

**BY-LAWS OF THE
VENANGO COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

**ARTICLE I
Name of Organization**

The name of this organization shall be "Venango County Regional Planning Commission", hereinafter referred to as the "Commission".

**ARTICLE 2
Authorization**

The authorization for the establishment of this Commission was set forth under Act of August 9, 1955, P.L. 323, Section 2001, including any amendments and supplements thereto. Powers and duties were delegated to the Commission by the County Commissioners of Venango County by Resolution Page 246, Commissioners' Minutes of Monday, May 1, 1961 in accordance with the above-referenced enabling law.

Powers and duties of the Commission, appointments, terms of membership, filling of vacancies and conduct of business shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247 of 1968, as has been and may from time to time be amended, since its effective date of January 1, 1969 and the Regional Planning Law; 53 Pa. C.S.A. §2341 et seq..

In addition to the powers and duties conferred upon it by these By-laws and the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, the Commission shall undertake and perform various duties as may from time to time requested by the Board of Commissioners of Venango County.

**ARTICLE 3
Membership**

Section 301. Membership shall consist of fifteen (15) members to be appointed by the Board of Commissioners of Venango County. One member shall be proposed by each active Council of Governments.

301.1. Members of the Commission shall be appointed for five-year terms, with three membership terms expiring during each calendar year. No member shall serve for more than two consecutive full terms plus the balance of the term of any vacancy to which the member was appointed. In the event a member serves two consecutive five-year terms on the Commission, that person shall not be reappointed until a period of one (1) year has lapsed since his or her last service as a member of the Commission.

301.2. Each member shall be entitled to one vote.

301.3. All members shall be residents of Venango County.

301.4. Vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired terms by the Venango County Board of Commissioners. The current VCRPC Board shall present the Board of Commissioners with nominations for vacancies no later than 30 days prior to the date of the position to be filled.

301.5. Members shall serve without compensation except that members may be reimbursed for necessary and reasonable expenses as approved by the board.

301.6. Any member may be removed from office for malfeasance, misfeasance, nonfeasance, or any other just cause after a majority vote of the Venango County Board of Commissioners in the manner provided by law.

301.7. Each Venango County Commissioner shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Commission, with no more than one to serve as a voting member. In addition, the Director of the Venango Regional Airport, the Director of Venango County Emergency Services and the Executive Director of the Economic Development Agency designated by the Venango County Commissioners may be appointed by the Venango County Board of Commissioners to serve as non-voting ex-officio members of the Commission.

301.8 Members shall be solicited from all municipalities in Venango County in order to procure representation from the broadest spectrum of the county as possible.

Section 302. Should any Commission member fail to attend three (3) consecutive meetings or fail to attend the majority of the twelve (12) past meetings they shall be considered to have resigned and the Chairperson of the Commission shall, in writing, notify the Venango County Board of Commissioners of such vacancy and request the appointment of a replacement.

The Commission may, by majority vote, waive these minimum attendance requirements when it determines that special conditions and circumstances justify the waiver. A leave of absence for up to one (1) year may be granted by a majority vote when the interest of the Commission and the County is served by such action.

Section 303. The membership of the Venango Regional Planning Commission shall be composed of a majority of locally elected officials, not to preclude a Commissioner, as required by 53 Pa. C. S. A. § 2344.

ARTICLE 4

Officers

Section 401. The officers of the Venango County Regional Planning Commission shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Second Vice-Chairperson, and Third Vice-Chairperson.

Section 402. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings and hearings of the Commission and shall have the duties normally conferred by parliamentary usage on such officer, as well as those duties herein provided. The Chairperson shall serve as a non-voting ex-officio member of all Commission committees and would be entitled to vote in those committees only to break a tie vote.

Section 403. The Vice-Chairperson shall act for the Chairperson in their absence. In the event the Vice-Chairperson is also absent, the Second Vice-Chairperson shall act in their place. If the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Second Vice-Chairperson are all absent, the Third Vice-Chairperson will act as Chairperson.

Section 404. All officers are entitled to vote on all matters before the Commission and may offer motions, introduce resolutions and enjoy all privileges accorded other Commission members.

Section 405. All officers shall serve annual terms and shall not hold the same office for more than three (3) consecutive years. No person shall hold the office of Chairperson who has not been a Commission member for at least one (1) year excepting only the first year of existence of this Regional Planning Commission.

