



Office of the City Manager

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# Memo

**Date:** August 31, 2011

**To:** City Council Members

**Re:** 2011 Vassar Community Survey Results

The 2011 Community survey has been completed and I have put together the results below. This will assist council in the future when discussions arise on what cuts to make or how the city can better provide services to the taxpayers. I have included the percent of people and the number of people who replied with each response.

## 1. How would you describe the City of Vassar as a place to live?

Good	59.04% (111)
Fair	20.74% (39)
Excellent	16.49% (31)
Poor	2.13% (4)
Very Poor	1.06% (2)
Don't Know	.53% (1)

## 2. How would you rate the City's efforts to community to citizens?

Good	45.21% (85)
Fair	32.98% (62)
Excellent	7.45% (14)
Poor	7.45% (14)
Don't Know	4.26% (8)
Very Poor	2.66% (5)

## 3. Service Ratings

**I receive a good value for the property taxes I pay:**

Agree	39.89% (75)
Neutral	27.13% (51)
Disagree	19.15% (36)
Strongly Disagree	8.51% (16)
Strongly Agree	5.32% (10)

**I am pleased with direction of the city:**

Agree	51.60% (97)
Neutral	28.72% (54)
Disagree	10.64% (20)
Strongly Agree	5.32% (10)
Strongly Disagree	3.72% (7)

**The City of Vassar welcomes citizen involvement:**

Agree	51.60% (97)
Neutral	25.53% (48)
Strongly Agree	12.77% (24)
Disagree	8.51% (16)
Strongly Disagree	1.60% (3)

**City of Vassar fairly allocates resources to all areas of the community:**

Agree	43.62% (82)
Neutral	35.64% (67)
Disagree	10.11% (19)
Strongly Agree	8.51% (16)
Strongly Disagree	2.13% (4)

**I trust the Vassar City Council:**

Agree	39.36% (74)
Neutral	36.70% (69)
Disagree	10.64% (20)
Strongly Disagree	6.91% (13)
Strongly Agree	6.38% (12)

**I receive good service from the City Hall staff:**

Agree	48.40% (91)
Strongly Agree	30.85% (58)
Neutral	13.83% (26)
Disagree	5.32% (10)
Strongly Disagree	1.60% (3)

**I receive good service from the Police Department**

Agree	50.00% (94)
Strongly Agree	24.47% (46)
Neutral	15.96% (30)
Disagree	6.38% (12)
Strongly Disagree	3.19% (6)

**I receive good service from the Fire Department**

Agree	42.02% (79)
Strongly Agree	30.85% (58)
Neutral	25.53% (48)
Disagree	1.06% (2)
Strongly Disagree	.53% (1)

**I receive good service from the Department of Public Works**

Agree	42.55% (80)
Strongly Agree	28.72% (54)
Neutral	21.81% (41)
Disagree	3.72 (7)
Strongly Disagree	3.19% (6)

4. If you disagreed or strongly disagreed then please indicate why:  
 Responses have been attached

**5. Potential Goals**

<u>Potential Goal</u>	<u>Rating</u>
1. Maintain 24/7 Police Service	3.21
2. Road Improvements	3.28
3. Downtown Improvement	3.58
4. Lower the tax millage	4.44
5. Continue maintenance of City Parks	4.92
6. Improve website to be more interactive	6.44
7. Keep City Hall open 5 days per week	6.45
8. Improve access to Cass River	7.25
9. Purchase homes on the river to tear down	7.67
10. Build a canoe/kayak launch in Vassar	7.69

6. If you had to eliminate one of the following city services, which would you eliminate?

<u>City services</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Close City Hall one day a week	47.22% (85)
Reduce snow removal from bike paths/sidewalks	20.00% (36)
Eliminate leaf pickup	12.78% (23)
24/7 Police Department	10.00% (18)
Maintenance of Parks	4.44% (8)
Other (see responses below)	4.44% (8)
Reduce street snow plowing	1.11% (2)

**Other:**

1. I would like all employees to take an equal across the board pay cut

2. No sick days paid off for employees
3. Excessive city owned sites that require mowing...plant vegetation that requires little or no maintenance.
4. Street sweeper, we don't have trash blowing on the streets
5. Reduce public hours and give the public a taste of being closed once a week. Don't allow people in one day a week and see how that works. Might not, but experiment.
6. Outsource city services and retire all service employees.
7. Reduce administrative overhead, scale back the police department and DPW, eliminate city manager

**7. Are you registered to vote?**

Yes	97.87% (184)
No	2.13% (4)

**8. Would you be in favor of a local street millage?**

No	69.31% (131)
Yes	30.69% (58)

**9. Would you support a police millage to keep 24/7 service?**

Yes	56.54% (108)
No	43.46% (83)

**10. If not in favor of voting for a local street or police millage please specify why?**

- See attached sheet with question #10 responses

**11. Would you like the City of Vassar to print an annual newsletter?**

Yes	51.87% (97)
No	48.13% (90)

