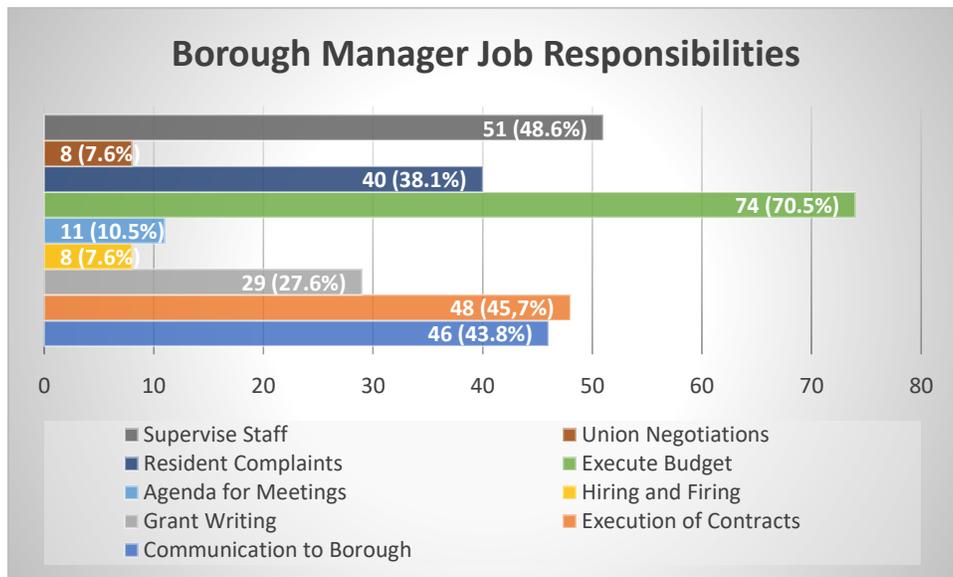


2020 Borough Manager Community Survey

Swissvale Council solicited input from residents regarding the hiring of a new borough manager. Due to the shelter in place restrictions of COVID-19, the input was collected by way of an online survey. One hundred-five (105) residents responded to the seven-question survey. The data was collected and organized by C. Ansell. All council members were given the entire raw survey data except for the personal information (Name and Street Address) collected. Below are the six shared questions and a quick look at the responses.

Q1:



*The nine responsibilities (and tallies) were as follows:

- Supervise office staff and department heads (with the exception of the police who are supervised by the mayor) (51)
- Hiring and firing practices (8)
- Prepare and execute budget (74)
- Preparation and communication of agenda for borough meetings (11)
- Communication to the borough of happenings and milestones (46)
- Grant writing (26)
- Execution of borough contracts (48)
- Receiving and resolving resident complaints (40)
- Union negotiations (8)

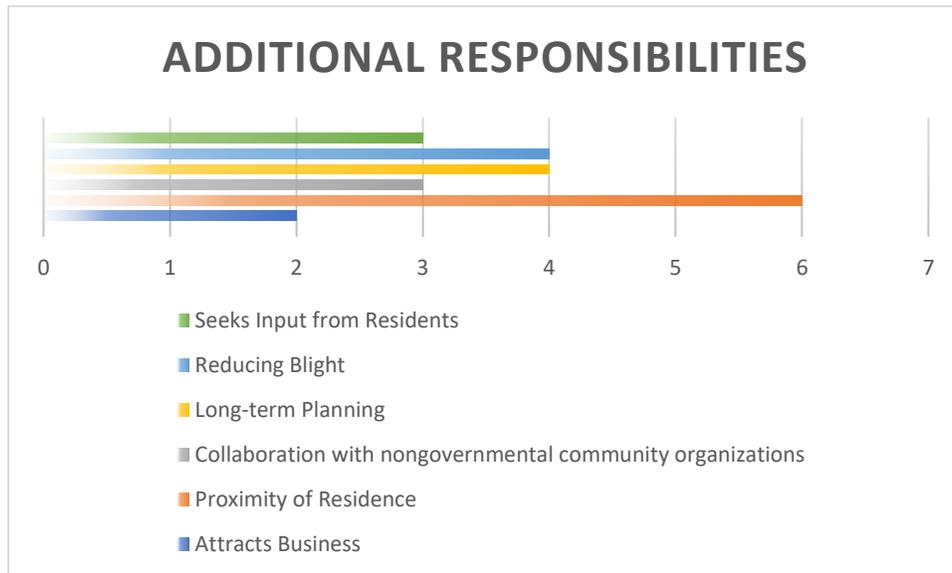
Analysis:

Far and away the primary concern for residents is the *budget*. 70.5% of respondents listed this as a one of the three most important roles of the borough manager. The other three roles which closed in on 50% were *Supervision of staff*, *communication*, and *execution of borough contracts*. It is evident that residents want a balanced budget, clear communication, and seamless running of the borough infrastructure.

