

Alle-Kiski Intergovernmental Council
Organizational Meeting Minutes
Meeting #1 January 15th, 2026
Virtual Via Google Meet

Attendees (D-Delegate, A-Alternate)

AK IGC: Tom Guzzo (D-New Kensington), John Zavadak (A-New Kensington), Melissa Cortilesio (D-Upper Burrell), Greg Primm (D-Lower Burrell), Barbara Sharp (D-East Vandergrift), Lee Fairman (A-East Vandergrift)

Westmoreland County Planning: Victoria Baur, Jillian Caswell, Joshua Spano, Jason Rigone

Public: None.

Meeting started at 5:03 PM.

1. Review/approve minutes from Meeting 15

A motion was made by Missy and seconded by Tom to approve the minutes. The meeting 15 minutes were approved.

2. Year 5 Operation

a. Agreements

Victoria reminded the group that the year 5 cooperation agreements were circulated to each community via email and mail in mid- December. Victoria noted that the county planning department has received signed agreements and dues, from West Leechburg, Upper Burrell, New Kensington, and Lower Burrell confirmed that their agreements have been approved and they will be received shortly. East Vandergrift requested a follow-up email regarding this.

b. Office Positions

The group confirmed that they didn't want to make any changes to those holding office positions: Tom Guzzo--Chairman, Greg Primm--Vice Chairman, Marilee Kessler--Secretary. A motion was made to maintain those holding office positions by Missy and seconded by Lee.

c. Confirm D/A

Group members in attendance confirmed that current delegates and alternates will remain the same for year 5. The group noted that they are unsure of delegates and alternates in Allegheny Township and Arnold due to recent changes.

d. Survey- Year 5 Goals

Jill shared a [Goals for Year 5 Operation Survey](#) with the group to complete, focusing on interests and goals for year 5 of AK IGC operation including questions on focus areas, project types, and services. Group members completed the survey and viewed results, then discussed some project ideas and goals:

- Tom suggested that the group continue blight remediation efforts by working together to demolish a blighted structure and using joint funding and planning efforts to build a community green space or park in place of the blighted structure.
 - The group agreed that they would like to pursue this idea and suggested using the organization [Kaboom](#) to help with the planning and construction of the community park, as well as other community organizations and volunteers.

- Tom suggested emergency management coordination, joint purchasing, and transportation and neighborhood planning should be topics that the group continuously plans on a regular basis.
- The group mutually agreed to continue prioritizing implementation of the Alle-Kiski Blight Plan and Alle-Kiski Planning District Plan

Jill noted that she will share the survey in the follow-up email for members to add any additional input.

e. Succession Planning

Victoria congratulated the group on entering their fifth year of operation. Victoria noted that the AK IGC has been working together for the past several years, with support from the county planning department, in hopes to take steps towards independence and self-sufficiency as an organization. She said throughout the next year, the group should continue to discuss their goals and aspirations as an IGC and work towards setting up functionality and independence to help ensure long-term success.

Victoria asked the group if they would be interested in involving a third party consultant to help facilitate the succession planning process. Victoria mentioned that Susan Hockenberry, who worked with the group in the planning district process where the AK IGC originated from, might make sense given her experience in intergovernmental collaboration and coaching. If this option is pursued, dues would be used to offset the cost of a consultant.

The group supported the idea of Susan Hockenberry being involved as a consultant to help facilitate succession planning for the AK IGC.

3. Next AK IGC Meeting Date: Thursday, February 19th, 2026 @ 5PM (in-person)

a. Discuss Agenda Items

Victoria and Jill asked for any agenda items to be sent in for the next or any upcoming meetings. Jill noted that the county will continue to try to secure presenters for virtual meetings and reminded the group to send suggestions for virtual presenters based on their interests.

Jill mentioned that county planners can also present on any planning topics that the group would like to know more about such as land use and zoning best practices. Lee suggested that a representative from the organization Kaboom would be helpful to hear from.

Other:

Jason informed the group that the Westmoreland County Community Development department received \$5.7 million dollars in Lead Hazard Painting removal funding. This funding is used for the [Lead Hazard Control Program](#), which removes lead paint hazards from eligible homes, including low-income households with older homes. Jason said the Community Development department will be promoting this program and communicating details shortly.

Jason informed the group that the process for exploring the reuse of the Penn State New Kensington site has continued and will go through 2026. Jason noted that the planning process will take place in two phases: 1, a facilities conditions assessment and 2, a community needs

analysis. He further noted that the comprehensive facilities conditions assessment was made possible by the Economic Growth Connection, who fronted the capital for that contract.

Following this process, a third party consultant will likely be hired to facilitate the community needs analysis including an involved process of community outreach and public engagement. Jason noted that the AK IGC will have the opportunity to re-engage and provide input during this process. Jason said that the PSNK Reuse Committee requested to be reimbursed for the costs of these processes by Penn State.

Josh provided an update on the [Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program](#) (BEAD). He said that Pennsylvania submitted their final proposal in September but the National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA) has not approved the proposal yet.

Missy noted that there is a **residential informational meeting on the potential development of the TECfusions data center** - repurposed at the former Alcoa Research and Development campus - in Upper Burrell on **Monday, January 26th at 7 pm** at the Upper Burrell municipal building. Jason mentioned that the WCIDC received notice of the first tenant of this new project.

Tom suggested that the group consider reaching out to the Red Cross to potentially pursue a joint effort to work with the organization to organize fire alarm installations throughout communities. Tom noted that New Kensington has worked with the Red Cross in the past to install up to 400 fire alarms in houses throughout the city.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Missy and seconded by John. The meeting ended at 5:53 PM.