From recent engagement of stakeholders, many are invested
- Finalizing Action Plans and recommendations for the District
- Important to ensure we uncover every \$ of funding available in the upcoming budget
- Just testified to Congress that the funds for water investment must be distributed on an equitable basis
- Asked for commitment to grow this water infrastructure funding to address flooding

2: 10 pm | FY24 Budget Timeline and Approach

-FY 23 starts on 10/1

Timeline:

Oct-Nov 2022: Agency budget request preparation

Dec-Feb 2023: OBP & EOM reviews and revisions

Mar-June 2023: Council review & Revisions

July-Aug 2023: Budget finalized

Flood Task Force Budget Support

- Prepare slate of projects to support budget process
- Each agency is responsible for their requests, let the Task Force know of specific budget requests
- Make sure Action Plans reflect the budget needed
- Want to consolidate as a slate request for all projects supported by task force, to raise priority in budget review process
- Vote on project slate at November Task Force meeting**

Preliminary list of projects:

-New projects in FY24

- Storm Damage Remediation Grants – cost TBD
- Backwater Valve Program - \$2.2M federal
- Resilience study in targeted neighborhoods - \$500-800k
- P St Levee Closure Contractor - \$150k

-Continuing projects in FY24 (requesting additional funds)

- Integrated Flood Model - \$1.5M
- FloodSmart Homes Installations - \$2.6M
- SW BGI at Lansburgh/King Greenleaf Parks Design - \$1M

- Outreach - \$100K
- Install Flood Signs & Sensors - \$200K

Nick: We are starting off with this because it is one of the most important things that our projects are able to be funded. The task force does not have its own budget, it is up to the agencies. Please use the Flood Task Force to highlight the project has support by the force and the Action Plans. This can help prioritize these projects, let the Mayor know that it is supported. By the end of the today you will have heard all the Action Plans that will be proposed. Want to get this in front of you before budget season starts so we know all that needs to be done and show support for the projects.

2:18 pm | Final Vote of Batch 1 Action Plans with Public Comments

The following Action Plans were unanimously voted “Yes” for final approval:

- 3.1 Develop Program to Floodproof homes and Provide Resilience Upgrades – DOEE
- 6.1 Update DOEE Flood Hazard Rules – DOEE
- COMPLETED: 6.3 Pass DC B24-0410 “Flood Resilience Act” enabling to Action 6.1 – DOEE
- 7.3 Use results of 2020 USACE modeling to update Watts Branch FEMA maps – DOEE
- 7.4 Use results of 2019 USACE modeling to update Oxon Run FEMA maps – DOEE
- 8.4 Conduct Yearly Interagency Outreach - DOEE

Nick: We received 4 comments that were incorporated into all action plans. Sent out an email last week of track changes on what was updated from the Action Plans before comment.

Cell: What was the basis for public comments? Voluntary based on website?

Nick: We put effort into getting the word out through email listservs, working with a group in Ward 6,7,8 group of folks that have been active in these issues. Comments were voluntary.

Monte: Sent to folks on ANC side as well as other community organizational contacts from outreach team.

Amber Hewitt: Offers to give more detail offline

2:29 pm | Consent Vote on Batch 2 Action Plans for Public Review & Comment

The following Action Plans were unanimously voted “Yes” for moving to Public Review & Comment:

- 4.1 Expand Backwater Valve (BWV) Installation Program – DC Water
- 4.3 Require Backwater Valve Installation in Codes – DC Water
- 5.1 Develop an Annual List of Capital Projects – DMOI

- 6.8 Amend Real Property Disclosure Rules to include Backwater Valve/Drainage Complaints
- 8.1 Update DC Silver Jackets MOU to include all participating District Agencies as signatories – DMOI
- 9.3 Install Flashing Warning signs at oft-flooded intersections – HSEMA

Action Plans will be published on dcfloodtaskforce.org

Nick: DCBIA put out an interesting survey about basement flooding in newsletter – is it an option to include Action Plan available for public review in next one?

