

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT – APRIL 12, 2021

Members: Barr, Chairman; Ressler, Vice Chairman; Zimmerman, Member; Martin , Alternate; Thompson, Staff

Attendees: Barr, Chairman; Ressler, Vice Chairman; Zimmerman, Member; Rowe, Reinhold, Richard, Thompson, Guest (1)

The Special Projects Committee met on March 15, 2021 and discussed the following:

Action Items:

None

Discussion Items:

1. Borough Manager Thompson discussed with the Committee the applicable codes as they relate to utility balances and who is liable for the past due amounts. Those sections of the Code of the Borough of Ephrata include Chapter 165 Electricity Sections 165-2E, 165-5I, Chapter 253 Rental Properties 253-7A(7), 253-10B(4), 253-10C(2).

The Committee discussed options how landlords can mitigate their risks without violating privacy issues. The issues are as follows:

- Can the Borough staff provide information to landlords regarding whether or not a tenant or potential tenant has outstanding utility arrearages?
- Can the landlord direct that the utilities serving landlord properties be disconnected without tenant permission? Can this be authorized if it is during a winter disconnection moratorium period?
- Change requirements such that the indebtedness stays with the property where it was created versus following the tenant
- Should both landlord and tenant be signatures on the application for electric service?
- What form of identification should be required when applying for service?
- What protections (if any) can the landlord get if they “do the right thing”?

Mr. Thompson will discuss these items with the staff and the Borough solicitor and report back to the Committee at their April meeting.

2. Mr. Thompson reviewed with the Committee a recent email response from Nathan Upham from the Ephrata Area School District concerning the Junior Council Program. Mr. Upham strongly advises that the Borough will need an elected official mentor/sponsor to be successful program. After some discussion Council Reinhold volunteered to be the Council mentor for the program. Mr. Thompson will inform the school district of that decision and arrange for Mr. Upham and Councilman Reinhold to have program discussion. No committee action is required.

Old Business Items:

None