

Registered Voter Survey Analysis for Ross Township

Survey Date	July 5, 2018 – July 15, 2018
Report Date	August 10, 2018
Notification Methods	Letter on township letterhead sent to all registered voters of Ross Township (4,154)
Survey Type	Online, mobile friendly, open access with IP audits
Question Formats	Forced choice; Open ended limited character follow-up (4); Open ended general comments (1)
Total Number of Questions	Nine questions with an additional general comment section
Expected Response Rate	20 – 25 %
Actual Responses	1,132 less 269 invalid submissions, 863 valid submissions
Response Rate	21%
Report Format	Standard count and percentage reporting by question; mean, standard deviation (if applicable), comments with analysis
Key Factors (Comparative Analysis)	Augusta, Percentage and Count Analysis, No Inferential Statistics
Security Review and Analysis	Yes
Satisfaction Analysis	No
General Comment Analysis	Yes; Ethnographic analysis provided
External Comparisons	Some demographic factors compared to last census data
Limitations	Assumptions are made that the survey respondents are providing an honest opinion in regard to their survey responses. Although the survey sample was sufficient, people taking surveys often have stronger opinions about the topics and could therefore bias the results. A valid question to ask is whether the survey results actually represent the majority of township voters who did not complete the survey.

Security Analysis and Review

All forms of surveying have advantages and disadvantages in reference to the survey process, collection of data, analysis, and data security and validity. Listed below are some of the key factors:

- **Open Online Surveying**

Simpler process to implement

Does not require the use of a code or link

Usually are anonymous unless the respondent indicates personal information

More difficult to control access to and restrict access to the survey

The possibility of survey fraud is higher if not mitigated through other procedures

Focusing more on the comments rather than the percentages is useful when potential fraud is likely to have occurred

- **Closed Online Surveying**

Requires a unique code or link to access the online survey

Higher data security is provided since most codes or links can only be used once

Works best using email generated codes and links

Code generation for a large paper mailing is often cumbersome; requires more attention and confidentiality

Survey takers have a higher level of concern for anonymity; concerns about matching the code to responses

Often there are issues with lost codes or links with larger public surveys

For the Ross Township survey, the following procedures were conducted to ensure a more valid survey database:

1. After the survey was closed, the database was sorted by IP addresses. Each IP address was limited to two submissions. Submissions that exceeded two were deleted. The first two submissions were retained.
2. After multiple submissions were eliminated from the database, a random sample of the IP addresses were examined and entered into a database to determine the locality they originated from. If an IP address was discovered from outside the local area (Augusta, Battle Creek, Galesburg, Hickory Corners, Kalamazoo, Richland), it was deleted from the survey database. However, if the IP address originated from a cell phone, two submissions were permitted to remain in the database, unless the cell phone originated from out of state.

3. Since there is a pattern to IP addresses from a geographic region, the entire database was reviewed a third time to ensure that only local IP addresses were included, subject to the first two previous steps and exceptions. This entire process (steps 1 to 3) resulted in a reduction in survey respondents from an initial 1,132 to 863 valid respondents. In summary, here are the reductions and rationale:
 - We had 47 responses that were eliminated because they were sent from an out of state location. Some of those locations were Illinois, Ohio, Kansas, Texas, and California. We had a submission from Norfolk, Virginia which was accepted since it was from the Naval Base there. We also had two submissions from Germany that were rejected.
 - We had 10 in-state submissions from Drummond Island which were rejected, along with 8 submissions from the Detroit area that were rejected because they were sent from a land-based Internet provider.
 - The remaining rejections (204) were all locally based. Additional research was conducted on these and it was discovered that most of them (165) were from a local Internet provider (TDS) and service was provided through their Augusta node. The remaining submissions were scattered around the township using TDS and other providers like Comcast.