ARTICLE 5

Election of Officers

Section 501. An annual organizational meeting shall be held at the first Meeting in each year during which meeting the officers of the Commission shall be elected to serve for a one-year period or until their successors have been appointed or elected.

Section 502. Nominations for each open elected position shall be made by a member of the Commission. If the person accepts, the remaining members will vote on the nomination. Voting shall be by show of hands if more than one person is nominated for any office.

Section 503. A candidate receiving a majority vote of the quorum of the Commission shall be declared elected and shall serve for one year or until *their* successor shall take office.

Section 504. Vacancies in office shall be filled immediately by regular election procedure

ARTICLE 6

Meetings

Section 601. All meetings or portions of meetings at which official action is taken shall be open to the general public. No formal action shall be valid unless such formal action is taken during a formal meeting. Public notice requirements of Act 175 of 1974 of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, commonly known as the Sunshine Act, shall be carefully observed.

Section 602. No regular or special meeting of the Commission shall be adjourned, begun, recessed or interrupted in any way for the purpose of an executive session except an executive session may be held during the course of a properly constituted public meeting upon notification to the public present by the Chairperson. The meeting will be in recess for the purpose of considering issues related to personnel, litigation and real estate, or otherwise permitted under law.

Section 603. Regular meetings will be held monthly on the days determined by the Commission at its annual organizational meeting. In the event of conflict with holidays or other events, or change considered necessary to afford greater public participation of any matter considered of broad interest, the Chairperson may change the date, time and place of said meeting, provided that Notice of the new meeting date, time and place are published in accordance with requirements of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

Section 604. A quorum shall consist of eight (8) members of the Commission or, in the event of one or more vacancies on the Commission, then and in that event a quorum shall consist of Fifty-one (51%) percent of the members then holding membership. If action is not unanimous on a matter before the Commission, voting shall be by roll call. A record of all votes shall be kept as part of the Minutes.

604.1. Any Board Member may participate in a meeting by telephone conference call or similar means of communication if all Board Members participating in the meeting can hear one another for the entire discussion of the matter to be voted upon. Participating in a meeting in this manner shall constitute presence in person at such meeting.

Section 605. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson. It shall be the duty of the Chairperson to call a special meeting when requested to do so by a majority of the members of the Commission. The Secretary of the Commission shall notify all members of the Commission in writing not less than five (5) days in advance of such special meeting and comply with the public notice requirement of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

Section 606. Unless otherwise specified by an affirmative vote of the majority of Commission members, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings at all meetings of the Commission.

Section 607. The order of business at regular meetings of the Commission shall be determined by the Chair:

<u>607.1</u>	Roll Call
<u>607.2</u>	Reading of Minutes
<u>607.3</u>	Public Comment – matters on the agenda
<u>607.4</u>	Officers' and Committee Reports
<u>607.5</u>	Special Purpose Matters
<u>607.6</u>	Subdivision review
<u>607.7</u>	Executive Director's Report
<u>607.8</u>	Public comments - general
<u>607.9</u>	Adjournment

Section 608. A motion from the floor must be made and passed in order to dispense with any item on the agenda or discuss and/or act on any matters not on the agenda.

Section 609. Notices of regular and special meetings and rescheduling thereof shall be mailed to all members and newspapers with general circulation in the County of Venango at least five (5) days before such regular or special meeting. The agenda for the regular or special meeting or subject(s) of any special meeting shall accompany the meeting notice.

Section 610. The agenda shall be prepared by the Executive Director and approved by the Chairperson. Any member may suggest items to be placed on the agenda but must make such request to the Chairperson at least five (5) working days prior to a regular meeting. Should the Chairperson deny the request, the member may invoke the privilege provided in Section 608 of these By-laws. Within reasonable time limits established by the Chairperson, members and guests should be afforded an opportunity to be heard.

Section 611. At any meeting at which a subdivision plan, submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Venango County Subdivision Regulations, is before the Commission, before passing on approval or disapproval of such subdivision plan, appeal of a staff disapproval, request for variance, interpretation or waiver, the Commission shall hear the report and recommendations of its staff. Ample opportunity to be heard shall be provided the applicant or representative of the applicant and/or any person having an interest in or affected by the proposed subdivision, including any officially designated representative of the municipality in which the proposed subdivision is to be located. The commission shall take action and report within the time period specified by the Venango County Subdivision Regulations and Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code from the date of submission of said subdivision plan. The Commission may elect to hold a public hearing, in accordance with Article 7 of these By-laws, on any subdivision plan prior to Commission action of the Final Plan. The Commission may elect to assign its authority for subdivision plan review to a committee to be appointed annually by the Chairperson. In such event, said committee shall report monthly and present recommendations on all actions to be taken.