**12. Should the city attempt to open up Cass River views?**

No	71.89% (133)
Yes	28.11% (52)

**13. In the past year, how many times have you, or members of your family participated in the following?**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>3-6</b>	<b>5-11</b>	<b>12+</b>
Attend City Meeting	57.44%	25.00%	9.57%	2.65%	5.31%
Visit City Park	12.10%	28.42%	20.00%	17.89%	21.57%
Visit City Website	35.26%	26.84%	20.00%	7.37%	10.52%
Visit City Facebook Page	56.84%	12.10%	10.52%	8.42%	12.10%
Walk on "Rail Trail"	14.81%	16.40%	13.22%	15.34%	40.21%
Utilized T. North Pavilion	18.95%	27.36%	24.21%	8.95%	20.52%
Visited the Library	13.75%	17.46%	14.81%	15.34%	38.62%

**14. Where do you receive your information about city government activities?**

Marquee	69.47% (132)
Pioneer Times	60.00% (114)
Advertiser	53.16% (101)
Water Bill Note	32.11% (61)
Facebook Page	30.53% (58)
City Website	23.68% (45)
Cable Access	18.42% (35)

**15. Please rate the service below based on experience:**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very Poor</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Code Enforcement	9.57%	34.57%	26.60%	13.30%	14.36%	1.60%
Police Department	27.13%	43.62%	21.28%	3.72%	3.19%	1.60%
Fire Department	35.64%	41.49%	10.11%	0%	0%	13.30%
City Hall Staff	31.38%	46.81%	11.70%	4.26%	1.60%	4.26%
Public Works	29.79%	38.30%	18.09%	4.26%	2.66%	6.91%
Receive Information	12.77%	44.68%	27.66%	8.51%	2.13%	4.79%
Cass River Access	6.38%	31.38%	25.00%	12.77%	3.19%	21.28%
Park availability	24.46%	58.29%	7.48%	1.07%	1.07%	7.48%
City Appearance	12.23%	53.72%	26.60%	4.26%	2.66%	1.07%
Park Quality	14.97%	57.22%	19.25%	3.20%	1.07%	4.27%
Website Quality	4.26%	29.79%	22.34%	4.79%	2.13%	36.70%
Snow removal	28.19%	46.28%	18.62%	4.79%	1.07%	1.60%
Street Quality	11.17%	58.51%	22.34%	4.26%	2.13%	1.60%
Utility Billing	17.02%	48.40%	23.30%	6.38%	2.66%	2.66%

**16. How long have you lived in the City of Vassar?**

Over 10 years	75.27% (140)
6 to 10 years	13.44% (25)
1 to 5 years	10.75% (20)
Less than 1 years	.54% (1)

**17. Do you rent or own your residence in Vassar?**

Own	96.69% (175)
Rent	3.31% (6)

**18. What is your age?**

65+	24.86% (45)
55-64	23.76% (43)
45-54	20.44% (37)
35-44	19.34% (35)
25-34	10.50% (19)
18-24	1.10% (2)

**19. What is your gender?**

Female	53.63% (96)
Male	46.37% (83)

**20. Do any children age 12 or younger live in your household?**

No	78.14% (143)
Yes	21.86% (40)

**21. Do any teenagers aged 13 to 18 live in your household?**

No	78.45% (142)
Yes	21.55% (39)

**22. Any additional comments?**

- Additional comments are attached under question #21 additional responses

**23. Which are of the City do you live in?**

North of M-15, West of River	39.44% (71)
South of M-15, West of River	31.11% (56)
South of M-15, East of River	15.00% (27)
North of M-15, East of River	14.44% (26)