The final database is quite clean after this process. However, the following items need to be observed:

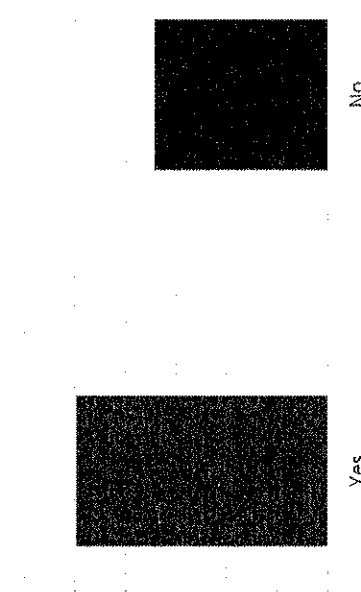
1. It is likely a few legitimate survey responses were accidentally deleted from the database.
2. It is possible a few invalid survey responses remain in the database.
3. Due to external influences by a special interest group (or groups), many people could have been influenced by a mailer which was focused on opposing Commercial Medical Marijuana Facilities (CMMF). The flyer contained many statements and most of the statements were not supported by any factual information or resources.
4. There were postings on Facebook in at least one of the CMMF opposition groups that was instructing group members on how to take this survey multiple times and to challenge the credibility of this survey. It was very disappointing that a few people clearly were not operating in the best interests of all township residents and were engaged in this type of activity. It undoubtedly influenced the survey responses received. As a result, it really did not matter if the survey was open or closed access. It was very disappointing to find people in our own community behaving in this manner.
5. For questions 1 and 4, and also in the general comments section, please read all of the comments carefully. Although there are definitely some inappropriate comments, people that take the time to leave comments are more engaged in the survey and are trying to express their ideas and concerns.
6. This survey was not a random sample of the population. All registered voters were given an opportunity to participate. Therefore, a valid question to ask is why did almost 80% of the registered voters not participate? It is not unusual to see lower response rates associated with surveys in general.

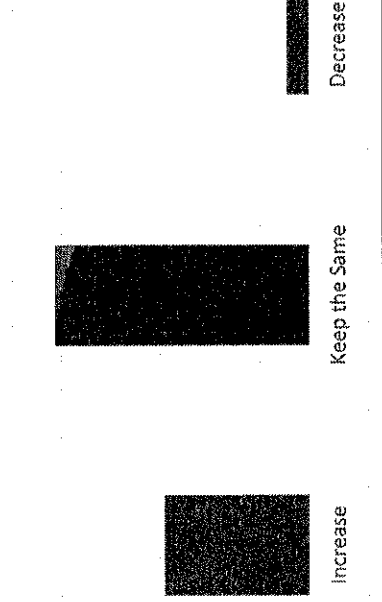
Recommendations

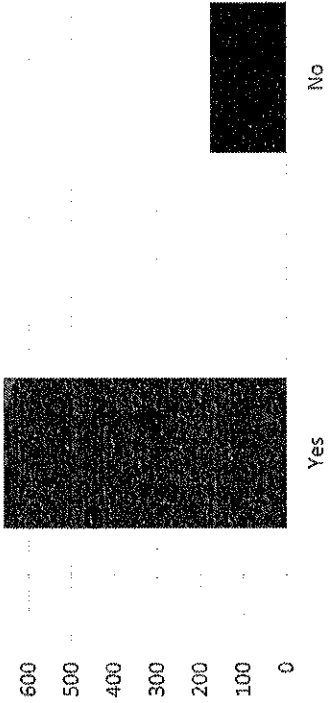
1. Although the percentage values for each question are easy to interpret, make sure that the written comments are carefully reviewed. It is evident that many township residents do not understand the zoning process, differences in zoning areas, and the implications associated with zoning in general. However, since it was apparent that many survey respondents were provided with suggested ideas and comments from a special interest group, many of the comments may not reflect the general public opinion.
2. Communication may be an issue within the community as it relates to Township Board activity and the various commissions and committees. The township newsletter should be produced on a more regular basis and to reduce costs every attempt should be made to gather email addresses from township residents to reduce printing and mailing costs. Continue placing notices on the web site along with meeting minutes and agendas.
3. Consider using MSU, the State of Michigan, and other research institutions to assist with providing the community with more information about topics like solar farms, wind generation, commercial medical marijuana facilities, and any other future development opportunity. Even if the township board decides not to pursue any of these options, a better-informed public is a community asset. Lack of verifiable information and potentially false claims about topics like CMMFs or solar farms does not help the community adequately assess the benefits and risks associated with potential local development.
4. Consider surveying the residents again in the future and develop a committee to design and implement the survey and tabulate the results. Again, an opposition group will likely object to some of the survey content, format, questions, and security, whether it is an open format or code accessed survey. Remember to focus on your audience and keep the survey questions as short and clear as possible. Based upon this survey and the 2016 survey, you may want to consider using a rating system for township and county services to assess satisfaction in addition to other topics.
5. It is clear from those that did comment on the survey that they desire the township to retain a rural atmosphere especially in the currently zoned rural residential areas. The Board should consider this in regards to any future development and focus more on Agricultural or Industrial zoned areas of the township. However, the general public is unlikely to fully understand what rural residential zoning indicates in terms of development and growth. Again, providing the township residents with more information about zoning is a critical first step in raising the awareness and knowledge about the zoning process.

