

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT – NOVEMBER 8, 2021

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

Attendees: Barr, Chairman; Zimmerman, Vice Chairman; Dudley, Member; Martin, Alternate, Guests (2)

The Special Projects Committee met on October 18, 2021 and discussed the following:

Action Items:

None

Discussion Items:

1. Borough Manager Thompson reviewed with the Committee the current Application for Residential Rental Permit, Residential Rental Permit Renewal and The Borough of Ephrata Utility Transfer form as they relate to the proposed changes to the rental permit process. Mr. Thompson proposes a twostep process, first all new applications for residential rental permits or change of ownership of an existing residential rental permit property shall require the verification of the owner's identity in addition to the creation of a utility form whereby the property owner acknowledges the liability for all arrearages from the rental property and provides for the owner to grant to the tenant the right to receive and pay for the utility charges. This new form will require the signature of the tenant along with identity verification and the tenant granting permission for the Borough to share their payment history information with the current owner or any other prospective owner from which the tenant wishes to rent from.

The second step will be to use the newly created utility form and apply it to existing rental units by requiring owners to confirm their identity as the owner of the rental unit(s) as well as granting tenants the right to receive and pay for utility charges with the owner remaining responsible for all outstanding charges. Tenants will be required to verify their identity as well as to grant permission for landlords to have access to their payment histories.

Due to the timing of the annual permit renewals Mr. Thompson informed the Committee that the staff would not be in position to implement the changes to coincide with the permit renewals effective November 1. Mr. Thompson also informed the committee that the staff would no longer attempt to track down tenants that leave rentals with arrearages. All arrearages will be the responsibility of the owner. The staff will keep this item under Old Business and provide status updates to the Committee throughout the implementation process.

2. Borough Manager Thompson indicated to the Committee that he has spoken with the Solicitor and expects that a draft of the Shade Tree Ordinance will be available for the November Committee meeting.

Old Business Items:

None