**Requested Action: No Action Required**

### Question #4 Comment Responses

<u>4. If you disagree or strongly disagree to the questions above please indicate why below</u>	
1	When the police hold grudges against those whom they have had problems with in the past. They never let it go.
2	Property taxes are too high for this small town, this is not California!
3	Replace Chief of Police
4	Sweep Roads Less Often
5	Only problem with PD is that they pick on the teens and drive them away from living in their hometown. Go after the drunks leaving the bar and Eagles instead, those adults are a much bigger problem.
6	Taxes are out of sight for condo owners with minimum city services. No snow plowing especially, we are in the city!
7	Although I did not disagree with police department I feel as though more could be done about the police departments involvement with the high school aged youth mostly to combat underage drinking
8	Too many police officers for a city Vassar's size. Police portion of the city budget is far too high.
9	It is already in my taxes
10	Water person use to work as sewer waste , city will not allow new businesses in
11	If SEV goes down - taxes do not
12	I would like to see city grow. Annexing properties west of city and others.
13	My SEV is triple from where it should be. No way my house is worth where its assessed at!
14	Had issue with basement flooding and had to pay despite it being the city's issue. Also the storm drains are higher on our side of the street than the other side and water pools in our driveway, we spent money to fix this problem
15	Property taxes are too high. City of Vassar doesn't care what the citizens say. I don't trust the city council, over paid staff at city hall. Very poor service from the police department, sometimes you wait 2 to 3 hours for a police officer to show up
16	Clean up city yards and barking dogs, roaming cats. Plant more flowers, not petunias and make more sidewalks. Is it allowed to dump raw sewage in backyard - my neighbor?
17	My property taxes are evaluated too high for my house value
18	I believe that in a recession we need to reassess and not place extra burden on individuals (i.e. high taxes, water bills, etc).
19	Councilman Hornung usually just sits there and does not answer yea or nay whenvotes are taken. He should be required to cast a vote.
20	Side walks over grown need edging, very expensive taxes considering we live in an association run condo and pay for services
21	Every year my taxes go up and I live on a fixed income
22	Taxes are too high
23	I grew up in a small town (Muskegon) so I just love being here. The people are very friendly nad kind (god bless you all!)
24	I did not receive good service fro mthe city hall staff - lack of bins for garbage. Trust the city council?
25	We have too many cops, plus state and county in Vassar. We should keep Dave, Myra, Shindorf and Simmerson. Barker needs to go
26	They are not fair in their petition for the city
27	More enforcement on removal of brush piles, junk piles, and general yard clean-up
28	Trees on Welsh that were to be cut down the past winter, Grant Street closure
29	Overtaxed and the school system is terrible
30	I think property taxes are too high
31	Police are lax!! & arrogant- everything is considered a civil matter. DPW are sloppy & arrogant too!
32	Property taxes are very high. Everyone is Vassar has known this for years. A long with water and sewer bills, and the value of our homes falling, how can anyone feel the property taxes are a good value? Its something we don't like but we live with
33	Staff has told me to hold/call back so they can get an answer like for: building permits, garbage questions, or are they issuing burn permits today.
34	Taxesin vassar higher than Frankenmuth! Police, Manager, City Clerk salaries high. Nepotism in city council - council members family members work for city and in city union, conflict of interest
35	For the amount of taxes I pay, not only should the city low my streety bit they should plow the sidewalk and shovel my driveway. Taxes in Vassar and Michigan in general are much too high
36	I love this city
37	Council conflict of interest/all city services not equal to all areas of the city
38	I believe my property tax values are low, but because of the high millage rate, they have to be

39	I had to have my water shut off due to a major water leak and it was an inconvenience for city employees to turn off and on because it was around their lunch time and the end of the day. (Which they told me)
40	Police ignore complaints , Public Works ignore and disagree with citizens issues and the parks look bad
41	Our property analysis proves that our property value has been cut in half... although our property taxes do not go down. Robert will attend meeting to lower our property taxes
42	My property is not worth the high tax dollars I pay
43	We need more and new businesses. More above poverty families and develop the downtown river area. Vassar is unique
44	City council does not work as a team
45	The police never come fast enough when you need them, the City of Vassar does not need another "dollar store." The town is falling apart.
46	City Hall Staff - During the recent construction on Huron Ave I have had several questions that I have directed towards city hall, and have received less than pleasant service over the phone.
47	Tearing down the IGA to put in a Dollar General? The people in power seem to want to tear down anything they can, and I, for one, think it's HORRIBLE.
48	Taxes are CRAZY high and although I realize it goes toward the River Projects the basic infrastructure of City is kind of poor. Parks are nice but have tons of graffiti and have had same graffiti for months. Rail trail is beautiful and well maintained and I have seen some improvements to sidewalks but for the most part sidewalks are almost dangerous.
49	Have never helped us when needed.
50	Taxes in Vassar are way too high!!! The tax assessor doesn't follow the states tax laws. Taxes are way more than the city of Frankenmuth.
51	I pay higher taxes for a 1000sq ft house in the city than my parents pay for a 200 acre, 3000sq ft house w/ 3 barns. I feel that taxes are too high. Add mandatory flood insurance (which I understand isn't the city's doing) and I'm dishing out an extra \$300 in escrow a MONTH! As soon as I can sell my house, I'm getting out of city limits and out of the flood zone!
52	Where would you say you allocate the resources? I don't see any improvement in the downtown area at all. M-15 going out of town to the south looks terrible and give the impressions of a town without pride.
53	The problem on the council is Henry Hornung. Someone who hates the city clearly can't or should not be on the council. Why did Henry Hornung encourage Mark Cooper to hang those organic signs downtown. I was one of the people that called Henry about this encouraging him to get Mark to take down the signs. Him and that nervous laugh and he did nothing. Why is someone that hateful on the council. Why is someone like him who is a NO VOTER on the council on the council. I hope he doesn't get back on that would be the best news.
54	I believe city councilors should NOT be employed by the city or have spouses employed by the city and should definitely not vote on issues relative to budget and benefits...those councilors should not have any input regarding this matter...it may be legal, but it is HIGHLY unethical...no other surrounding communities allow it, why does Vassar?.
55	We had a lot of problems with neighbors setting off firecrackers at all hours this summer. The police didn't seem to mind, as long as they weren't hurting anyone. Setting off firecrackers at midnight is unacceptable.
56	The police need to start doing their job not sit around drinking coffee and shooting the crap in a gas station, we have way too many people speeding in and out of town, and way too much crime for a little city that has 24/7 police. We need to replace the ones that can not run or have been here since the old chief and think they are above the law and Dave is one of those
57	Property taxes are outrageous, everytime the city needs to balance the budget taxes go up
58	I strongly disagree with the direction the city is taking...too many empty buildings in this town...looks like a ghost town! I also strongly disagree with the value vassar residents get from their taxes...what? there is NOTHING in this town to do for anyone...the brightest spot in vassar is the library!
59	I think we still pay too much for taxes. Its more than Frankenmuth.
60	The hours of City Hall are very inconvenient for a family that works out of the area. I leave my house at 7 am and return at 6 pm. When I call with questions, the staff is rude and acting like I am bothering them. Makes me not want to call or be involved with City Hall.
61	When it comes to council - I don't trust Henry Hornung at all. If he runs a city like he runs his business we will all be in trouble. He ought to just stick with what I would say he knows; but he doesn't know much. That is a FACT!

