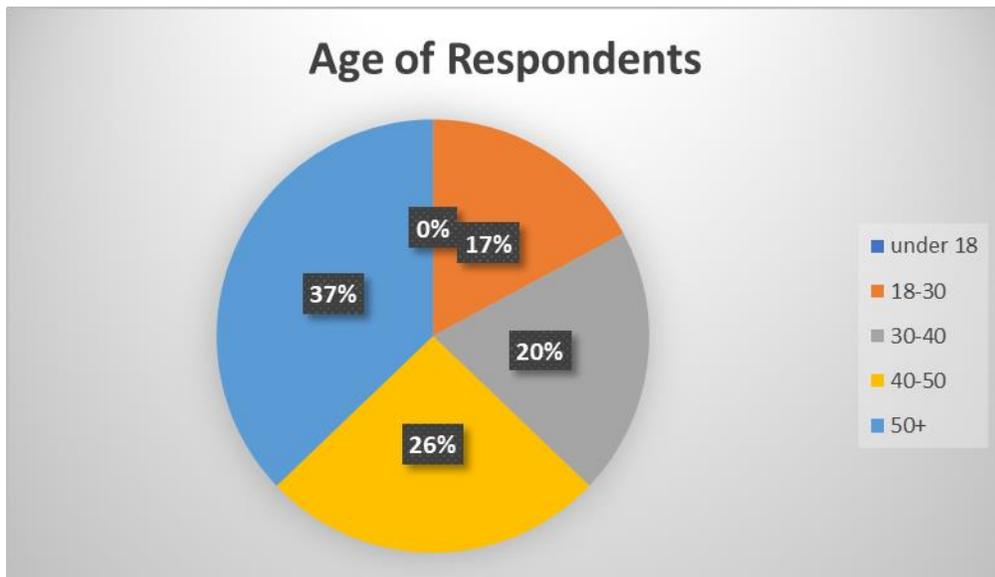# Results of Village Commons Survey

The Pagan Groups of the Spokane Area would like to thank all who participated in the survey. We received 39 responses, which is statistically significant, given our estimate of the number of Pagans in the community.

Obviously, the poll was geared such that people would respond with why they don't go to events. The reason for that was if you don't know what mistakes are being made, you cannot correct them! On November 25, seven members representing five of the most active groups in the area met to discuss the results and determine how certain complaints can be addressed, and how the groups can move forward to create a more vibrant Pagan Community. Respondents and others need to be aware that there is only so much that we can do. The groups have time constraints as well, and there are no full-time Clergy members in Spokane. We are all volunteers, and we may not be able to provide expertise in every area of community interest.  That will be the subject of a later post. Here are the poll results:

## Demographics

The Issue of demographics is important because we need to ensure that we are reaching all ages. We are not. Almost 2/3 of the respondents are over 40 years of age and over 1/3 are over 50 years of age.



Only 17% of the respondents are 30 years old or younger.  This is a little disheartening. If this demographic distribution reflects the distribution of people looking at our Facebook pages (where the poll was primarily promoted), we aren't drawing in the younger Pagans.

## Reasons to Not Attend Events

There is some pent-up anger about things that happened in the past, unrelated to the current groups. The data are tabulated below (numbers do not add up to 100% because people could choose multiple answers):

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Work/other commitments | 12 | 32% |
| Would feel awkward because I don't know anyone. | 12 | 32% |
| Cannot afford it. | 11 | 30% |
| Previous Bad Experience | 7 | 19% |
| Didn't know there were public events. | 5 | 14% |
| No transportation. | 5 | 14% |
| Prefer to practice privately. | 4 | 11% |
| Can't afford a sitter | 2 | 5% |
| Sickness/Disability | 2 | 5% |
| Distance | 2 | 5% |
| Terrible with Directions | 2 | 5% |
| Coven Conflicts | 1 | 3% |

Almost everyone who checked other on the original poll provided enough additional information that we could break down that category into others that are more specific.

