

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT – JULY 12, 2021

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

Attendees: Barr, Chairman; Dudley, Member; Martin, Alternate, Rowe, Reinhold, Ressler, Thompson, Guest (1)

The Special Projects Committee met on June 21, 2021 and discussed the following:

Action Items:

None

Discussion Items:

1. Borough Manager Thompson discussed the recommendations from the Staff to change the process for collecting utility arrearages from rental properties with the Committee. The recommendation from Staff is to keep all utility arrearages with the property from which the arrearages were generated and discontinue the practice of attaching the arrearages with tenant at future residences in the Borough. In order to accomplish this change, the application for electric service will require both the signatures of the owner and the tenant/lessee. The signature of the owner will verify that they have authorized the tenant/lessee to request electric service at the rental unit as well as to accept responsibility for the outstanding utility balances generated at their property. The signature of the tenant/lessee will state that they will accept responsibility for the utility balances as well as grant approval for the Borough to share their payment histories with potential future landlords. It is also recommended that the tenant/lessee be required to demonstrate proof of identification when making their application. The proposed changes will go into effect beginning November 1, 2021 consistent with the 2022 rental permit renewal period. No action is required at this time.
2. Mr. Thompson reviewed Chapter 115, Trees, of the Code of the Borough of Ephrata with the Committee. He discussed that since currently there are no appointed members of the Shade Tree Commission, he is reviewing the Chapter and will be recommending to the Committee proposed changes that will grant authority to the Staff to carry out the requirements of the Shade Tree Commission. President Rowe stated that a number of years ago the Shade Tree Commission was involved in a major revision of Chapter 115 and asked about the status of those changes. Mr. Thompson explained that he went back through 2018 and was unable to locate any proposed changes. He stated he would search further and report back to the Committee at their next meeting. No action is required at this time.
3. President Rowe addressed the Committee informing them that Deputy Executive Director of the Pennsylvania State Associations of Boroughs, Ed Knittel, will be retiring. She stated that Mr. Knittel has been a valuable resource to the Borough and has visited the Borough on more than one occasion. She requested that the Committee consider sending a letter of thanks to Mr. Knittel and to wish him well in his retirement. The Committee was fully supportive of this request and the Borough Manager will prepare a letter to Mr. Knittel. No further action is required.
4. **Old Business Items:**
None