

Penn Township water survey meets some pushback

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PENN TWP — A few Township residents at the Supervisors' meeting Tuesday evening, July 9, raised concerns about a survey the Township sent out to some households to gauge their interest in receiving water from a municipal system instead of wells.

The survey was distributed last month to Penn Township residents in specific parts of the Township — mainly those in older developments.

According to Penn Township Administrative Assistant Nicole Tempalski, 649 surveys were sent out, of which the Township has received 283 back. Of those who returned, 189 said they were in favor of potentially receiving public water, while 81 said they were not, and 13 said they were unsure.

However, some residents showed up at Tuesday night's meeting to register their concerns about the idea of public water coming into the Township. Benjamin Kohser said bringing in public water would be the first step toward Penn Township losing touch with its roots and becoming a more urbanized municipality like Gibsonia, where he grew up.

"We're no longer a rural community ... and if this Township wants to head away from that direction, to what Gibsonia is, push it," Kohser said. "I don't want the government to control my water coming to my house. I like the fact that I get water right from underneath my house and there's no one that can affect that."

Roger Davis, who has a business in groundwater systems, went one step further by accusing the Township of being "biased" against groundwater in the letter it sent to survey participants.

"This Township was developed on groundwater," Davis said. "When you do a survey, you don't send out a letter leading people that way. And that's what this Township's done."

Supervisor Samuel Ward said he had no hidden motives, and that he simply wanted to give Township residents a chance to express their opinions on what type of water service they wanted in the future.

"This whole exercise is going to give our community an opportunity to make your own judgment," Ward said. "If they don't want to have the well hassle, they can get the municipal service."

Ward said there is no cutoff date for the survey as of yet.