

**Borough of Ben Avon**  
**7101 Church Avenue, Ben Avon, Pennsylvania 15202**  
**Regular Meeting of Council – November 15, 2016**  
**Minutes**

**Call to Order**

Council President Earl Bohn called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Council Members Present**

Russell Kuehner, Michael Wrbas, Richard White, Mayor Robert Jones, Earl Bohn, Philip Brind'Amour, Brad Cole, Ken Opiery

**Council Members Absent**

**Others Present**

Anne Sweeney, Solicitor  
Dale Regrut, Public Works Foreman  
Lisa Cronin, Secretary  
Jim Rupert; Chief; Ben Avon Volunteer Fire Department  
Adam Beck, Sergeant; Ohio Township Police Department

**Public Participation**

Susan Hockenberry, Executive Director from the QVCOG, accompanied by Jean Sebastien Valois, President of QVCOG and council member of Kilbuck Township, made a presentation to council about her newly appointed position and the future goals, roles, ideas, and purpose of the QVCOG and how that will benefit Ben Avon. See Exhibit A  
Scott Keener, residing at 7140 Belle Riviere Court and a member of the Tri-Borough Joint Planning Commission, came by to hear Carolyn Yagle's report. Council asked Ms. Yagle to reschedule as council did not have time to review her information.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion: Mr. Brind'Amour; Second: Mr. Wrbas; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2016 Regular Meeting of Council. Mr. Bohn abstained.

**Financial Report - Report given by Richard White**

Motion: Mr. Opiery; Second: Mr. Wrbas; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the November 2016 accounts payable reports as presented, authorizing payments of \$27,153.18 from the general account.

**Administration Report – Report given by Richard White, Chair**

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Kuehner; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the November 2016 Revenue and Expense. Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Brind'Amour; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to explore the costs and benefits of joining other COG's.

**Public Works / Building and Property Report – Report given by Ken Pipery**

Mr. Pipery reported that he and Mr. Cole will draw up specifications for the Fire Hall repair work and a new bid will go out in January 2017 and not include the roof repairs. The roof repair project will be deferred to another time.

**Public Safety/Code Enforcement – No Report given**

**Public Affairs – No Report given**

**Mayor’s Report – No Report given**

**Police Chief’s Report – Report given by Sergeant Beck**

**Fire Chief’s Report – Report given by Chief Rupert**

**Tri-Borough Joint Planning Commission Report – No Report**

**Solicitor’s Report – No Report**

Ms. Sweeney requested an Executive Session to discuss legal issues.

**New Business**

**2017 Budget**

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Pipery; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to advertise the 2017 Budget as presented.

**Ordinance No. 777**

Motion: Mr. Pipery; Second: Mr. Cole; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to advertise Ordinance No. 777, levying an ad valorem real estate tax for the fiscal year 2017.

**Verizon Wireless Tower**

Motion: Mr. Pipery; Second: Mr. Wrbas; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to reject the Verizon proposal to erect an 80’ cellular tower.

**Old Business**

**Consolidate Properties**

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Wrbas; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the consolidation of properties; 214-E-20 and 214-F-192. Solicitor will handle the paperwork.

**Executive Session**

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Wrbas; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to begin Executive Session at 8:15 pm for discussing legal issues.

Motion: Mr. Pipery; Second: Mr. Cole; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to adjourn from Executive Session and reconvene Regular Session at 8:29 pm

**Adjournment**

Motion: Mr. Cole; Second: Mr. Kuehner; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Lisa Cronin,  
Borough Secretary*

## Ben Avon Borough

Listening Session  
November 15, 2016

Quaker Valley Council of Governments

Jean-Sebastien Valois, COG President  
Susan G. Hockenberry, Executive Director



### Purpose of this Visit

- Introductions
- Reflections
- Hear from Ben Avon Borough Council and Mayor
  - What are your top 3 concerns for Ben Avon?
  - What is your timeframe?
  - How will you know you made a difference?
  - Respond at: [tinyurl.com/qvcogms](http://tinyurl.com/qvcogms)
- We will come back to these questions

## Reflection

QVCOG declined as a matter of both organization and governance

- What is the organization doing to provide responsive, efficient, and equitable service?
- What are the members doing to establish and keep the organization viable?