Q2:

Are there any responsibilities missing from the previous list that you would like to see in a borough manager’s job description?

20% of respondents selected “no”



Analysis:

This was the question with the lowest response rate. Furthermore, 20% of those who did respond chose to simply state “no.” It appears that most residents feel that the nine job responsibilities (summarized from the boroughs.org website) are an adequate representative of the borough manager position.

Forty-four (44) residents responded with additional suggestions. The 22 listed in the chart were responses that appeared more than once. The most striking is the community’s desire to have the borough manager *live in close proximity* to the borough.

Some of the other respondents that did not make the chart involved *code enforcement, public relations* for the borough, *supervision of police department, cleanliness of the borough*, many of which are traditionally covered by other employees of Swissvale.

Q3:

What qualities and characteristics would you like to see in a borough manager?



Analysis:

The most frequent responded characteristic had to do with *communication*. Residents want to know and understand what is going on with the borough. The borough manager sets the tone for proactive communication to the residents.

In addition, there were clusters of words relating to the virtues people would like to see in a candidate – *honesty, fairness, caring*, etc. There was also a desire to find someone who is *committed to the diversity* which is reflected in the demographics of our borough. Lastly, there were several respondents who want someone who is *competent* and *wise* with budgets and spending.

Q4:

How would you describe a successfully managed borough?



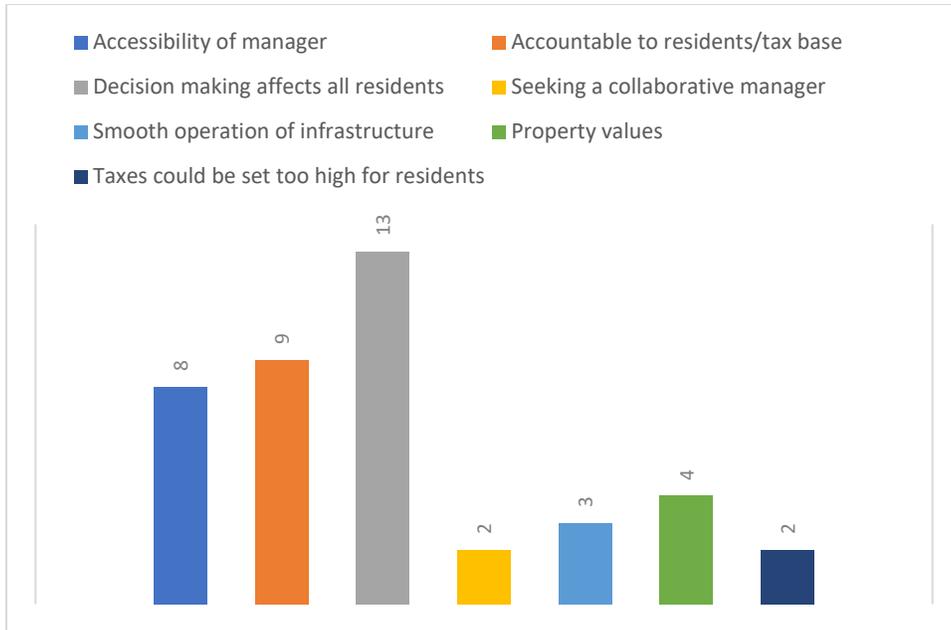
Analysis:

The most frequent characteristic of a successfully managed borough by residents was the term *fiscally sound*. Many other responses echo this desire to ensure that the borough maintains a balanced budget. The second highest response dealt with the aesthetic of the borough, residents want a *clean* borough. As we saw from the prior question, there was also a lot of emphasis put on *clear communication* (also *responsive to residents*).

Some of the other data clusters pointed to the presence of businesses in the community. Words like *thriving* and *growth* were used to point to the economic development and revitalization of our region. Specifically, residents want that growth to be *fair to all residents*, they want to see growth through the lens of *equity*. Lastly, there was a strong desire for a *safe* community.

Q5:

Does the position of borough manager impact you in a significant way? (If so please explain.)