62	<p>City Council is very SELF interested. Have too many who have relatives working for city to be impartial. City Council only seems to be interested in spending every cent they get their hands on instead of saving for a rainy day. Was very disappointed to hear that you reinstated all pay raises. Why???? is the millage for the City of Vassar higher than any other, and why do we have the largest police department? You are way out of touch with the average citizen. For example, Shirley Seney gets to vote on pay raise for her husband????? What does the word Nepotism mean??? The only one on the council who knows anything about finances is Henry Hornung who successfully runs a business. And he realizes that you can't spend what you don't have. He also knows that you can't keep raising your prices or you will price yourself right out of business!!!!!! As far as the police go, you can always find them at one of our gas stations, Betty Lou's or even at baseball games.</p>
63	<p>City council and management is ...and always has been...out of touch with the real needs of residents. Most run for name recognition or for "what's in it for me" rather than to really benefit the majority of residents or the city. This survey is a perfect example. The questions are worded as a veiled threat in the two choices...raise taxes or lose services. If council really cared about hearing from residents a stamped envelope or an answers only post card should have been provided. Use the one percent admin. fee from taxes to pay for it. Lord knows that it did not cost the ten dollars that I paid just to print and mail my tax bill. The survey below is also out of touch. I would rank many of those a zero. Work on grants and incentives to bring jobs to town. More jobs ...more residents...larger tax base...community committee and volunteer groups would gladly volunteer to complete many tasks on this survey. Move away from the big city ideas and focus on the small town values that abound in Vassar. Finally move away from "how it has always been done here". Be bold, embrace the small town concept and capitalize on our strengths. We will never be Frankenmuth...we could be better if we embrace what we are with no apology.</p>
64	<p>I see police on patrol talking on cell phone and wearing seat belts as per law they are not exempt from it.and there are too many need to make some cuts before i vote to pass any more millage,s</p>
65	<p>We bought our house here in the city limits 1.5 years ago and feel we should have been shown where our property lines are. Also, it would be nice to know the city ordinances- it appears our neighbors have too many dogs inside &amp; out and their trees hang way over their fence onto our property. Would be nice if the city would address those things with them so we don't have to. We pay a lot in taxes, wish the city would enforce city code/ordinances in these areas. Would make living here much more enjoyable. Too bad some people just aren't considerate of their city neighbors. We also think their shed may be too close to our property line, but not sure since we don't know what the city ordinances are regarding this.</p>
66	<p>Taxes....my home is worth half what it was three years ago. I realize that the city has a dwindling tax base but we sure could use a break.</p>
67	<p>Look forward to a new council. Not all new but one that votes no all the time is a negative impact on the council.</p>
68	<p>Taxes are too high in Vassar with the total millage exceeding many small towns in Michigan. City council continues to be comprised of those with little education and poor understanding of business and economics. Most council members have very little involvement in the community. Residency requirement should extend to the position of City Manager.</p>
69	<p>I am involved with the City in many ways and I know thier efforts - they do a great job trying to get people involved and informed.</p>
70	<p>When calling with questions it seems like there is not a lot of response or answers...for instance - I have had brush (yard waste) by the road for 2 weeks now - first week as a pile - not taken, 2nd week as a cleaner pile - not taken, 3rd week (this week) in cans. I called City Hall and was given very loose instructions about what to do with it when you want it picked up. I am hoping it is picked up this week when it is in a can - I will not be happy if it's not.</p>
71	<p>The police have a slow response time when called. It is quicker for me to go to Beacon and Bridges to find them as they are "hanging out" talking. The staff at City Hall is not welcoming or friendly. They act like you are bothering them when you come in to pay bills. The City Council is more worried about spending money on "beautifying" the city with non-needed new signs and lighting then they are about making sure the police and DPW are doing their jobs efficiently or fixing the roads that truly need to be fixed.</p>
72	<p>I think the City Council could be doing more to bring businesses to industiral park and also the other empty buildings in the city.</p>
73	<p>The DPW people are terribly slow at basically everything they do. Whether it's mowing or clearing snow in the winter. The way things are done makes no sense and is terribly inefficient.</p>
74	<p>Based on the taxes paid in other areas of Tuscola County we pay way too much. Based on the bottoming out of the real estate industry and the fact that the value of homes have gone down so much, taxes are just too high.</p>
75	
76	

