7-16-18

Watertown township board members:

This is information I copied and pasted about the 2007 community survey.

Dale Westrick

**Township Survey**. Tubbs sent RFP’s out to five different firms with only two firms responding. . She suggested a

telephone survey would receive better response recommending MRC at $16,500.00. Weitzel looked at credentials and

found Epic‐MRA had the experience. Thelen found the Epic‐MRA proposal offered more. Husby felt that a mailed

survey would receive a better response than a phone survey considering the time involved in the phone survey. Mitchell

thought the options offered to follow up with phone calls to reach the results and the name recognition of Epic‐MRA

would get a better response. Adams also felt that the mailed survey would get a better response considering the time

factor for the telephone survey. Tubbs plans to work with the survey firm in order to bring the information back to the

regular Board meeting in July. Discussion continued on the contents of the survey to be sure we get all the topics

covered, the number of surveyʹs to by mail or phone or both, and to request a result level versus limiting the number of

surveys issued. A special meeting may need to be scheduled to discuss the survey contents. Motion by Maahs and

seconded by Mitchell that the Board authorizes the Township Manager to contract with Epic ∙ MRA to develop a survey

to mail and to augment with telephone surveys for a cost not to exceed $19,000.00. Motion carried.

Survey. Tubbs passed out samples of the draft survey as it was written for phoning. Members will provide feedback by

the 30th of July. The final draft can be addressed at the August Board meeting.

Tubbs introduced John Cavanaugh from EPIC‐MRA. He will work with the board to amend the draft survey to refine

what the board wants. The next draft will be in the form of a mailed survey. Weitzel commented that ambulance service

is a priority question for public safety services. Mitchell suggested that Mr. Cavanaugh explain the process. Mr.

Cavanaugh explained that they had reviewed a prior survey, that the survey draft is too long intentionally to try to

include everything. If there are insufficient returns from the mailed survey, there will be a follow‐up survey by phone.

More than 1800 surveys will be mailed out. It will be about eight pages and include a stamped envelope for return of the

survey. A cover letter will explain the process to the resident. They ask for the youngest adult in the household because

they tend to be under represented in the sample. This is done only with the phone survey. Maahs asked if they are

looking for resident types, geographic areas, new vs. old resident, or rural vs. urban. Mr. Cavanaugh explained that these

will self‐stratify. Thelen wants assurance that all of the residential households receive a mailed survey. It was explained

that is the intent. Overton asked if the businesses would be surveyed. It was explained that wasn’t a part of this survey.

Priorities: Thelen would like to see questions concerning township services available at the township hall. Weitzel

commented that the need for a response on ambulance service is the main question. Mitchell suggested that there

shouldn’t be questions where the township has no control or action is not expected. Police presence, fire service, and

ambulance service were discussed as being priorities. Cavanaugh commented the survey needs to reveal if the residents

feel that they get a good return on their tax dollars. They include questions concerning ballot proposals and whether or

not the resident would vote yea or nay to support the service with tax dollars. Husby commented that a question

concerning services needed and provided is important. Overton feels that the questions concerning personal issues such

as, age, income, etc. are turn‐offs and will not be answered. Mr. Cavanaugh was asked to draft a question to the resident

concerning where the tax dollars go. Polverento suggested a question concerning acreage owned. Weitzel suggested a

question about knowledge of the township website and newsletter. Polverento suggested a question that would reveal

how the resident gets knowledge of township issues. Husby reviewed the results of the 1994 survey and noted that

many responses were received on unfair assessments; roads and speeding; water quality; the loss of farmland, wetlands,

wildlife, and open space; rapid growth and density; rural character. Zay feels that the planning issues are important for

baseline information. Adams feels that the priority issues identified are: township services (public safety with ambulance

and fire) and planning issues. Husby suggested a question concerning communications and how they connect to us how

we provide information is important. Other items discussed in previous sessions for a survey have been; recycling, roads,

emergency services, recreation, PDRs, community character, infrastructure, pedestrian circulation plan, township

services, and communications. The draft survey questions were reviewed in detail to determine which to include in the

final survey. Mr. Cavanaugh expects to return a final draft in one week.

Survey. Tubbs explained that this survey has all of the changes suggested. Husby noted several corrections were still

needed: question #8 needs editing “write comment as stated” will be deleted. No. 17 we had asked to have the manager’s

office listed. No. 99 needs to be edited “Please stop me when I get to the category that applies to you” should be deleted.

Motion by Weitzel and seconded by Zay that they approve the Epic‐MRA Watertown Charter Township survey as

amended on October 15, 2007. Motion carried. Tubbs asked permission to make any grammatical changes as needed

without bringing it back to the Board. The Board members agreed.

**Report on Township survey results.** The response rate was close to 25%. There was almost perfect stratification by zip

code which means that it covers the entire township. 54% of the people like where they live because of the rural quiet.

The biggest concerns were growth and taxes. Sensitivity to taxes was consistent throughout. There was a preference for

cutting services rather than raising taxes. Over half of the respondents (59%) felt that their taxes were too high. There

was overall satisfaction with the direction of the township with a positive rating of 74%. Protecting farmland was

important 55%, but not if paid for with added taxes. Over 75% would vote no to tax increases. The residents are satisfied

with the existing fire and emergency medical services and are opposed to increasing taxes to pay for more. EPIC‐MRA

will provide verbatims of the written responses.

Township survey. Pratt requested the Board seek direction from the residents on how the Township should be expending

funds by assigning the Capital Improvements Committee to conduct a survey. Skerritt suggested he present the idea of a

township wide survey to the Capital Improvement Committee on 3/24/04 to see what they think should be done.

12:15 p.m. ‐ Community Survey – Tubbs to look for assistance and present at July meeting. Items to be addressed in a

community survey: recycling; roads; emergency services; recreation; PDR’s; community character; infrastructure;

circulation plan