



City of Shorewood Council Meeting Item

9A

MEETING TYPE
REGULAR

Title / Subject: Investigation of Solid Waste Collection – Resident survey

Meeting Date: October 22, 2018

Prepared by: Greg Lerud, City Administrator

Reviewed by: Tim Keane, City Attorney

Attachments: Proposal from Morris Leatherman Company

Background: At the September 24 work session, the council discussed continuing to investigate solid waste collection in Shorewood, and the consensus was to consider a survey as a next step in the process. Specifically, the council wanted to consider a scientific survey conducted by an experienced company. Council directed staff to obtain proposals for conducting a survey of residents as the next step in investigating solid waste collection. Following that meeting, staff contacted three firms that conduct opinion surveys. One response was received, from Morris Leatherman Company. Their proposal is attached and the quotation is in the amount of \$7,000.

There was a question raised at the meeting on the 24th about the MN Supreme Court decision in the matter of the Hands Off Our Cans versus the City of Bloomington regarding holding a referendum on an issue – in this case, having a city-wide vote regarding organized collection. The petitioners in the Bloomington case sued the city and argued that residents have the right to petition to amend the city's charter and put the question of garbage collection on the ballot. The Supreme Court found in favor of the residents.

Bloomington is a home-rule, or charter city. A charter city creates a charter that grants the city, and the residents of those cities, certain powers provided the powers do not conflict with state law. There are 107 charter cities in the state and some of them allow residents to propose ballot initiatives. This authority is not permitted in the other approximately 725 statutory cities like Shorewood. In fact, in statutory cities, there are strict limitations to the type of ballot questions that can be asked of residents, and there are only two specific exceptions to the rule prohibiting advisory elections; the first is whether the city should join a special district or similar independent governmental body that has taxing powers, and the second is a vote to adopt a city charter. Because cities only have powers that are specifically authorized in statute, and there is no statutory provision that allows an advisory election regarding solid waste collection. In other words, the city is prohibited from holding a referendum election in this matter.

This is not to say, however, that the city is otherwise limited in seeking citizen input. The city can have a survey and gather resident input in any other way it determines – it is not just not permitted to conduct a referendum on the question.

Mission Statement: *The City of Shorewood is committed to providing residents quality public services, a healthy environment, a variety of attractive amenities, a sustainable tax base, and sound financial management through effective, efficient, and visionary leadership.*

Financial or Budget Considerations: There is sufficient money in the recycling fund to pay for the cost of the survey.

Options:

- 1) Accept the proposal from Morris Leatherman.
- 2) Reject the proposal and give staff alternative direction

Recommendation / Action Requested: Staff recommends accepting the proposal from Morris Leatherman company.

Next Steps and Timeline: If the proposal is accepted, staff will advise the company. The proposal calls for a session to develop the questionnaire, and we will work with the company to facilitate that meeting.

THE MORRIS LEATHERMAN COMPANY
3128 Dean Court
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416

September 27, 2018

Mr. Greg Lerud
City of Shorewood
5755 Country Club Road
Shorewood, Minnesota 55331

Dear Greg:

The Morris Leatherman Company is pleased to present this survey research proposal to you for the City of Shorewood. This prospectus is organized in three parts: a potential design; project schedule; and, estimated project costs. As you will see, I am certain that MLC can provide the City of Shorewood with the information it seeks in both a cost-effective and timely manner.

DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH:

The Morris Leatherman Company, Ltd., proposes to conduct a telephone survey of 400 randomly selected households in the City of Shorewood. A sample of 400 residents would provide results projectable to the entire city adult population within ± 5.0 percent in 95 out of 100 cases. The sample is also of sufficient size to permit the district to be divided into a maximum of four categories for more detailed analysis, such as age, mobility, home ownership, location of residence, presence of children, and other demographic characteristics.

To insure the integrity of the sample, MLC places the most exacting sampling standards in the industry on our procedures. MLC uses a mix of random digit dial landline and cell phone numbers. Before an alternate household is substituted for a designated target, at least ten tries are made to contact the initial households during a five-day period. The telephone calls take place during various times on weekday evenings and during the weekend. Our interviewers are also instructed to seek convenient appointments with interviewees, cutting our non-contact rate to less than five percent on average. An unbiased selection process is also used to identify the adult member of the household to be interviewed. To validate the completed sample, the latest United States Census updated population characteristics are utilized as a standard of comparison.

The questionnaire would be administered by MLC trained and supervised personnel. The computer analysis will be obtained from our in-house C-MENTOR and SPSS statistical analysis

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systems, insuring both access to the most current analysis programs and confidentiality of the data set.

The City of Shorewood will be presented with bound copies of the final report highlighting all the major findings of the study. MLC will also speak to any major differences from and similarities with the past studies of the community, when applicable, in addition to other maturing communities. A volume of all computer-generated cross tabulations and other multivariate statistical techniques will also be included.

PROJECT SCHEDULE:

1. Planning with City Council Members, City Staff, and/or relevant individuals to establish the topics to be covered in the survey. Based on these topic concepts, MLC would word specific, neutral questions. This activity can be completed by a meeting, telephone and/or fax, depending on client wishes, within two weeks of the initiation of the contract.
2. Structuring of questions and final approval of the survey instrument. These activities are usually completed within three weeks of the discussion of topics to be covered in the survey.
3. Final determination of the field dates for interviewing.
4. Pre-testing and, if needed, approval of resulting revisions. This activity is usually completed by the second day of fieldwork.
5. Completion of all fieldwork within a two week period.
6. Computer analysis and preparation of written report. All analytical tests and commentary will be available within four weeks after completion of the fieldwork.
7. Delivery of the final written report to the City of Shorewood, including presentation graphics. Afterwards, telephone consultation, as the need arises, will be provided about the study's findings and implications.

PROJECT COSTS:

The cost of a survey is driven by two factors: sample size and questionnaire length. The cost to conduct a 20 question unit survey would be \$7,000.00. Each additional question unit beyond the initial allotment would be \$135.00.

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As company policy, MLC requires one-half of the cost prior to the commencement of fieldwork; the remainder is due upon delivery of the final written report. Unless otherwise arranged, MLC invoices clients for the initial payment at the time of the initiation of the contract; the remainder is due at the time of the receipt of the final written report.

If you require any further information from us, feel free to contact either Bill Morris, Diane Traxler, or me. We look forward to the opportunity to work with the City of Shorewood.

Sincerely,

Peter Leatherman

Peter Leatherman
Managing Partner