6. Although the survey respondents indicated that they preferred to keep the same level of police coverage, a significant percentage indicated that more coverage was desired. As you review the comments, pay attention to several comments about speeding on local roads and some possible concerns about the response time for the sheriff when an officer is not on duty in the township. Sharing police reports with all residents might be helpful as well. The November ballot proposal for recreational marijuana is likely to have an impact on the need for future police coverage.
7. There was a valid concern that an online survey would not engage the senior population. However, the results indicated that the older age groups were well represented in the survey. Although Internet access within the township remains a concern, the option of taking the survey at the Augusta McKay Library, or at the Township Hall, can alleviate many concerns about access.
8. It would be helpful to make the township budget more transparent on the website for public review. Many township residents do not understand the size and scope of the township budget and how priorities are determined. A breakdown of how taxes are allocated to the township, county, and state would be helpful as well.

General Analysis by Question

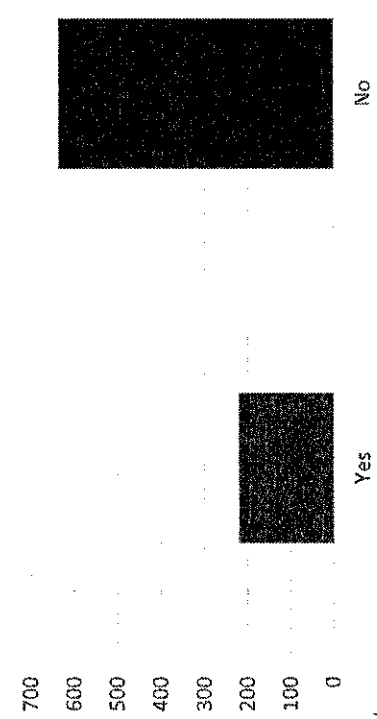
<p>Question 1</p>	<p>In many states and local communities, solar farms are becoming popular. A solar farm is a field of solar panels that use the sun's energy to produce electricity. These solar panels could be located on existing acreage in our Agricultural or Industrial zoned areas of the township. The energy generated is often used locally or sold back to the local electrical power provider by the farm owner. Are you in support of having solar farms in our community? Yes/No.</p>															
<p>Question Type</p>	<p>Yes/No.</p>															
<p>Data Analysis</p>	<p>Category Yes No</p>	<p>Count 496 342</p>	<p>Percent 59.19% 40.81%</p>	<p>Note: Percentage values are rounded to two decimal places and occasionally may total just above or below 100%. For clarity, the total will always show 100%.</p>												
<p>Graphical Analysis</p>	<p>Q1: Solar Farms</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Data for Q1: Solar Farms Bar Chart</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>496</td> <td>59.19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>342</td> <td>40.81%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>838</td> <td>100.00%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Category	Count	Percent	Yes	496	59.19%	No	342	40.81%	Total	838	100.00%
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No	342	40.81%														
Total	838	100.00%														
<p>General Analysis</p>	<p>A slight majority of survey respondents are in favor of solar farms. As you review the comments associated with this question, you will find that many people do not fully understand the impact of solar farms to a community (both positive and negative), how they are constructed, and where they would be located. If there is an interest in having solar farms, more information about the benefits and costs are needed by the public from reliable sources, as well as the possible locations where they would be authorized.</p>															