Cell: Yes, we can look into that. Will talk offline

2:33 pm | Presentation of Batch 3 Action Plans

The following Action Plans were presented to committee:

Residential Resilience Action Team Plans

- 1.5 Join FEMA’s Community Rating System to Reduce Insurance Premiums – DOEE
- 1.6 Conduct Outreach to Increase Number of Flood-Insured Residents – DISB
- 1.7a Storm Damage Remediation Grant Program for income eligible residents – DISB
- 1.7b Storm Damage Remediation Payment through Group Insurance Policy
- 1.9a Home Insurance Water Damage Mitigation Credits, Premium Discounts – DISB
- 1.9b Enhanced Water Damage Coverage for Homeowners Policy – DISB
- 2.2 Develop a Local Workforce to Perform Flood Related Repairs – DC Water
- 3.2 Make it Safer for Residents (including Renters) living in Basements – DC Water

Governance & Coordination Action Team Plans

- 6.6 Process Improvements for Floodplain Review – DCRA/DOEE
- 6.7 Improve Federal and District Collaboration on Floodplain Management – DOEE
- 7.1 Map Interior Flooding Areas – DOEE
- 8.2 Improve Process for Resolving Drainage Complaints – DOEE/DC Water
- 8.3 Finalize Plans for P St Levee Closure – DOEE
- 8.5 Create a Centralized Place for Residents to Report Flooding Problems – HSEMA
- 9.1 Early Severe Weather Warning System for Residents – HSEMA
- 9.2 Emergency Flood Response Procedures

Word documents will be sent out for comments or track changes by 9/23/22

Action Plan Discussion Notes

3.2: Make it Safer for Residents (including Renters) living in Basements – DC Water

- Lessons learned from Hurricane Ida - fatalities from trapping residents in basements, in other states
- Current regulations are for risk most likely to occur (fire), fire provisions make it harder to exit if the home is filled with water
- Best approach to protecting residents is making them aware in renters' policy of risk in case of a storm and providing some alarm if water is building up
- First step is identifying areas in city that are most at risk for this
- Develop public education programs for basements dwellings owners / renters

7.1 Map Interior Flooding Areas – DOEE

Cell: Can you distinguish how this differs from IFM?

Meredith: IFM (available in 2-3 years) is the long term, most accurate solution. This is a short term solution in response to public concerns about interior floodings while the IFM is in development.

DOEE will flag permits that are near historic flooding locations, work with projects developing there to let them know they should protect themselves from flooding.

Task Force members will develop a single centralized tracking/mapping system to track all drainage and flooding issues, regardless of agency.

EJ: Would this be housed with DOEE (the database)?

Meredith: Yes, and accessible to agencies. Not public due to security sensitivities with data. Primarily for permit review.

Nick: Centralized complaints could be at DOEE or OCTO – need to discuss. Goal is for any DC agency to log in and access this

Vermecia: Budget is \$1.5m and \$150k for centralized database - is the \$150k for GIS, building off this and using open data for district partners to share

Nick: The thought here is to consolidate tracking systems for each agency receiving flood complaints, a way to put them all in the same place to track and manage what to do with them, and eventually put them on a map. More to come on this, further discussions offline

8.2 Improve Process for Resolving Drainage Complaints – DOEE/DC Water

Nick:

- DC drainage committee, which is an informal group trying to resolve drainage issues around city and come up with solutions, could benefit from more SOPs, tracking, information for the public.
- Resolutions can take lots of time
- Want to prepare information to the public to tell them whose responsibility / who to contact
- Develop SOPs so that when an agency receives a complaint (DC Water, DDOT, DOEE), they can make sure it is addressed, followed up on, and closed out
- Formalize committee through MOA or MOU, make sure there is agency staff for it
- Establish data and tracking – in line with the IFM

-Work to be done leveraging communication between agencies

8.3 Finalize Plans for P St Levee Closure – DOEE

Nick:

-Need to figure out whose responsibility the P St levee closure is, agree who would install flood barriers if we get a flood (sand bags, jersey barrier)

-**DPW** agreed with nick on plan after walkthrough, they are committed to make sure everything needed to close the gaps. No immediate concerns on their end

8.5 Create a Centralized Place for Residents to Report Flooding Problems – HSEMA

-Centralized database needed to report flooding problems

-HSEMA has talked to partners such as DC water about process for complaints – residents call 311, 311 has a database to store, sent to DC water who investigates, they follow up with resident and close out

Victor: In this diagram, is this reflective to where DC water would triage drainage complaints as well?

