

VERONA-CEDAR GROVE FLOOD CONTROL ADVISORY BOARD  
CEDAR GROVE MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
9:00 AM

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**OCTOBER 16, 2025**

**I. ROLL CALL**

Cedar Grove Township Clerk Dale A. Forde called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Present: Councilwoman Cynthia Holland, Verona  
Deputy Mayor Joseph Maceri, Cedar Grove  
Kevin O'Sullivan, Township Manager, Verona  
Joseph M. Zichelli, Township Manager, Cedar Grove  
Paul Ferriero, Township Engineer, Verona  
Alexandra Handel, Township Engineer, Cedar Grove  
John LoCraсто, Resident Member, Verona  
Felix Luisi, Resident Member, Cedar Grove (arrived 9:05 a.m.)

Also Present:

Mayor James Damiano, Township of Little Falls  
Vincent Quatrone, Township Administrator, Township of Little Falls  
Samuel Yodice, Jr., Borough Administrator, Borough of Woodland Park  
Dale A. Forde, Township Clerk, Cedar Grove

The Township Clerk made the required announcement concerning the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Adequate notice of this meeting was duly provided to the Verona-Cedar Grove Times on October 2, 2025, filed with the Township Clerk, and posted on the public bulletin board in the Municipal Building Lobby in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

The Board welcomed Mayor Damiano, Administrator Quatrone and Administrator Yodice.

Mr. Zichelli mentioned that if the four Towns came together, they could discuss developing a budget to pay administrative and engineering fees. He reported if Little Falls and Woodland Park joined Verona and Cedar Grove, an ordinance would need to be adopted.

Mr. O'Sullivan said joining with Little Falls and Woodland Park would be a greater opportunity for the Board to have a larger voice.

Deputy Mayor Maceri reported when he sat on the Regional Flood Board in Little Falls, the Township was able to receive grant funding and the Township's voice was heard. He said he was glad to have the Passaic family present.

**II. OLD BUSINESS**

a) DEP Issuance of I.P. to Township of Cedar Grove 615 Pompton Avenue.

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Mr. Zichelli reported that the property owner of 615 Pompton Avenue lost 15 feet to bank erosion of the Peckman River. He reported the Township had armored a portion of the bank opposite the side of the doctor's office located at 615 Pompton Avenue. He reported that the owner of the property felt the armoring damaged her side of the property.

Ms. Handel reported the Township received a permit to install a 15-foot wall from the DEP; however, after the work was done, there was a change of opinion and the DEP directed the Township to install a ready rock retaining wall.

Mayor James Damiano described an incident with a pre-existing wall that was completely destroyed for a residential property in Little Falls who had a permit as of right. He reported the County took care of Cedar Grove's side and secured funds for resident(s). Mayor Damiano reported the Army Corps of Engineers promised funds to Little Falls about two years ago, but had not done anything in five years. He explained it was a long process. He explained the funds were intended for the installation of a flood tunnel. He said the DEP was the biggest hurdle in these matters.

b) Recap Discussion with NJOEM Re: Peckman River Bank Stabilization.

Ms. Handel reported that the Township has a five-year general permit that permits for the de-snagging of the Peckman River. She reported there would no longer be any downstream incidents after the installation of the wall.

Mayor Damiano responded he would prefer water going downstream to debris getting snagged. He said bank stabilization was a benefit.

Ms. Handel reported that she discussed Cedar Grove eroded banks, specifically streams of water going into Community Park. She reported she was still in communication with the agency to discuss other funding options.

Mr. O'Sullivan reported he had a contractor lined up to handle stabilization in the winter. He reported peak runoff would be reduced. He asked about providing support to the County of Essex for the lake lowering permit.

Councilwoman Holland asked if Verona and Cedar Grove would collectively or individually request a lake lowering permit from the County. Township Managers O'Sullivan and Zichelli responded they would do both.

Councilwoman Holland moved that the Joint Board request a lake lowering permit from the County collectively and individually. Deputy Mayor Maceri seconded the motion and it was passed by the following vote.

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AYE: Councilwoman Holland, Deputy Mayor Maceri, Verona Township Manager O'Sullivan, Cedar Grove Township Manager Zichelli, Verona Engineer Ferriero, Cedar Grove Engineer Handel, Resident Member LoCraсто, Resident Member Luisi

NO: None

c) Blue Acres Update (Verona).

Mr. O'Sullivan reported the first section of interest for the Blue Acres Program was along the Peckman River in Verona. He reported the Township notified residents about Blue Acres and explained the process of receiving funding from the program. He reported three residents sent letters of intent, met with Blue Acres representatives on an individual basis, then provided an agreement to work with the Program. He reported that he submitted the agreement to FEMA during its grant cycle. He reported that Blue Acres suggested working with small sections of Peckman River.