Regardless of the past, this point in time presents tremendous opportunity for the communities of QVCOG

- Reframe the community conversation about intergovernmental cooperation
- Set a new course

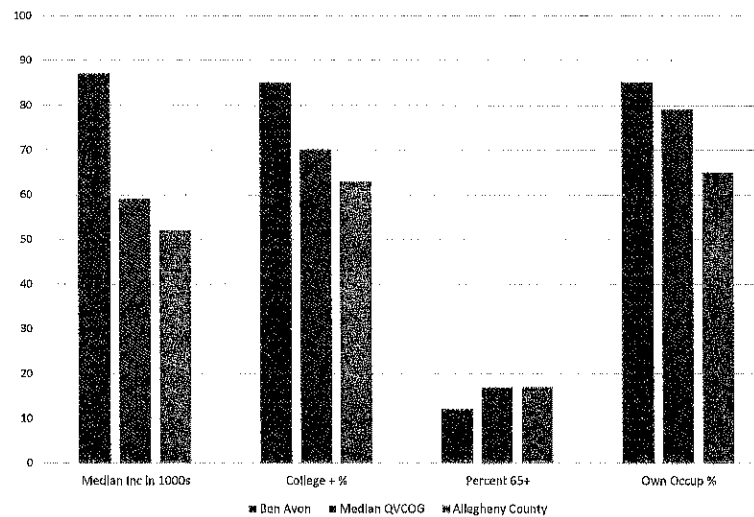
## Role and Purpose of COGs

- Enabled by PA Constitution and Legislature to overcome barriers in muni codes
  - It's up to local communities to decide what to make of them
  - Flexible solutions based on shared concerns
- Provides easy way for other governments and potential funders to think about and engage a territory
  - "the area along the Ohio River from City of Pittsburgh line to the Beaver County line" or the "65 Corridor"
- Adds capacity and scale to member communities
- Voluntary
- Improves communication
- Improves all intergovernmental cooperation, not just thru projects it as an organization administers

## The Opportunity, QVCOG 2.0

- Take advantage of the reboot to reshape the COG
  - Identify individual communities priorities in order to identify multi-municipal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
  - Build on traditional contractual relationships
  - Review understandings of the municipal-COG relationship
  - Build better community relationships
  - New organizational capacity of COG

## An Asset Based Approach



## Asset Based Approach

- Mixed Use Walkable Communities
  - Consumer Trends NAR 2014 Survey “Somewhat or Very Important” 78%
- Comparatively strong local government fiscal position

	FB / Reve Ratio	FB / Exp Ratio
Ben Avon-- 2014	73%	85%
Beb Avon-- 3 yr ave	67%	75%
QVCOG -- 3 yr ave	14%	14%

- IGC makes a difference in COG area/increases scale of communities:
  - Small population communities – Ben Avon 1781 ave. 2178, total 30487

## Ideas and Opportunities

- It's for the members to say
- COG staff can curate from the many success stories
  - Allegheny County – 7 COGs, beyond shared purchasing and equipment
    - Shared staff – code enforcement TCVCOG
    - Shared Strategy – “Blight Busters,” TricOG Landbank, SRCOG
    - Watershed based solutions MS4 working group- Engineers, NHCOG
    - Technical Rescue Team / Chiefs Committee, SHCOG
    - Multi-municipal comprehensive planning CWCOG
  - Pennsylvania
    - Centre Region COG Emergency Management
    - Erie Area COG – E-Gov, Open Records, Cloud Service migration
  - Nationally
    - Most MPOs are basically COGs – planning, transportation, environmental

## Opportunities for COGs

History, Academic Research, and Legislatively, here are 4 principle opportunities for COGs. These are examples, to help us think broadly, not an agenda or set of priorities.

- Planning and Coordination, such as:
  - 65 corridor
  - Parks & Rec development
  - Land Use
- Administrative and Contractual, such as:
  - Solid Waste
  - COG to muni services
- Fiscal and Intergovernmental Revenue, such as:
  - Stormwater Utility Fee
  - Dedicated to revenue to certain priority
- Shared Service and Structural, such as:
  - Joint Departments
  - COG as provider of service

## Back to the Questions

- These aren't questions about what you want from the COG, but an open ended question about what as political leaders you see as concerns.

**What are your top 3 concerns for Ben Avon?  
What is your timeframe?  
How will you know you made a difference?**

[tinyurl.com/qvcogms](http://tinyurl.com/qvcogms)

## Back to the Questions

- COG will work identifying connections w/ other members as part of its reboot
- QVOCG will conduct its organizational strategic plan
- Feedback loop to members with proposals for municipal members to engage or not engage around (voluntary)
  - You assess value and benefit
  - You make decisions about your participation
  - Delegate is connector, communicator, responsible to both the muni they represent and to their peers on COG Board
  - ICAs thoughtfully developed

*Thank You!*

Contact Us:

Ben Avon Delegate

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