

Alle-Kiski Intergovernmental Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
Meeting #1 - August 18, 2022
New Kensington City Hall

Attendees (D-Delegate, A-Alternate)

AK IGC: George Hawdon (D-Arnold), Mark Saxon (Arnold Redevelopment Authority), Melissa Cortileso (D-Upper Burrell), Tom Guzzo (D-New Kensington), Mike Korn (A-Allegheny Township), Kristen Sarno (A-East Vandergrift), Barbara Sharp (D-East Vandergrift), Jody Sarno (D-Vandergrift), Marilee Kessler (A-Vandergrift), John Andrejczik (D-Lower Burrell)

Westmoreland County Planning: Corey Block, Victoria Baur

Public: None

Meeting started at 5:10 PM.

Affirm/select new officers and delegates/alternates:

No changes to current officer positions or delegates/alternates were discussed or made.

Review/approve minutes from Meeting 11:

A motion was made by John and seconded by Missy to approve the Meeting 11 minutes. The Meeting 11 minutes were approved.

Follow-up: Admission of Vandergrift into the IGC:

Marilee reported that Vandergrift Borough decided to formally join the AK IGC. She presented a signed AK IGC resolution dated August 1, 2022 to the IGC.

Formal vote: Admission of Vandergrift into the IGC:

A motion was made by Tom and seconded by Missy to admit Vandergrift Borough into the AK IGC. The motion passed unanimously by formal roll call, and Vandergrift Borough's admission into the AK IGC was approved. Jody noted that he will be the Delegate and Marilee will be the Alternate for Vandergrift.

Year 1 Reflection - 4 question exercise:

Victoria and Corey lead members through a 4-question exercise, reflecting on the AK IGC's first year of operation, and setting the stage for the second year. Members provided answers to questions and the group discussed feedback:

1. What went well? Organized meetings, positive and accepting group, county support, continued to build relationships, retained core members, and added Vandergrift.
2. What didn't go well? Not deciding on a shared project, limited time to work together, and different needs between communities.

3. What needs to change for the long-term success of the IGC? Continued patience and persistence, continued county support, becoming more focused, and accomplishing shared code enforcement.
4. What expectations do you have for yourself as a member of the IGC? Honest and faithful representation of my community, get more local government officials involved with IGC, continue to communicate information back to my community, continue to get to know others, and see projects through to completion.

AK IGC Year 2 - Project management tracker:

Victoria presented a printed version of the draft AK IGC project management tracker to members. The tool will be posted on the ReimaginingOurWestmoreland.org site to help track and show progress on AK IGC activities and projects. The group discussed the tracker and agreed it would be useful to help keep projects moving and to communicate progress to other local government officials. Victoria noted that the tracker would be shared and asked for members to provide feedback.

AK IGC Year 2 agreements to be distributed after meeting:

Victoria noted the AK IGC Year 2 agreements would be distributed in time for communities to sign at their September meetings. Signed, dated, and attested agreements are to be returned, along with the second year dues, to the Westmoreland Planning Division office by Monday, October 3rd.

Shared code enforcement officer - Follow-up on HW: What property maintenance codes does your community follow (IPMC)?:

The group discussed which communities follow the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC), noting that Arnold, Lower Burrell, New Kensington, East Vandergrift, and Vandergrift each follow different editions of the IPMC. Allegheny and Upper Burrell do not follow the IPMC, and instead use separate ordinances.

The group discussed the benefit of working from the same code enforcement software and property maintenance codes, when considering sharing a code enforcement officer. The group discussed their interest in subscribing to the Redevelopment Authority of Westmoreland County's (RACW) cloud-based code enforcement software, noting that New Kensington has already digitized their system and Allegheny Township is in the process of digitizing their system, utilizing private firms.

Victoria shared that Brian Lawrence is willing to speak at the October 20th meeting to share information about the RACW's cloud-based code enforcement software for communities. Victoria also shared that Amanda Settelmaier is willing to speak to the group at an upcoming meeting about the Turtle Creek Valley COG's experience with creating a shared code enforcement program. The group confirmed their interest in having Brian and Amanda speak at upcoming meetings.

Next AK IGC meeting date: Thursday, September 15th, 2022 @ 5 PM - Discuss agenda items for upcoming meeting:

Tom confirmed that Jake Lydick with eye-bot will be returning to the September 15th meeting to share sample drone data and continue the discussion on the application of drones for short-term community-based projects. Tom reminded the group to send agenda items along for the next meeting.

Public comment:

None.

Other discussion:

Mike asked about the option of virtual meetings or providing a “call-in” option for members who aren’t able to attend. The group discussed options and preferences. Members expressed preference for in-person meetings over virtual, but noted this option could be used in the future. The group acknowledged a “call-in” option may be added to meetings in the near future.

John shared that the riverfront plans between New Kensington, Arnold, Lower Burrell, Harrison and Pittsburgh Brewing Company are postponed until next year, due to a lack of participation from pontoon companies and time constraints.

Kristen suggested that the group consider amending the AK IGC bylaws to better reflect the current operation of the IGC and its needs. Tom asked the group to reflect on the bylaws in order to discuss amendments at the next meeting. Victoria and Corey confirmed they would identify the process for the IGC to amend its bylaws.

Victoria shared a flyer and information regarding the RACW’s Autumn Blight Remediation Event on Friday, October 14th at the Westmoreland County Community College Youngwood Event Center. The focus of the event will be to discuss blight plans and remediation efforts.

Victoria shared a flyer with information on the Westmoreland Broadband effort, encouraging all of Westmoreland County to take an internet survey which will help determine where broadband investments are made throughout the County.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Tom and seconded by Missy to adjourn the meeting. The meeting ended at 6:18 PM.