Ms. Handel asked Mr. O'Sullivan how he handled the process. Mr. O'Sullivan responded he would provide her with the information.

Mayor Damiano shared his experience with Blue Acres and FEMA. He recommended that the Board consider the pros and cons.

Administrator Yodice also shared his experience with Blue Acres. He concurred with Mayor Damiano's remarks.

Deputy Mayor Maceri shared that the Board would have to consider the projects on a case by case basis. He shared that small clusters of the Peckman should be considered.

d) Peckman River Stabilization at Bloomfield Avenue (Verona)

Mr. Ferriero recommended that the Board consider a design standard for normal impervious projects and stricter rules or variances be considered for larger issues.

Mr. O'Sullivan reported that Verona adopted a stricter Stormwater Ordinance than was required by the State.

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

a) Welcome to Little Falls and Woodland Park (Request for Formal Membership).

Mr. Zichelli reported that based on what was shared during the Meeting, Verona and Cedar Grove wanted to formally request membership be extended to Little Falls and Woodland Park. He asked Mayor Damiano and Borough Administrator Yodice to provide the information to their respective Councils.

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Mayor Damiano reported that Little Falls, Totowa and Woodland Park were on Little Falls-Woodland Park-Totowa Passaic Valley Regional Flood Control Board concerning the Passaic and Peckman Rivers. He shared that he liked the idea of bank stabilization upstream. He indicated he would meet with Totowa to discuss if they were still interested in remaining on a Joint Board for the Passaic River only.

Borough Administrator Yodice shared that joining the Verona-Cedar Grove Board would be a great way to share resources through equipment and grant writing.

Ms. Handel shared that all of the towns present experienced issues with the Peckman River and everyone would benefit from the construction of something.

Mr. Zichelli shared the collaboration would help with Capital Planning and cost sharing.

b) Request to Passaic Valley to Perform Cleaning/De-snagging of Peckman

Mr. Zichelli advised that he would send a request to the Passaic Valley Sewage Commission for them to perform annual cleaning and de-snagging in the Peckman River.

c) MS4 Permitting Phase I Watershed Inventory Report

Ms. Handel reported that the Inventory Report deadline is December 31, 2025 and the other two are scheduled for December 31, 2026 and December 31, 2027, respectively.

Mr. Ferriero reported he had a meeting with the DEP next week to get clarification on all of the requirements. He explained that the Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund (MEL) assisted with funding. He advised of a case out of Haddonfield regarding a \$22 million jury verdict for notice of a defective stormwater management feature that imparted liability on the municipality. He advised that many townships are facing similar suits. He said he would share the information with Mr. Zichelli.

Mr. Zichelli said he would reach out to the Town's Joint Insurance Fund (JIF).

The Board agreed that the JIF should work with the MEL.

Mr. O'Sullivan reported Bohler Engineering was assisting Verona with the MS4 Report.

Ms. Handel reported the Township was discussing a rate for contractors to handle catch basins.

Mr. Zichelli reported the Township spent a lot of money on materials. Mr. LoCrao asked about precast. Mr. Zichelli responded it may be an option.

Mr. O'Sullivan said precast may be needed on a case by case basis.

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Mr. Zichelli said for the next capital year, the Board could consider recommending getting one contractor for all four towns in an attempt to achieve a better rate to the municipalities

d) Future Meeting Schedule

The Joint Board decided that if Little Falls and Woodland Park chose to become Members of the Joint Board, the 2026 Meeting Schedule should be prepared. The Board with the inclusion of Little Falls and Woodland Park decided on the following 2026 schedule:

The quarterly meetings would be held on:

- 1) Thursday, January 15, 2026 at 9 AM to be hosted by the Township of Verona
- 2) Friday, April 17, 2026 at 9 AM to be hosted by the Township of Cedar Grove
- 3) Friday, September 18, 2026 at 9 AM to be hosted by the Borough of Woodland Park
- 4) Friday, December 4, 2026 at 9 AM to be hosted by the Township of Little Falls

Mayor Damiano suggested each town's OEM Coordinator be appointed or designated to the Board.

The Board decided that each Town's OEM Coordinator and the Municipal Clerks from Little Falls and Woodland Park be on the Board as non-voting Members.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Zichelli asked if there was anyone present wishing to address the Joint Board. Seeing no one in the audience, this portion of the meeting was closed.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

There being nothing further to discuss, Councilwoman Holland moved to adjourn. Deputy Mayor Maceri seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. All Members voted in the affirmative at 10:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale A. Forde, RMC, MMC, Township Clerk  
Township of Cedar Grove