<p>Question 2</p>	<p>The results from our 2016 township survey indicated that many people living in the township wanted more police visibility and coverage in our community. A Police Committee was formed by the Township Board and alternatives were evaluated for police coverage. The Township Board would like to know if you are still interested in obtaining more police visibility and coverage.</p>																	
<p>Question Type</p>	<p>Increase/Keep the Same/Decrease.</p>																	
<p>Data Analysis</p>	<p>Category Increase Keep the Same Decrease Total Skipped Question</p>	<p>Count 291 513 43 847 16</p>	<p>Percent 34.36% 60.56% 05.08% 100.00%</p>															
<p>Graphical Analysis</p>	<p>Q2: Police Protection</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Data for Q2: Police Protection Bar Chart</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Increase</td> <td>291</td> <td>34.36%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Keep the Same</td> <td>513</td> <td>60.56%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Decrease</td> <td>43</td> <td>05.08%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>847</td> <td>100.00%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Category	Count	Percent	Increase	291	34.36%	Keep the Same	513	60.56%	Decrease	43	05.08%	Total	847	100.00%
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Keep the Same	513	60.56%																
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Total	847	100.00%																
<p>General Analysis</p>	<p>The results of this question are a bit different than what was provided in the 2016 survey of property owners. The use of the voter registration database could have caused this difference, as well as many other factors. At a minimum, there is an interest in at least keeping the same level of coverage although there are a significant number of people that would prefer an increase in coverage which should be considered in future planning. During the time period of this survey, the Kalamazoo County Sheriff conducted a town hall meeting about issues associated with <u>recreational marijuana</u>, its use, and a ballot proposal for November. This meeting may have had an impact on the results of this survey question.</p>																	

Question 3	Under Michigan Law, individuals can use Medical Marijuana to help them with a medical condition like cancer, HIV, and any condition where strong pain killers are often prescribed. Further research is being conducted on other possible uses. Do you support individuals being allowed to use Medical Marijuana for these conditions? Yes/No.																				
Question Type																					
Data Analysis	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>658</td> <td>78.99%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>175</td> <td>21.01%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>833</td> <td>100.00%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Count	Percent	Yes	658	78.99%	No	175	21.01%	Total	833	100.00%	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Skipped Question</td> <td>30</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Count	Percent	Skipped Question	30		
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Graphical Analysis	<p>Q3: Medical Marijuana Use</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>658</td> <td>78.99%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>175</td> <td>21.01%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Category	Count	Percent	Yes	658	78.99%	No	175	21.01%									
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Yes	658	78.99%																			
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General Analysis	<p>A significant majority of the survey respondents indicated that they support the use of medical marijuana for specific health conditions. During the time period the survey was open, the State of Michigan authorized medical marijuana for additional uses which may have impacted the survey results. Also, there was considerable public discussion about a ballot measure related to recreational use of marijuana being on the November ballot. Several comments were made about federal vs. state laws.</p> <p>Ideally in a longer survey, the two marijuana questions would be in separate locations and farther apart. It is possible that some bias could exist as a result of the two questions being close to each other, and also</p>																				

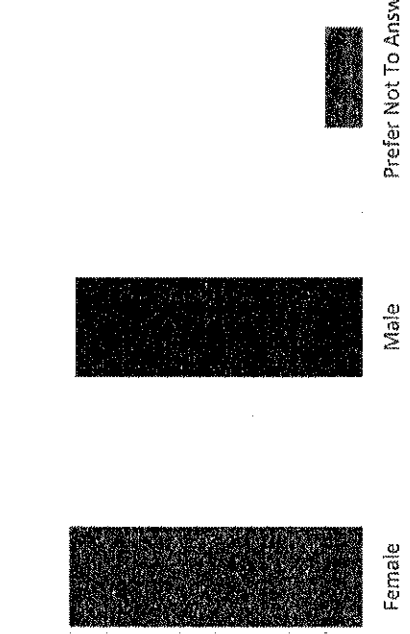
from concerns as to why this question was asked. In addition, it appears a group of survey responders were "coached" about what to say in response to this question. The survey results indicate that this question had a minimal or no effect on the next question related to CMMFs.

The rationale for asking this question was simple. Are the township residents generally against the use of marijuana for medical purposes? If people object to the overall use of marijuana, then it is likely that they would also oppose the growing and production of it. The survey results indicated that a majority of residents are not opposed to its use for medical purposes, although many valid concerns are expressed related to its continual use and access to the product, as well as the growing and production.