Some of these are things maybe we can mitigate, others are not. Obviously if people prefer to be solitary (11%), that is their right. People who have young children and cannot afford a sitter (5%), people who are invalids (5%), or live at a great distance (5%) are not going to be part of a target audience for a Pagan event unless/until we can stream events. That they are reading our Facebook output or Village Commons is at least encouraging. Our best way of serving them is through social media and through better content on Village Commons (which will require more writers).
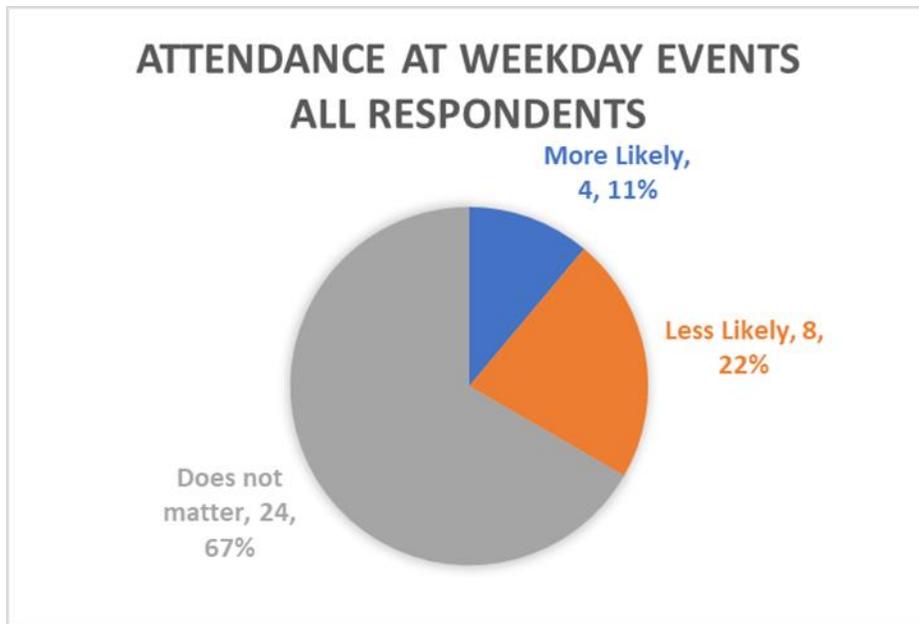
Coven conflicts (3%) are something we can mitigate with better inter-group communications.

**Work Conflicts (32%)**

One of the most common reasons for not attending events was work and other time conflicts. This can be very true, particularly when someone has a service industry job and hours are not consistent from week to week. One way of addressing this problem is to hold events on weekday evenings. But if you do that, how will it affect other attendees? Then we have to ask whether the groups themselves can host an event and then go to work the next day.

The first pie chart below includes all respondents. Twice as many people are less likely to attend a weekday event than are more likely to attend a weekday event. Even though scheduling something on a weekday doesn't matter to 2/3 of the respondents, there is a net loss if we schedule events on a weekday evening.

That is not the whole story though. If we just consider respondents who said events usually conflict with their work schedule, only 3 out of 8 said they would be more likely to attend a weekday evening event. The other 5 said it didn't matter.