Phillip Edmonds: Our proposal discusses program to empower residents, although they do have a complaint process already where water damage complaints are processed within 45 days.

EJ: What is this focused on (type of flooding, drainage issues?) and how does this work along with the proposed centralized database from DOEE? How do we not finger point at one another between agencies – does DC water coordinate all of this?

Salil: In a flood emergency, there is a large influx of calls and the command center is overwhelmed and residents end up waiting too long. Trying to work a system out where if we hit a trigger on command center calls, they will be redirected to 311. When the command center gets the call, they look at content of call and create an “investigation work order” – don’t want to dispatch a workforce that does not have the tools to solve it. Command center looks at problem, anticipates issue, pulls up historical database, then sends the work order with the correct crew to investigate. If they cannot fix it, they direct residents to another agency – want to avoid this, can cause finger pointing and residents have to make multiple calls. When determined that it cannot be solved by DC water, it is routed directly to the correct agency.

Victor: It looks like 311 is used to handle overflow services, and residents sometimes call it. DC water has this triage where if it is not a DC water issue the resident is forwarded to appropriate agency?

Salil: No, the issue is forwarded by the command center, so the resident isn’t making multiple calls. Also working out how this info will show up on a database.

Victor: Drainage committee reporting and emergency reporting could be identified in same flow diagram where the 311 piece is introduced for overflow, but the rest is the same.

Salil: We are trying to create a direct link to database for complaints, issues that go to drainage committee will show up differently on database – this is for emergencies only.

Meredith: These flooding and drainage complaints need to be divided by emergency and non-emergency. Those may have difference oaths.

Vermecia: This plan is related to the 2020 flood where there was no strategy for the overflow of calls so when DC Water was unable to respond to call from that incident then 311 can respond if they have overflow.

9.1 Early Severe Weather Warning System for Residents – HSEMA

- Utilize the alert DC system in place, no additional cost to use this system
- Create options to ensure reaching every resident

Salil: Any thoughts on including a message for basement dwellers? Would be great because that section of population is the most at risk

Carolyn: That is something we could consider when putting templates in place in review and recommendations period

Salil: Database of hospitals with mobility impaired people could have targeted messaging

Carolyn: AlertDC is a sign-up process, could expand how they identify themselves when they sign up according to the language or access they need

Melissa: Federal agreement to include those with disabilities to have proper preparation. Currently working on this. Currently in settlement agreement

Additional Discussion

Nick:

- Task force members should think about immediate action needed in some neighborhoods
- Nick was at a community event in a neighborhood where it is impossible to exit without going to an underpass – intersection floods
- Suggested making sure they catch basins are clear, possibly pumps
- Committee has done a good job thinking of long-term, but how can we leverage this task force if it floods tomorrow?
- Examples: Nannie Helen Burroughs Ave and i-295

3:50 pm | Closing Remarks

- **Monte** thanks us for keeping equity in mind in presentations

- **Director Tommy Wells** remarks:

- We are one of the first cities to do this at a comprehensive level
- We are going into next phase of getting this funded
- Operating under city administrator, look forward to presenting this budget
- This exercise reminds everyone that flooding disaster is a shared responsibility

3:53 pm | Next Steps

-Final Approval Dates of Action Plans Batches 1-3

-Batch 1: September 21, 2022

-Batch 2: November 16, 2022

-Batch 3: January 18, 2023

-Committee to review Batch 3 Action Plans, will be sent via email by 9/23

-Batch 2 Plans that are released for public comment will be uploaded to the website this week, agencies to incorporate comments

-If you are not receiving emails, notify DCFloodTaskForce@dc.gov

3:57 pm | Closeout

Next Governance and Coordination meeting is Friday, October 14 at 10:30am

Next Residential Resilience Action Team Meeting is Tuesday, October 11 at 2:30pm

Next Full Flood Task Force Meeting is Wednesday, November 16 at 2pm

The meeting ENDED at 4:00 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 dcfloodtaskforce.org.