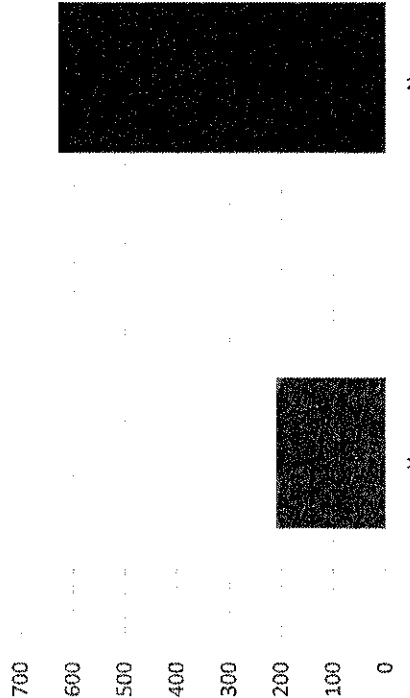
<p>Question 4</p>	<p>Are you in favor of Ross Township permitting commercial medical marijuana facilities in Agricultural or Industrial zoned areas of the township?</p>			<p>Question Type</p> <p>Yes/No.</p>												
<p>Data Analysis</p>	<p>Category</p> <p>Yes No</p> <p>Total</p> <p>Skipped Question</p>	<p>Count</p> <p>220 637</p> <p>857</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Percent</p> <p>25.67% 74.33%</p> <p>100.00%</p>	<p>Note: Of all the questions asked, this question was skipped the least.</p>												
<p>Graphical Analysis</p>	<p>Q4: Commercial Medical Marijuana Facilities</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Data for Q4: Commercial Medical Marijuana Facilities</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>220</td> <td>25.67%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>637</td> <td>74.33%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>857</td> <td>100.00%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Category	Count	Percent	Yes	220	25.67%	No	637	74.33%	Total	857	100.00%
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<p>General Analysis</p>	<p>The majority of survey respondents were against having commercial medical marijuana facilities. However, there are several external events that need to be evaluated as to their impact on this question. Several groups were formed to oppose these facilities and considerable discussion occurred on the Internet and on Facebook about this question.</p> <p>In addition, people were instructed on Facebook in regards to criticizing this survey and submitting multiple responses, among other related issues. Also, an opposition group mailed a flyer to most of the township residents indicating their opposition to the facilities and making several statements that were not supported by factual resources. A different group that appeared to support these facilities also did a mailing but it arrived after the survey closed.</p>															

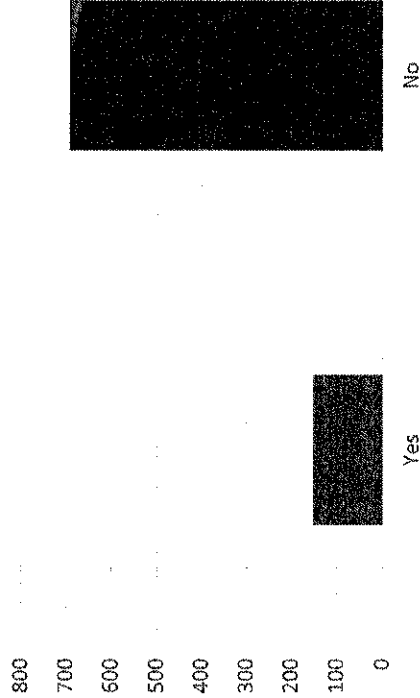
Similar to "mudslinging" in a political campaign, there is no doubt that these activities had an impact on the survey results. However, some valid concerns were expressed in the written comments about the zoning process, how areas are classified, and a general lack of zoning knowledge by the public. The township may want to consider providing its citizens with more information about zoning classifications, the zoning process, and how zoning impacts current and future development. Also, please review my comments in the security section of this report for additional information about the survey security and audit process.

Question 5	To better understand our community, we would like to ask a few demographic questions. The first is what is your age?																										
Question Type	Category choice, 6 categories. Demographic data.																										
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Graphical Analysis	<p>Q5: Age Group</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Q5: Age Group Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Group</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>18 - 29</td> <td>52</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30 - 39</td> <td>96</td> </tr> <tr> <td>40 - 49</td> <td>110</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50 - 59</td> <td>192</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60 - 69</td> <td>224</td> </tr> <tr> <td>70 +</td> <td>168</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Age Group	Count	18 - 29	52	30 - 39	96	40 - 49	110	50 - 59	192	60 - 69	224	70 +	168										
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General Analysis	The 60 - 69 age group participated the most in the survey, followed by the 50 - 59 and 70 + age groups.																										