**ATTENDANCE AT WEEKDAY EVENTS ALL RESPONDENTS**

More Likely, 4, 11%

Less Likely, 8, 22%

Does not matter, 24, 67%

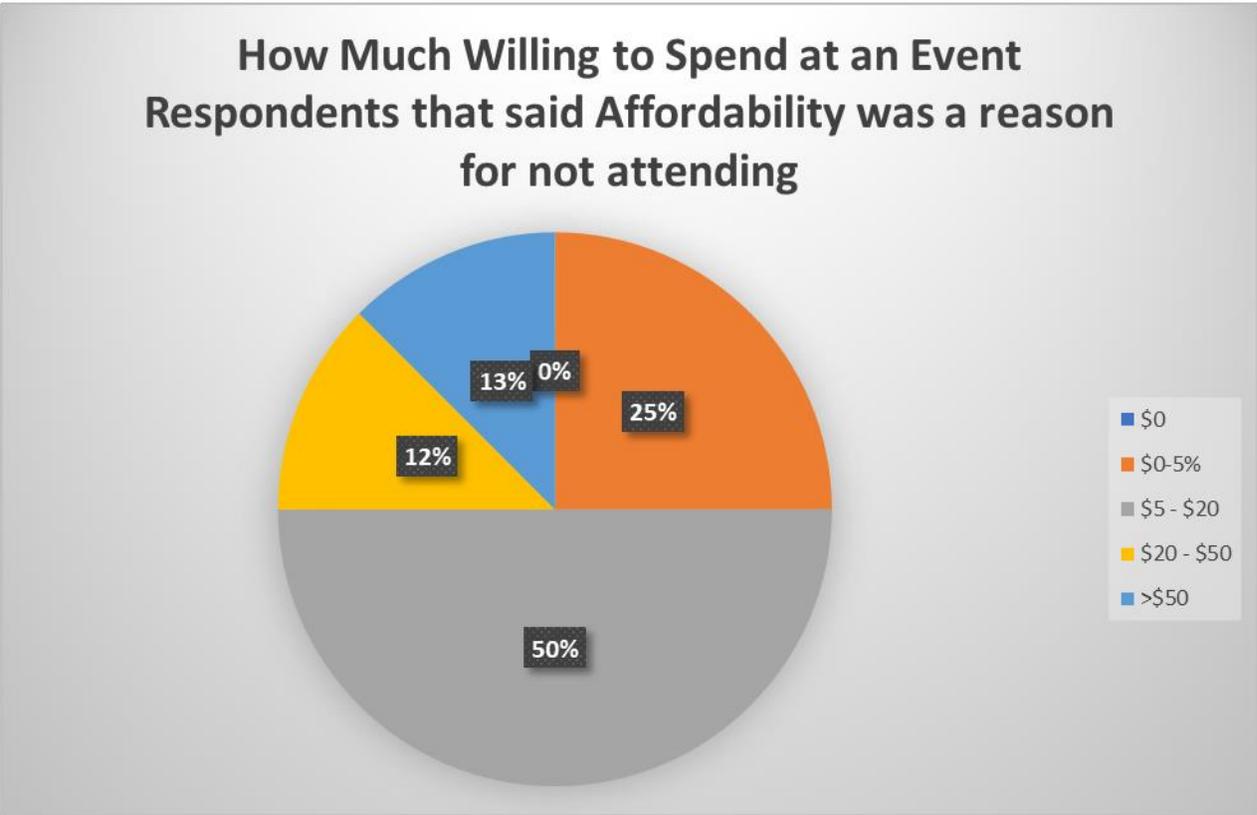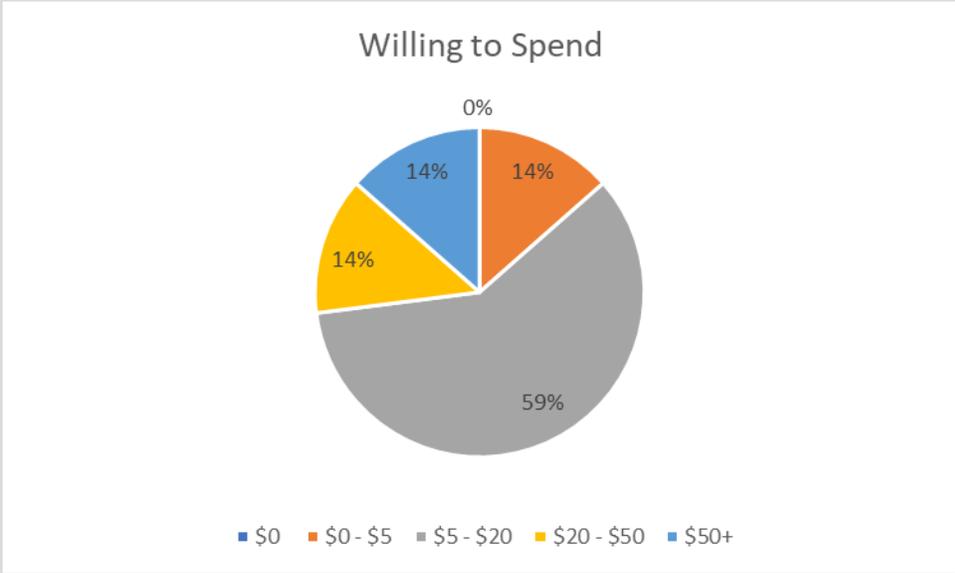### Awkwardness/Don't Know Anyone (32%)

This was the second most common reason given, with some people expressing shyness or awkwardness and one or two expressing severe agoraphobia. One group does schedule coffees and pizza nights that are attended by other group members – that is one way people who are a little uncomfortable cam meet others in what amounts to small group settings.

