

Alle-Kiski Intergovernmental Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting #2

September 16, 2021

New Kensington City Hall

Attendees

AK IGC: Amy Rockwell (D-Lower Burrell), George Hawdon (D-Arnold), Dennis Scarpiniti (A-New Kensington), Ren Steele (D-Allegheny Township), Tom Guzzo (D-New Kensington), John Andrejczik (Lower Burrell), Kathy Starr (A-Allegheny Township), Kristen Sarno (A-East Vandergrift), Barbara Sharp (D-East Vandergrift) (D-Delegate, A-Alternate)

Westmoreland County Planning: Corey Block, Daniel Carpenter

Public: None

Meeting started at 5:04 PM.

Tom called the meeting to order and confirmed that everyone had a chance to review the meeting #1 minutes and asked if there were any questions or concerns. A motion was made by Amy to approve the minutes and it was seconded by George. Meeting #1 minutes were approved.

Tom then confirmed with the group the meeting schedule, location, and the option of virtual meetings (if necessary). Ren made a motion to approve the meeting schedule and it was seconded by Amy. The schedule was approved. John mentioned that Lower Burrell City Hall could be used as a backup if needed.

Tom opened the floor for the group to discuss long- and short-term goals of the IGC.

John talked about the significance of a riverfront trail and Ren added the ongoing efforts with the Erie to Pittsburgh trail that would go through the communities to the Point in Pittsburgh. Members discussed concerns with time constraints and right-of-way. The group also talked about the multiple possibilities of other trail connections and connections to local parks. Tom mentioned talking to key property owner(s) as a unified group.

Tom followed the discussion with how the IGC sees itself and it being an entity. He asked about the need for letterhead and a website. It was determined that

letterhead is necessary, Daniel said he'd create a Word template for the IGC's use. The group concluded that a website is not necessary at this time and will utilize each municipality's respective website as well as the reimaginingourwestmoreland.org site.

Daniel asked about the group's desire to become more self-sustaining after year one. Members expressed interest in continued county support to the IGC. Daniel expressed the county's desire for the IGC to be successful and ensured their commitment to year one. The group discussed the limitations of the current dues structure and the possibility of revising it to allow for continued county support after year one.

Tom talked about broadband in underserved areas and if it would be a short- or long-term goal. Amy discussed funding opportunities. Corey added that the county is currently forming a task force on the issue and is examining options and approaches (countywide/local/regional). Tom expressed interest for this group of municipalities to be actively involved in the process.

Tom also brought up transit (trains & buses) as a long-term goal and cited years of the region talking about train service to Pittsburgh.

The group then began to talk about short-term projects. Kathy continued the transit discussion by expressing the need for more bus stops/service (e.g. older residents of Allegheny Woodlands, students at WCCC & PSNK). Tom mentioned that New Kensington is paying for dedicated transit service for residents to access a grocery store with covid-CDBG funds.

George discussed providing development-ready sites as a way to remove blight and position parcels for redevelopment. He also talked about the desire to have an inventory of developable locations that would provide an opportunity for the communities to market properties. Tom discussed the opportunity for shared code enforcement. Daniel discussed the county's experience in conducting blight and vacant property inventories, as well as with mapping repository properties.

Tom expressed interest in actions #10, #11, and #12 from Remaking Our Westmoreland regarding joint purchasing, shared services, and capital projects. Tom inquired about RoadBotics.

Daniel mentioned the group's interest in identifying key corridors and gateways for beautification from meeting #1 and the county's ability to assist.

Amy also brought up EMS and the opportunity for the group to take a regional approach, rather than individual municipalities going at it alone.

Daniel notified the group of an application being submitted to the R.K. Mellon Foundation for a mobility study project. The application is being led by the IDC, PSNK, and CMU's Metro21. If funded, the study will examine and model options and scenarios for improved mobility in the Alle-Kiski. The study aims to build off of the work that was done during Remaking Our Westmoreland and look at transit, ridesharing, microtransit, on-demand service, etc. to better connect college students to institutions and workers to jobs. Daniel asked if the IGC would provide a letter of support for the application and Tom said yes.

Tom recapped the discussions on long- and short-term options for the IGC. A riverfront trail and trains & busses were identified as long-term items. Blight, mapping and marketing developable lots, and code enforcement were identified as mid-term. And letterhead and an inventory of purchasing, capital projects, large equipment owned/needed, and services provided/needed were identified as short-term actions.

Kristen brought up the issue of trash collection and how other communities deal with non-payment among residents. A general discussion on utilities and animal services continued.

Tom asked for a motion to adjourn, a motion was made by Amy and it was seconded by George.

Meeting ended at 6:12 PM.

