

## SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT – MARCH 9, 2019

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**Members:** Barr, Chairperson, Ressler, Zimmerman, Martin

**Attendees:** Barr, Ressler, Zimmerman, Martin, Rowe, Reinhold, Mayor Mowen and Thompson

The Special Projects Committee met on Tuesday February 18, 2020 and discussed the following:

1. The Committee discussed the gateway sign program. Specifically, in 2018 the Borough had the Gateway sign entering the Borough from the south rebuilt in anticipation for the 100-year anniversary of the Ephrata Fair. With the exception of one organization, the Borough has been unsuccessful in having any of the service organizations provide their plaques to populate the new sign. Previously the Committee discussed several options for populating the sign including paying for the plaques or sharing the costs for the plaques with the service organizations. Councilperson Martin suggested that perhaps Mainspring of Ephrata may have an interest in assisting the Borough since the role of the Executive Director consists of connecting with various organizations in the community. The Committee directed the Staff to approach Mainspring with this idea. Borough Manager Thompson advised the Committee that Mainspring discussed the Borough's request and declined to participate. The Committee discussed ending the service organization sign program. Mayor Mowen volunteered to contact each identified organization one last time in hope to keep the program alive. The Mayor will report his results back to the Committee at the March meeting.
2. The Committee reviewed the list of other than Borough facilities receiving free electricity. The annual value of the free electricity to others in 2019 was \$136,744. Mr. Thompson performed a quick survey of six PMEA communities and only one of those public power communities provides free electricity and they provide it to the Library and the FD's. All others do not provide free electricity. The Committee did not want to adversely impact the existing free customers. They discussed not adding any new facilities to the list and to perform inspections of each facility and recommend conservation improvements to reduce the electric consumption. In addition, the Committee discussed the Rec Center and that although it does charge fees for service the Rec also provides free space for community services. The Committee asked that the amount of space allocated to the community at no cost be quantified so that they could discuss this further at the next Committee meeting. Councilman Zimmerman, who sits on the Rec Board, will discuss this with ED Summers and report back to the Committee. The Staff will begin performing inspections and reporting results back to the Committee.
3. Borough Manager Thompson provided the Committee with samples from previous hard copy welcome packets that were issued to new customers in the Borough. Mr. Thompson suggested preparing digital versions of the packet that could be downloaded from the Borough's website. The Committee was in favor of the digital welcome packet. The Staff will begin preparing to assemble the information for the website.

4. The Committee discussed a proposal from the Ephrata Area School District to provide a live demonstration of how to scrape Spotted Lantern Fly eggs from trees. Due to some communication errors, the representative from the district was not available to attend the Committee meeting. This item will be rescheduled for a future meeting.
  
5. The Committee discussed the presentation of the municipal moment by the Friends of Eberbach and how the Borough could improve that relationship. Items discussed were events during Fair weeks such as hosting a dinner, providing trail tours and the like. It was discussed to follow the Eberbach example by translating their newspaper into English. The concept of having Council and their Eberbach counterpart to ride in the parade was also discussed. This item will remain open for future Committee meetings to flesh out ideas.