

Alle-Kiski Intergovernmental Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
Meeting #2 - September 21st 2023
Virtual Via Google Meet

Attendees (D-Delegate, A-Alternate)

AK IGC: Matt Grantz (D-West Leechburg), Melissa Cortilesio (D-Upper Burrell), Tom Guzzo (D-New Kensington), John Andrejczik (D-Lower Burrell), Jody Sarno (D-Vandergrift), Marilee Kessler (A-Vandergrift Borough), Kristen Sarno (A-East Vandergrift), Barbara Sharp (D-East Vandergrift), Dennis Scarpiniti (A-New Kensington)

Westmoreland County Planning: Jason Rigone, Jillian Caswell, Victoria Baur
Guests: None **Public:** Cynthia Contie (Vandergrift resident)

Meeting started at 5:01 PM.

1. Review/approve minutes from Meeting 1

A motion was made by Missy and seconded by Jody to approve the Meeting 1 minutes. The Meeting 1 minutes were approved.

2. AK IGC Year 3

a. Agreement status

b. Invitation letter to non-member communities

Victoria noted the AK IGC year 3 agreements were mailed out at the end of August. She indicated that everyone should have received two copies and instructions to complete the agreements and to mail both copies back to the county with the year 3 dues. Victoria said the county has received agreements and dues back from Upper Burrell and West Leechburg. The county also received some information back from Arnold and East Vandergrift.

Tom noted that the agreement was reviewed by New Kensington in their last meeting so the county should receive the agreement and dues soon. Kristen noted that East Vandergrift approved the agreement and it will be sent to the county soon. Victoria mentioned that communities will receive a completed copy of the agreement once commissioners approve it.

Victoria brought up that an invitation letter to non-member Alle-Kiski communities was drafted and will be sent out soon on behalf of the AK IGC. The letter serves to notify neighboring communities of the AK IGC, its current interests, and invites them to come to upcoming AK IGC meetings.

A motion was made by Jody and seconded by Missy to approve letter to be sent out. Victoria noted she would work with Tom to sign and and distribute the letter soon.

3. AK IGC Blight Inventory and Plan

a. Agreement status & LGA Resolutions

b. Press release

c. *Virtual Kick off meeting: October 5th @ 10AM*

Victoria shared that the county commissioners approved the blight inventory agreement on September 14th and copies of the completed agreements will be mailed out to the six participating communities. Victoria mentioned that the county is still waiting on Local Government Academy Resolutions from Arnold and Vandergrift.

Victoria announced that after commissioners approved the agreement, a press release was issues on behalf of the AK IGC. She mentioned that it did not appear that the press release got picked up anywhere yet but it is posted on the AK IGC landing page on the *Reimagining Our Westmoreland* website.

Tom said he received a call from the Tribune Review with questions about the Blight Inventory. Missy confirmed that the Tribune Review also contacted Upper Burrell. Jason noted that he received a call from the Tribune Review also. .

Victoria reminded the group of the virtual kick off meeting occurring on Thursday, October 5th at 10AM. She stressed that representatives from each community participating in the blight project should be on the call - including code enforcement officers, police chiefs, fire chiefs, and council members. She added that project meetings will likely occur monthly and be virtual. Victoria said reports on the project's status will occur regularly at the AK IGC meetings as well.

4. Shared code enforcement

a. Discuss third party providers

i. Harshman CE Group, KLH Engineers Inc., Strategic Solutions

b. Determine next steps

c. Subcommittee check-in, report

Tom asked the group what their thoughts and feedback were based on the third party presentations that occurred at the last meeting. Victoria mentioned that summaries of the presentations are in the meeting minutes. Victoria said she did not receive any follow-up questions for the presenters from the group but she did thank the presenters for coming and let them know interested communities may be reaching out.

Kristen mentioned that East Vandergrift liked Strategic Solutions the best. Kristen shared all the documents and information from the presentations with her council and they liked Strategic Solutions. She said that Strategic Solutions seemed the most flexible and easiest to work with. Tom echoed these comments.

Victoria mentioned that each company was interested in negotiating their hourly rates based on bulk participation of AK IGC communities. She stated that this opportunity may not have been made available if each community approached the companies on their own.

Tom asked the group if they would have interest in any of the companies doing a brief follow-up. John suggested that the group rank each company (1,2,3) and compare the rankings to come to a consensus on which company best suits the group's common interest.

Jody mentioned that Vandergrift's council is still not sure if there is a need to work with a third party code enforcement agency, but if they find a need during more busy months, Strategic Solutions seemed to have the most willingness to work with the communities based on varying needs.

Jason asked if the companies discussed flexibility of their services from community to community during their presentations. John said that the subject was briefly discussed. Victoria said based on the presentations, the companies each seem to offer services and pricing based on a "pay for what you use" basis.

Jason suggested that Vandergrift could be an example for the code enforcement companies to create a more flexible package that shifts code services based on specific community needs.

Jason also suggested that the members could be surveyed to determine which company is best to follow-up with. Victoria noted she would follow-up with members to survey their company rankings and report back.

There was no report from the shared code enforcement subcommittee.

5. Shared fire service Subcommittee

a. Check-in, report

There was no report from the shared fire service subcommittee.

6. Next AK IGC meeting date: Thursday October 19th, 2023 @ 5PM (in person)

a. Discuss agenda items

None.

7. Public comment

None.

Other Discussion

Victoria shared that the county is planning to host a virtual interest meeting for Planning District 3 (the Mon Valley Planning District) on Monday, October 2nd at 6PM. Victoria said the purpose of the meeting is to compile the representatives from the Mon Valley area to see if they are interested in the Planning District process.

Victoria asked if anyone would be interested in coming to the meeting to give a testimony to the Planning District process. John mentioned that in the past, he prepared something for his council which summarized the benefits of being a part of the AK IGC. John offered to send that document to Victoria to use as a resource.

Jason noted that the county is looking for someone to give a peer recommendation that gives a localized observation of the program. Jason asked if anyone who found a benefit in the Planning District process could speak about that briefly at the upcoming meeting. Tom offered to attend the meeting and speak. Victoria said she would follow-up with an invitation.

Kristen asked if anyone in the group uses quickbooks for accounting and if they don't, which accounting software do they recommend? Kristen also mentioned that East Vandergrift is looking to purchase electronic devices for the mayor and the president or vice president of council. She asked if anyone has recommendations on which devices are best to purchase.

Tom suggested an IT specialist that New Kensington, Arnold, and Lower Burrell have worked with in the past. Victoria suggested Google chrome books because of sizing, user friendly features, and affordability. Jody suggested evaluating the uses for the devices first before deciding on a type of device. The type of device might change depending on training required and potential uses.

Jody asked what group members thought of the virtual format of the AK IGC meeting. Jody explained that he liked the flexibility of virtual meetings. John said he appreciated not having to commute. Group members echoed these comments.

8. Adjournment

A motion was made by Missy and seconded by Jody to adjourn the meeting. The meeting ended at 5:37 PM.