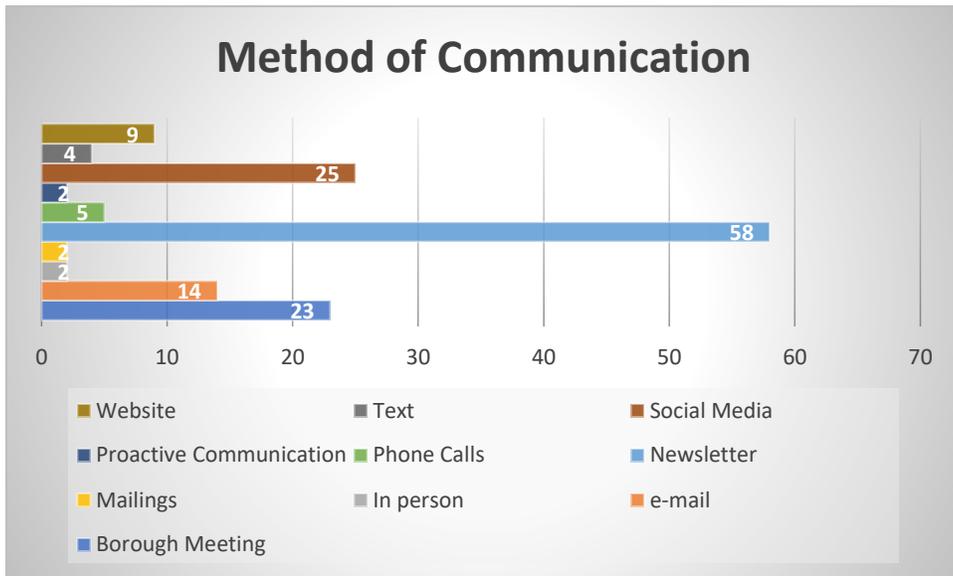
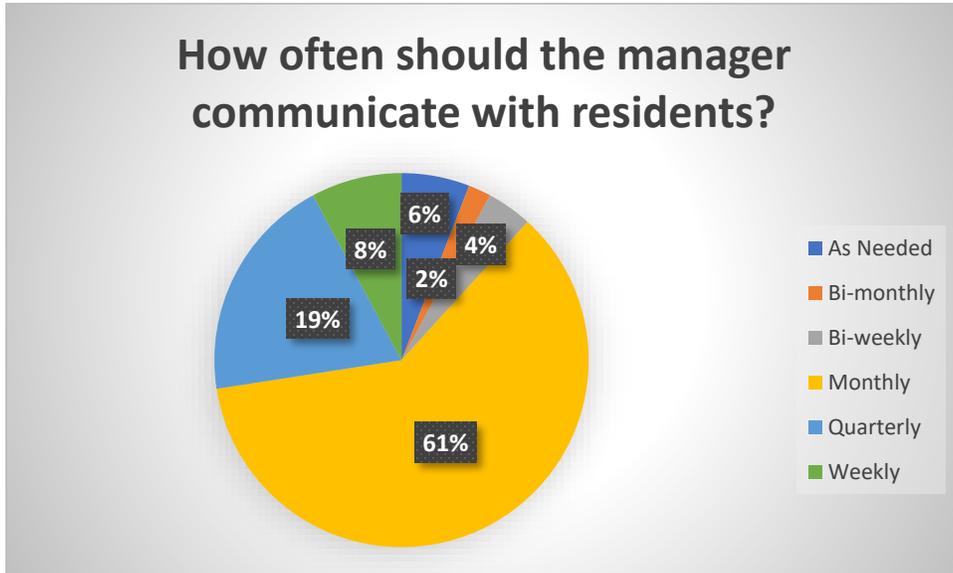


Analysis:

Many residents recognized that even if they have no direct interaction with the borough manager, that the position still has a strong bearing on their quality of life. The primary themes found reflected in responses focused on *infrastructure, property values, taxes, and collaboration*. Another respondent suggested that a good borough manager, who is doing their job well, will not be noticed much. Since much of the work is done behind the scenes, the manager’s success will equate the flourishing of the borough.

Q6:

How often, and through what medium, do you expect the borough manager to communicate with residents?



Analysis:

For this question, the data was split to focus on quantity of communication and then method. There will be places where the time frame is indicative of the medium. For example, residents should not expect a personal phone call from the manager each month. However, it was important to highlight the

frequency residents wanted. Far and away residents want to hear from the manager *at least once a month*. More than 75% of respondents wanted to hear from the manager monthly or more frequently.

When it comes to the medium, there are many options available and the future manager should maximize those opportunities. As we saw from questions 3 and 4, the residents desire a manager who is open and proactive with communication. The *newsletter* is the primary way residents expect to hear from the manager. But a significant number of people would like to hear from the manager directly through *social media* and borough-wide *e-mail*. The manager will continue to make his/her/their reports during the monthly borough meetings as one regular means of communication.