

Water Committee Survey Results & Follow Up

The new Water Committee, created by Prospect Heights Mayor Nicholas J. Helmer, was established to serve the needs of all residents regarding all water issues. This advisory committee works to provide guidance to residents who want to accomplish the following tasks: improve their well water, resolve issues with city water equipment costs, rate costs and other related costs, and form special service areas to pursue obtaining city water and fire hydrants for an area with a majority of residents wanting city water.

The Prospect Heights Water Survey questions were drafted by Chairman Bob Korvas. Similar questions were used in a prior survey of Lake Claire residents by Chairman Korvas to form a special service area and obtain City water and fire hydrants for that area.

The purpose of this survey is to determine the current interests of residents who don't have Lake Michigan water and to enable the City of Prospect Heights to better know the interests and needs of these residents of the community. The total number of surveys sent was approximately 2300. Through December 1, 2015 the total number of residents who returned answered surveys is 629, approximately 27% of the residents surveyed. Of that number, the total count of residents answering yes to an interest in pursuing city water is 236, while the number answering no is 331. 62 of the residents surveyed answered not sure. The Water Committee will be happy to share the final results of this first survey with interested residents as discussed in the Water Committee meeting on November 21, 2015. The next scheduled Water Committee meetings will be posted on the City's website, eNews, and cable channel. All interested residents are welcome to attend.

Some negative comments were received from residents regarding the survey and its intended purpose. To be clear, this survey is in no way a vote for city water. As stated in the previous edition of this newsletter:

"Once the committee obtains the results of the survey, they will then determine which residents are interested in actively participating and organizing a homeowner's association for the purpose of establishing a special service area (SSA). A special service area (hereinafter referred to as "SSA") is a temporary taxing entity that is created to pay for infrastructure improvements to a

specific neighborhood or area of residents who want the improvements, in this case, with a life span of approximately 20 years. The last survey was completed in 2010 and therefore it is necessary to update the prior survey. At that time, there was a large percentage of residents who did not have city water but were interested in obtaining it.

The survey in no way will be used as a vehicle to impose city water on any residents who do not want it. Further, to be clear, it is not the intention of the water committee to impose city water on any residents who do not want it."

There will be follow up surveys which will be more in-depth than the first survey and will ask about other water issues. In addition, those who did not reply to the first survey will receive another survey with revisions to question number one.

This committee is here to assist and guide all residents on all water issues, positive or negative.

Those who criticize the need for potable water must consider the interests of all residents in Prospect Heights. It is well known that a number of people on a well system have water that is not drinkable, has ruined appliances such as dishwashers and hot water tanks, and has caused concerns over health issues. There are others who are very happy with their wells, want to keep them, and have no interest in obtaining city water.

Elected officials have not and do not endorse the survey nor does it reflect their opinions.