<b><i>6. If you had to eliminate one of the following city services - other, what would it be?</i></b>	
1	I would like all employees to take an equal across the board pay cut
2	No sick days paid off for employees
3	Excessive city owned sites that require mowing...plant vegetation that requires little or no maintenance.
4	street sweeper, we don't have trash blowing on the streets
5	Reduce public hours and give the public a taste of being close once a week. Don't allow people in one day a week and see how that works. Might not, but experiment.
6	Out source city services and retire all service employees.
7	Reduce administrative overhead, scale back the police department and DPW, eliminate city manager
8	street sweeper,

	<b>Question #10 Comment on whether in favor or not in favor of millages</b>
1	They waste a lot of time
2	One or the other, not both millages. It is tough for fixed income retired seniors to make ends meet
3	City funds should be allocated evenly for all homes
4	It is never ending, they get paid to victimize the people that pay their wages
5	What I pay in taxes in relation to my house value is much higher then what my family pays in Frankenmuth
6	In favor of less officers, but feel you could maintain 24/7 with different scheduling - too much time off available with too many part timers for a small town
7	Should be in the budget already
8	Not necessary
9	Taxes should cover street service, plus get money from government for road or streets
10	We already pay taxes for these services
11	Millage should remain as is, those who don't like it are free to move out
12	IT should be covered under property taxes
13	What are our taxes for now?
14	Like I said earlier, I pay way too much in tax already
15	I need to know more about the local street millage before I say yes to this
16	Just include in general budget - Streets
17	I am happy with the way it is. My taxes go up every years, are they not keeping up?
18	too much to keep track of already - giving way to much trust to other figures. What would the trade-off be? Would city taxes be reduced? Where do the costs come from now?
19	We can't afford it
20	No more taxes - no more raises - stop wasting tax dollars on dumb stuff. Example, taking rocks out of river for \$75,000
21	My taxes are too high already!
22	Do I really have to explain that most people are hurting? Our streets are ok for now, Vassar has a low crime rate.
23	Our property taxes are supposed to pay for these items. Since funding is reduced from the state, I am willing to pay a little for extra police coverage.
24	Tax rates in Vassar are already high compared to other areas. New tax to cover for existing services just does not make sense.
25	There is not enough crime in Vassar
26	I pay enough taxes already
27	Streets should be taken care of in millage already paid now
28	Senior citizen - fixed income
29	Doesn't the local taxes already cover them?
30	Taxes are high enough, we don't need two police on at one time, we can call for backup
31	I am in favor of the police millage
32	We have too many vacant houses and a lot of people just rent
33	T.E.A.
34	We are taxed too much now
35	Have everyone share equal in reducing burden on tax payers
36	We are taxed enough
37	Because they should do streets already, because of school, police are needed anyway
38	Overtaxed
39	We don't need more street millage, they do a good job now. I don't think we need all the officers we spend too much on it now
40	I do not think that these are necessary services
41	Don't need them
42	Our millage rate is already too high compared to other communities
43	No they need "new blood" in the police department, new leadership
44	We should have money now for these projects

