

Plumbing Advisory Board

June 29, 2022

Advisory Board Attendees: Ed Bigley, John Inks, Regis Claus, John Cummins, David Green

Absent Advisory Board Members: Ruthann Omer, John Moffit, Jim Eichenlaub, William Price

ACHD staff Attendees: Drew Grese, Geoff Rabinowitz, Jason Willis, Kim Joyce, Shauna Morris, Todd Bogdanovich

Mr. Bigley called the meeting to order and announced that the Plumbing Advisory Board was holding this special meeting to review proposed changes to Article XV.

Mr. Grese reminded the Board that they had been sent copies of the proposed changes for their review two to three weeks ago. He stated that the changes were minimal, and mainly focused on changing of verbiage and some changes from brass to copper alloy. He stated that there were no major substantive changes.

Mr. Inks asked if there were any changes for schools. Mr. Grese stated that there would not be. He thanked the attendees for their attendance. He informed them that once the changes were approved, new books would come from the ICC that will include both the 2015 changes and the 2018 changes in the same book. Mr. Inks asked what the best-case scenario would be for when the books would be available. Mr. Grese estimated sometime in August or September. Ms. Joyce stated that the changes will be presented to the Board of Health in July, a one-month-long public comment period will be opened, the Board will consider the public comments and then vote for final approval in September, and the proposed changes would then be sent to Allegheny County Council for ratification, hopefully before the end of the year. She stated that ACHD will coordinate with the plumbing schools as to when to change their tests. Mr. Grese acknowledged that ACHD knows that schools will need time to update their curriculums.

Ms. Joyce noted that as part of the proposed changes, language will be implemented regarding Master Plumbers falsifying hours of Apprentices. She asked the Advisory Board's opinion as to whether they wanted this language included. Mr. Cummins stated that he wanted something in the regulations to add more teeth regarding this. He requested that if a Master Plumber refused to legitimize past working hours of an Apprentice, that the Master Plumber be subject to penalties. Ms. Joyce stated that she will put something together with the help of Mr. Willis.

Mr. Grese also stated that ACHD was looking at requiring more proof of residency requirements to counter an influx of nonresident plumbers who are brought into Allegheny County, fraudulently register as Apprentice Plumbers, and then leave Allegheny County after their particular project is completed. Mr. Bigley said that the Master Plumber should be held accountable in such instances.

Mr. Bigley asked if there were any other questions on the proposed changes. There were none.

Action: Mr. Bigley motioned to approve the proposed changes to Article XV. Mr. Inks seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously by a 5-0 vote.

Mr. Inks asked if there was anything new to discuss at the next meeting of the Advisory Board. Mr. Green stated that the City of Pittsburgh has modified its stormwater legislation. PLI has a new stormwater permit, for larger scale developments. He had previously discussed this with Ivo Miller but wanted to now make the Advisory Board aware. Mr. Grese stated that it would be a good idea to discuss boundaries between the City and the County regarding stormwater. Mr. Green stated that he would be happy to discuss this at a future meeting, and that it may be helpful to have a Memorandum Of Understanding.

Ms. Joyce said that ACHD will probably bring forward virtual inspection options and how they can be started. She asked the Advisory Board to begin thinking about potential problems with this. Mr. Grese stated that virtual inspections would be limited in scope, and subject to a structured policy so that they would not be taken advantage of. Mr. Green stated that virtual inspections can be a useful tool to increase efficiency. He stated that the City looked at the same issue, and he would be happy to share relevant information. Mr. Cummins stated that he would like to be able to schedule inspections within certain timeslots. Mr. Grese stated that could be a viable option and noted that plumbers love the idea. He stated that it can be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Bigley adjourned the meeting.