Question 6	What is your gender?																	
Question Type	Category choice, three choices. Demographic Data.																	
Data Analysis	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>401</td> <td>47.45%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>393</td> <td>46.51%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer Not To Answer</td> <td>51</td> <td>06.04%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>845</td> <td>100.00%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Count	Percent	Female	401	47.45%	Male	393	46.51%	Prefer Not To Answer	51	06.04%	Total	845	100.00%	<p>Note: Gender based questions are becoming more difficult to ask because some people identify themselves differently. Many surveys now use a category called "other" or will simply use "prefer not to answer", in addition to male and female.</p>	
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Female	401	47.45%																
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General Analysis	<p>The survey respondents are essentially equally divided between female and male. Since the survey had a significant level of response from older age groups, I would have expected a slightly higher percentage being female, but the differences are not that significant.</p>																	

Question 7	What is your marital status?																							
Question Type	Category choice, 4 categories. Demographic data.																							
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839	24																							
Graphical Analysis	<p>Q7: Marital Status</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Q7: Marital Status Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Single</td> <td>105</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Married</td> <td>652</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Divorced</td> <td>48</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Widowed</td> <td>34</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Category	Count	Single	105	Married	652	Divorced	48	Widowed	34											
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General Analysis	A significant majority of the survey respondents indicated they were married.																							

Question 8	Do you have any children age 18 and under living at home?														
Question Type	Yes/No. Demographic Data.														
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Category	Count	Percent													
Yes	210	25.00%													
No	630	75.00%													
Total	840	100.00%													
Graphical Analysis	<p>Q8: Children 18 and Under Living at Home</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Graphical Analysis Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>210</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>630</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Category	Count	Yes	210	No	630						
Category	Count														
Yes	210														
No	630														
General Analysis	This demographic question indicates that the majority of survey respondents do not have children 18 and under living at home.														

Question 9	Are you a resident of the Village of Augusta?															
Question Type	Yes/No.															
Data Analysis	Category Yes No	Count 151 693	Percent 17.89% 82.11%	Note: Some Ross Township residents don't understand that the Village of Augusta is within Ross Township. Also, some residents might have confused an Augusta mailing address with being part of the village.												
Graphical Analysis	<p>Q9: Village of Augusta Resident</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>151</td> <td>17.89%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>693</td> <td>82.11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>844</td> <td>100.00%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Skipped Question</p>				Category	Count	Percent	Yes	151	17.89%	No	693	82.11%	Total	844	100.00%
Category	Count	Percent														
Yes	151	17.89%														
No	693	82.11%														
Total	844	100.00%														
General Analysis	<p>The majority of the survey respondents indicated that they were not part of the Village of Augusta. There appeared to be some confusion on this question as some people did not know that the village is within Ross Township and that having Augusta in your mailing address does not mean you are part of the village. This question will be used to separate the database into two sections: Village of Augusta and Ross Township (excluding the village) to see if there were any significant differences.</p>															

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Ross Township - Ross Township (excluding Village of Augusta) – Village of Augusta

Question	Response	Entire Township	Township (Excluding Augusta)	Village of Augusta
1. Solar	Yes	59.19%	57.80%	68.71% *
	No	40.81%	42.20%	31.29% *
2. Police	Increase	34.36%	33.92%	33.33%
	Same	60.56%	60.79%	62.59%
	Decrease	05.08%	05.29%	04.08%
3. Medical Marijuana	Yes	78.99%	80.42%	73.47% *
	No	21.01%	19.58%	26.53% *
4. Commercial Facilities	Yes	25.67%	25.00%	30.67% *
	No	74.33%	75.00%	69.33% *
5. Age Group	18 - 29	06.18%	05.25%	10.60% *
	30 - 39	11.40%	11.52%	11.26%
	40 - 49	13.06%	11.66%	17.88%
	50 - 59	22.80%	22.16%	25.83%
6. Gender	60 - 69	26.60%	28.13%	20.53% *
	70+	19.95%	21.28%	13.91% *
7. Marital Status	Female	47.45%	47.60%	47.68%
	Male	46.51%	46.29%	48.34%
8. Children 18 and Under	Prefer Not to Answer	06.04%	06.11%	03.97%
	Single	12.52%	10.96%	19.87% *
	Married	77.71%	80.99%	62.91% *
9. Divorced	Divorced	05.72%	04.68%	09.93% *
	Widowed	04.05%	03.36%	07.28% *
10. Yes/No	Yes	25.00%	24.89%	24.83%
	No	75.00%	75.11%	75.17%

Comments: Percentages shown in bold with an asterisk are significantly different than the comparative group. In summary, there are some significant differences between the Village of Augusta and the rest of the township. The village has a younger population, a higher percentage of single people, and a higher percentage of people that are divorced or widowed. They appear to be more supportive of solar farms, less supportive of medical marijuana, and more supportive of commercial medical marijuana facilities.

**ROSS TOWNSHIP 2018 COMMUNITY SURVEY
WRITTEN COMMENTS AND ANALYSIS**