45	Residents manage with local snow falls to access major thur-ways. Vassar seems to have a lot of police for its size. Some say too many, its also patrolled by the county sheriff as well as state police. I do not feel service would suffer by eliminating a police officer
46	We have to cut, things have gotten out of hand. We all need to chip in and do our part
47	We don't need 24/7 police, we really don't get that now, but we pay for it
48	Would millage be the same for all streets or would streets in better areas of Vassar be charged more? If the same for all neighborhoods I would be ok with this
49	Worried not be able to afford both
50	Don't have money to pay it
51	Need to manager money you already received. Highest taxes around
52	No more taxes period! Use what's in place now
53	Not in these economic times
54	Must have safety - but this is not the time to increase spending on streets, maybe in the future
55	Taxes too high already
56	Taxes are too high now
57	Can't afford any more bills
58	Police are not doing their job. No use in giving them more for incompetence
59	Vassar needs to lay off employees! I always see 1 person working & 3 standing around watching. Make cuts like every other city. Thank goodness the rude embezzler doesn't work at city hall anymore
60	Those are the two things that are important our taxes should already be paying for. Come on leaf pickup or a police officer, be real.
61	3" of snow doesn't need to be plowed - less salt also police always come after the crime has been committed.
62	We probably wont be living here in 5 years
63	Taxes are high enough already. Snow removal does not need to include secondary streets during overtime hours. And the condition of the secondary streets is good.
64	Any milage increases should go to the schools not to officers who use their lights to get to Betty Lou's faster.
65	Taxed enough
66	I think the police need to be more effective before I support a millage. TN Pavilion needs to be monitored - espeically in the spring. There are times when I am uncomfortable walking the rail trail because of rowdy teenagers. There are several times I've encountered kids smoking or drinking around the Pavilion. Kids know that officers simply drive by the Pavilion instead of actually getting out and walking around. Police need to be much more of a physical presence, and not just a body in a car.
67	Reducing city employee wage and benefit packages would allow funds for other services...most are overpaid and receive ridiculous health benefits.
68	I think I said it all in the above
69	I don't know what millage would be required,I don't know what the expenses are.
70	yoo much money in taxes already
71	Pay high enough taxes--take a pay cut for more money everyone else does
72	too many taxes now being paid for not much!
73	There are other places that could be cut back. The citizens shouldn't suffer because the city doesn't know how to manage their money.
74	I already pay taxes that support snow removal and 24/7 police coverage. If cuts need to be made, across the board pay cuts and reducing city hall hours and staff should be considered first.
75	While I am happy with city services taxes in Vassar are high and passing taxes onto seperate millages is not a solution
76	The streets are fine.
77	We already have one the most expensive taxes in the county. We have no services/activites for children (like a park and recreation department like Frankenmuth) other than baseball and football. Wish this town was more kid friendly.
78	Economy is to tight on my personal income.
79	Don't need it all the time.
80	These items should be covered by our property taxes.

81	The economy is bad and people don't have much to give in support of government activity
82	Our millage in vassar is already the highest around. Learn to live on what you already have, just like the rest of us.
83	Spend your money more wisely. Adding more tax will force me to move to the township. I have a lot and a tiny house. I pay double what a friend pays for two acres and a house triple my size in the township, and she doesn't have a monthly water bill to boot. There is something wrong with this picture. Raising taxes will only force those of us who can afford to move out to move and compound your tax revenue problem. I am not the only college educated working professional in my circle of friends looking to move away from the city due to the tax and water issues here. If we all go...who will you tax?
84	That should be what a percentage of our tax dollars are to be used for already.
85	because the street st and sidewalks that get fixed are not the ones that need it they only fix the ones in the down town area,and the police are never there when you need them you see them outside the city and using the car at taxpayer expense for there personal use and are not around when you need them the dept. is over staffed and they misuse the funds on golf outings
86	Don't think we need an extra millage for the roads it should already be in the budget. With the break in's going on all around the city, we need 24 hour police. I think that is why we don't have that happening. here.
87	By out sourcing services the city can save a substancial amount of money to fund road repairs.
88	taxes are too high as it is
89	Taxes are already too high. The city must find a way to reduce costs without compromising essential services. Raising taxes is not the answer. This is the challenge that every community faces. Vassar has a bloated administration - particularly the police force and DPW. Consideration should be made to eliminating jobs and selling off expensive DPW equipment while contracting certain services to private-sector businesses where necessary.
90	Already pay enough taxes that pay for these services. Need to see a complete breakdown before I would vote for that!
91	I live right on m-15 so question doesn't really effect me
92	I would like to see some cuts made in employee benefits first, then I would be more willing to vote for a millage request.
93	Crime rate isn't high enough to support a millage for 24/7 police coverage and our taxes are high enough now to cover maintenance of local streets.
94	We could get better "bang for our buck" contracting with the county sherrif's office. Nothing shows me how poorly spent the police force money is then when you can drive by Beacon and Bridges on any day at any given time and see the Vassar Police car parked there for hours on end.
95	The schools get quite a large portion of tax money that would be useful elsewhere and benefit more people.
96	Why should we pay more for roads that are already being plowed?
97	Resident inside the city can take a few minutes and remove the snow from their sidewalks...