### Cannot Afford It (30%)

Affordability is the third most common reason.  A large majority of respondents are willing to spend $5 - $20 on an event. This can translate to a coffee or soft drink at a social event, possibly including an inexpensive lunch. Some events will cost participants more than that, for various reasons. Only 14% were willing to spend less than $5 and no more, while 28% were willing to spend more than $20. Some commented that their spending depended on what they were receiving.

Among respondents who gave affordability as a reason, 50% were still willing to spend $5 - $20 for an event, but 25% were unlikely to spend more than $5 while 25% would be willing to spend more than $20.

This is a difficult hurdle, not only for those who cannot afford it, but for the groups. Some groups do have social events at coffee houses or pizza places, and while they are free, there is the expectation of supporting the venue with at least a small purchase. If we don't, then the venue will be offered to groups that do. There is also the matter of cost to the groups themselves – every event has consumables, and events that take place in a rented venue have higher costs – rental, insurance, etc.  Even public parks are not free if you want to reserve a pavilion. There is only way one for the groups to recoup that money – and that is to charge for the service being provided.

Willing to Spend


How Much Willing to Spend at an Event
Respondents that said Affordability was a reason
for not attending

**Previous Bad Experience (19%)**

Nineteen percent (19%) of the respondents reported previous bad experiences at public Pagan events. Obviously, bad experiences need to be addressed, and corrections need to be made. Having said that, you cannot please everybody. What is most disconcerting about this category is that most of the incidents
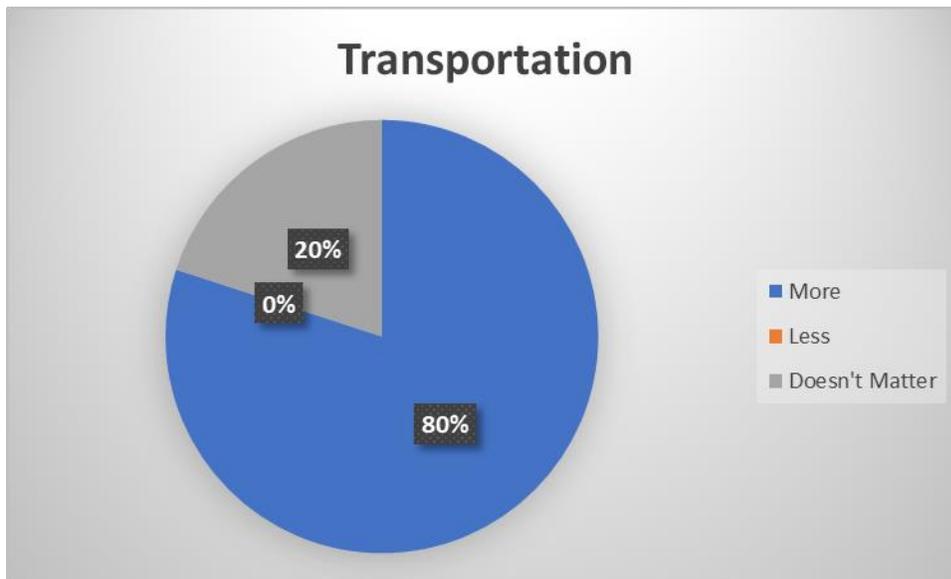
reported in the comments happened 5 to 15 years ago and were associated with persons/groups that are no longer active.

**Didn't Know There Were Public Events (14%)**

Most of us post our public events on our Facebook or Meetup pages and often on each other's Facebook pages as well, and Village Commons picks them up and posts them on the community calendar. Not sure what more we can do, except ensuring we post events as announcements, so they stay at the top of the page. Some groups need to announce their events a little sooner than they do, because announcing the day before an event makes it hard to plan to attend.

**No Transportation (14%)**

There is a high correlation between no transportation and affordability. 80% of respondents who said transportation was an issue said they were more likely to attend events if public transportation was available to them.



**Those are the results. Village Commons welcomes people to use the**