Section 612. The Executive Director, in collaboration with the Chairperson of the Commission, shall arrange all meeting agendas in such a manner so that meetings may not extend for a period of time exceeding two (2) hours in length. In the event the Executive Director determines a meeting may exceed two hours in length, they shall inform the Commission members in the notice calling such meeting. A vote will have to be taken to extend meetings beyond two hours. Extension of meetings beyond two (2) hours shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of members present.

ARTICLE 7

Hearings

Section 701. In addition to those required by law, the Commission may hold public hearings when it decides that such hearings will be in the public interest.

Section 702. Notice of the time and place of such hearings, when on matters of widespread interest, shall be published once a week for two successive weeks in at least one newspaper of general circulation in Venango County. Such notice shall state the time and place of the hearing and the particular nature of the matter to be considered at the hearing. The first publication shall be not more than thirty days or less than fourteen days from the date of the hearing. Except that which is required by law, the notice need not be a legal advertisement. For matters of limited interest, notice shall be given in such manner as is deemed appropriate by the Commission, provided that any such notice shall conform to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

Section 703. Any matter before the Commission shall be presented in summary by the Chairperson or a member of the Commission designated by the Chairperson, and, within reasonable time limits established by the Chairperson, parties in interest shall have the opportunity to be heard on the subject matter.

Section 704. All records or statements made in any hearing shall be recorded or sworn to as evidence for any Court of law unless prior notice to the contrary shall have been given to the parties and published consistent with the requirements of Section 702 of these By-laws.

Section 705. A written record shall be kept of the identity of those persons speaking before the Commission at all hearings.

ARTICLE 8

Employees

Section 801. Within the limits imposed by the funds available for its use, the Commission may recommend employment by the County of Venango of such staff, personnel and/or consultants as it sees fit to aid in its work. Such recommendations shall not be binding upon the Venango County Commissioners.

Section 802. The Director shall be appointed by the Venango County Commissioners as recommended by the Chairperson and the Personnel Committee. A Deputy Director as well as all other employees shall be appointed by the Director after consultation with the Personnel Committee. The Director, any assistant director and all other staff shall be employees of the County of Venango and all hiring, employment, discipline and firing shall be consistent with the relevant rules and regulations of the Human Resources Department of the County of Venango.

Section 803. The Venango County Commissioners may discipline or dismiss the Director consistent with the relevant policies and procedures of the County of Venango for disciplining or dismissing Department Heads.

Section 804. Discipline of the Deputy Director shall be at the discretion of the Director.

Dismissal of the Deputy Director as well as all other employees shall be at the discretion of the Director's recommendation to the Venango County Board of Commissioners. In no event shall any such discipline or dismissal be inconsistent with the policies and procedures of the County of Venango for similarly situated employees.

Section 805. Commission employees shall be employees of the County of Venango, and shall observe the same working hours as employees of the Venango County Courthouse and shall be entitled to the same vacation, holidays, sick leave and fringe benefits as other employees of the County of Venango.

ARTICLE 9

Commission Finances

Section 901. The Commission, with the consent of the Board of Commissioners of Venango County, may accept and utilize funds, personnel, or other resources as appropriate to assist carrying out its duties and responsibilities.

Section 902. Reimbursement of staff and members for expenses incurred in the conduct of Commission business must be supported by receipts. The Commission shall adopt a policy for staff and members' incurring expenses in the conduct of Commission business.

ARTICLE 10

Committees

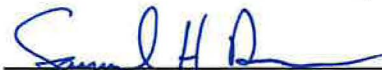
Section 1001. The Commission may create committees, and appoint committee members from the ranks of the Commission members and the general public, as deemed necessary, proper or expedient for the conduct of the business of the Commission.

ARTICLE 11

Amendments

These By-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Commission.

AMENDED THIS 14th DAY OF January, 2025
By Venango County Commissioners



Samuel H. Breene, Chairman



Albert A. Abramovic



Kenneth J. Bryan