	<b>Question #21 Any Additional Comments</b>
<b>1</b>	Leaf Pickup depends which is cheaper because you are shifting the cost to homeowner when they have to buy bags and do it themselves
<b>2</b>	Why is Oak St between Cass and Main St Low priority of plowing in winter? Visitors who park downtown have trouble getting down Oak Street
<b>3</b>	Its my choice to stay here - I enjoy Vassar
<b>4</b>	Property taxes too high! Peoples homes are not what they are taxes for lost value
<b>5</b>	night. The people that live in the country pay very little in taxes, why does a city owner have to pay 2 or 3 times more and they still get to use school, library, parks, etc.
<b>6</b>	Need a crossing guard by Junior High driveway, maybe consider less areas for kids to cross to make it safer
<b>7</b>	Many of us work ten hours a day, if you close early one day do not make it Friday, most people get off early to take care of errands
<b>8</b>	Just discovered Dog Park in Frankenmuth, why don't we have one here?
<b>9</b>	We would like to see more businesses come in - less taxes and no lying to the people - be fair - have more for kids to do
<b>10</b>	Get the assesments on Cass Ave looked at! We would all be thrilled.
<b>11</b>	We have an absolutely wonderful library for a town our size
<b>12</b>	Vassar City employees and most citizens seem genuinely concerned about the city
<b>13</b>	Who took the "Price has been paid" signs from the post office and 202 N. Main location weekend of July 16th.
<b>14</b>	The sidewalks are very bad
<b>15</b>	I have lived here 40 years, 2,700 people pay for the services of 25 people. 1.2 million dollars - way over paid. If you don't live on the hill you get treated differently. You people don't tell the truth, how can we trust you to print "true"results of the survey. We are always trying to fix downtown but 40% of stores are vacant and city parks just cut the grass and keep the trouble out of the park.
<b>16</b>	Junk cars in yards, people park in there own yard and animal barking and cars roaming sucks
<b>17</b>	Stop raising taxes
<b>18</b>	Repair the railroad crossing in town and clean the river south of town
<b>19</b>	Keep doing good work - keep going
<b>20</b>	Love Vassar - but we have things we can work on!
<b>21</b>	We need another bridge over the Cass River. If the bridge on M-15 closes we have to drive all the way to Tuscola 30 miles round trip to get downtown. This should have been corrected in 1986
<b>22</b>	Nothing is easy in this economy
<b>23</b>	Lower tax millage during economic distress
<b>24</b>	I would use the library more but will not support it until they stop allowing the tea party to meet there.
<b>25</b>	I would like to see yearly yard inspections for brush/junk piles, fire hazard and electric line clearance and code violations
<b>26</b>	Your fixing up fronts downtown that we can't even keep a business in all we have is bars and restaurants and theatre. I don't want my taxes to go up to pay for new looks
<b>27</b>	I just love Vassar, City Manager doing a very good job. My husband was on city council for 18 years then a county commissioner

28	The waste management personal are not doing a good job. They are very selective in what they feel like picking up
29	Replace leadership in DPW & Police
30	Just wish there was a way to fill all of the empty buildings downtown with little boutiques and become a tourist town
31	Sewer and water ills are very high in Vassar. With billing every three months there will be a lot more defaults in payments. Although with water being shut off and turned on more often. The city will probably collect more fees that way, but it will be a lot harder for me to pay such a large bill at once. I do not like the idea at all. With increased shutoffs there will be more paperwork and there is no benefit for the city
32	I am some what proud of Vassar, but sometimes the smell from the factory is rough. City Manager seems very sincere in his work
33	We love Vassar, the community feel is great!
34	One bumps when driving over sewer entrances
35	Need crosslight for walkers/bikers etc at light by speedway/city hall. Also - walk signal between speedway to Bridal shop is slow to ? Operating
36	Return the riverfest to the river. Its mismanaged right now. It is a glorified car show, bring back the Friday night burnout, add a cruise, canoe race, rubber ducks, put the river back into riverfest!
37	Create wild land areas along the river and the moore drain so it won't have to be mowed
38	Great work in past two years with Julius as manager
39	I feel many streets are in desperate need of repair
40	Lay off unneeded workers & lower property taxes. Vassar does not offer anything to residence. The population has been going down, everyone that can moves away. Who would want to live here? Terrile water & outrageous propret taxes.
41	Close library 3 days a week it only needs to be open Mon, Wed & Fri. There is never anyone there
42	Whats the big deal about access to Cass River? If you are going to do something buy the shacks along the river and make it a great park or some sort of property the city can make income off
43	Too many empty lots and parks to maintain - too much labor
44	Please keep trying to attract business whicb rings jobs and tax base necessary for a viable community
45	the city needs picked up....
46	i just think that we need to promote vassar as a good place to live for the young and older population. we are close to saginaw, bay city, flint and midland.
47	Why does Henry Hornung bad mouth the current council that he is a part of? That should not be allowed. Mr. Hornung does not realize the effects to his business by the type of person that he is and how he is on the council. Do you have to be ethical to be on the council.
48	Good luck dealing with the state government!
49	There is a certain amount of arrogance which is quite noticeable from some city employees and most city councilors who appear to have a superiority complex as well as personal agendas...this attitude shouldn't exist as the afore noted people should ALWAYS have the best interest of the residents of Vassar in mind...NOT their own. Should you disagree with this statement I've proven myself correct.
50	Please improve are roads and side walks and expand the rail trail

