



MEMO

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Joe Fivas

DATE: November 18, 2010

SUBJECT: Citizen Survey Internet Option

At the last Town Council meeting, the Town Council requested to continue discussion on the possibilities of an internet community survey option. We have a quote from our consultant (ETC) for \$2,400 for an internet survey option. This could be added on to our current contract.

Staff emailed ETC and asked for their “professional opinion on the validity of such an instrument.” They replied, in Chapel Hill, “it is a ‘wired’ community and they did want the internet option, but the results were 725 completed surveys by mail/phone from just the random sample, and 90 from the internet survey option that anyone could fill out as often as they wanted.” They also indicated that it is a nice touch in the interest of public relations, but not effective. The ‘random’ part of the statistically valid random survey cannot be guaranteed with an internet survey either. It is that random distribution that lets you know you have reached every portion of your population. “The reason for doing this at all is so that you can rely on and defend your numbers.” They indicated they would be willing to help us with an internet option survey.

Staff has also reached out to other communities who have done internet surveys, and will have this information at Tuesday’s Town Council meeting.

jaf