51	This is a dying town. About half of the homes are either for sale or foreclosed. The industry is all leaving. You need to do something to attract industry and businesses so there will be jobs. And quit raising taxes to provide for raises. We have plenty of parks that nobody uses now we don't need more.
52	I am a city taxpayer but do not live in the city
53	The City needs business to open once again and become the great town it once was. What can we do as citizens to make this happen? The yards of many people are cluttered with junk and blithe and someone needs to be held responsible for this.
54	Good group of workers, I have never experience problems with them. Business owners should not be allowed to be on council. They always have their own personal agendas. Need I say anymore?
55	Again I would say, live within your means and sto the nepotism!
56	It'd be really nice if community communications were better... for example in '10 my neighbor didn't know about the watering ban and therefore were watering everyday... I can't even tell you if there is a ban on watering this year.
57	Work on creating jobs. Forget about the cosmetics of river access and trails. We have vacant factories and warehouses and plenty of people willing to work. Spend resources on creating jobs. Have volunteer groups help clear river access. Many people cut wood for fuel...focus on how small town values can be put to work for the city...embrace who we are...and quit trying to be what we aren't. That alone will go far to improve the city image.
58	Sometimes things have to be done in small steps to accomplish the task. Try doing things in moderation as the budget allows. Don't always go for the "Great Gusto" of doing something..
59	public works people are some of the worst they need to get the on grant st. fixed and the sidewalks in that areathe road has been closed for month's now and the police need to down size there is no need for more than four officer's to be employed . do not mean to be so neg on these dept's but time's are hard and cut's need to be made and the money spent on the street's and sidewalk.
60	Please drive around the city neighborhoods and take a look at peoples trees, how many dogs they have, etc., to ensure they are in compliance with city code. Not everyone is comfortable confronting their neighbors about these things. It makes living here miserable when simple things like trees and dogs and dog waste piling up in your neighbor's yard is allowed. We pay way too much in taxes to have to put up with that. Look for dog kennels in back yards and multiple dogs in the house and trees right along fencelines! Please help with this!
61	The city will continue to decline until new businesses are attracted to the area. Therein lies the problem, How to convince a new company to move to Vassar when its downtown is falling apart and has nearly 50% vacancy.
62	Good staff at city hall. Good manager. Good police. Improvement to a city council person would be nice

63	<p>The city administration's arrogance of the last few years with regard to budgeting and cost containment does little to evoke public sympathy for the current economic woes or support for additional tax millages. Administrative salary increases have exceeded those in the private sector at a time when many of the taxpayers in this community have lost jobs and/or benefits. As the population and tax base continue to decrease, the size of local government must also be reduced. The DPW is particularly bloated with too many employees and too much unnecessary equipment. Why does it take two DPW employees to operate a snow plow in the winter? The DPW has far too many "official" vehicles and expensive little-used equipment in its fleet. Any consideration of reducing the city hall hours of operation must also entail commensurate reductions in the salaries for the city manager and all city workers. Elimination of one day in five would correspond to a 20% decrease in payroll for all full-time city employees. Eliminating hours of operation without reducing salaries further burdens taxpayers.</p>
64	<p>#22 very confusing M-15 turns west in town at traffic light so I'm not sure how to make the right decision. Other than that good survey. Note question 2 "Suchy as surveys"</p>
65	<p>If a newsletter is being considered, I would recommend distributing as much as possible (if not all) electronically. I would be interested in doing more to support our town but I don't know how or what is needed. I'm not sure if I need to be from a certain family in order to get involved. I'm involved more with community activities in the town where I work (Saginaw) than my hometown because I know ways that I can help. For example, I wouldn't mind volunteering to paint the graffiti at the park.</p>
66	<p>City Hall can go to 4 10 hour days. I have a hoarder by me - they live on the corner of Grant and Welsh and NOTHING is being done. GROSS!!! Also - need to have auto deduction for water bills. That could prob eliminate one person at city hall if things were done electronically. Police force and DPW are great. Biggest complaint is hoarder and Grant St being closed for so long. Need to either attract new business or do something crafty with empty store fronts...Love the mural on the train track overpass thing by the City "museum". Love the flower planting on the hill...could be a Christmas in July project sometime for a family that needs some help maintaining yard, etc...Think with the economy bad people took paycuts (me - 40% pay cut) so I would NOT approve more money for taxes unless it was necessary.</p>
67	<p>I would like to be able to pay my bills online other than using a credit card, debit my account. The city could consider leasing the vacant lots it acquired with FEMA money to the neighboring homeowners to use tax free in exchange for maintaining them therefore saving the city mowing expenses.(of course they couldn't build on them but they could use them for additional yard space.)</p>
68	<p>The City Council should spend more time trying to attract new business to Vassar, especially the downtown area and the industrial park, instead of worrying about the city beautification and new access to the Cass River.</p>
69	<p>I think the kids/punks hanging out at the pavillion is ruining the playground and railtrail for everyone, these kids are rude, swearing, smoking. this should be a family place not a hang out for kids, i know many people who have stopped going there because of these kids! It is a huge problem that needs to be addressed.</p>
70	<p>There are some nice benches near the pavillion that overlook the river, howecer this year are unusable due to overgrowth. Keep the parks, they are wonderful!</p>
71	<p>The amount of books at the local library is pathetic. I quit using it because there is never anything there to read that I either haven't already read or own. I have more books in my home than what is contained in the city library.</p>

