

5-22-2014

PO2  
000105

TOWN OF WINDSOR

# Supervisors to review governmental structure

## Incorporation will be town's focus

By Lauren Anderson  
Times-Tribune  
Associate Editor

After months of considering the potential for future collaboration with DeForest, the Town of Windsor announced last Friday it will begin reviewing its governmental structure options.

A statement by the town said the Board of Supervisors will take the next several months to consider three options: maintaining the current structure, merging or consolidating with DeForest to form a new governmental entity or incorporating into a village.

Talk of collaboration began nine months ago as a



Wipperfurth

response to a letter co-signed by local community group DeForest and Windsor Now (DAWN) and the DeForest area Business Development Group, urging

the two communities to consider forming a "stronger united entity."

As the board now officially begins to explore its options, Board Chairperson Bob Wipperfurth said the town's "emphasis" will be on incorporation.

"We see it as part of our due diligence for longer term planning to see if that is a viable option."

See **WINDSOR**, page 16

# WINDSOR

From page 1

Wipperfurth said.

The town statement said incorporation has the potential to "preserve and maintain Windsor's civic, social and economic character," allow for more local control over zoning and development and "prevent further loss of tax base through annexation."

The statement also noted that incorporation does not exclude the possibility of merging or consolidating in the future.

The discussion comes fourteen years after DeForest and Windsor engaged in a consolidation/merger study, which included a review of farmland preservation, financial and tax impacts, land use, government structure, community name, public safety, utilities and public works. The town ultimately opted not to move forward with consolidation after the review.

This time around, Wipperfurth said the town wants to explore the possibility of incorporation because that was not considered during the previous study.

The next several months will involve receiving feedback on the three options from town residents, Wipperfurth said. The board will host a series of town hall meetings to discuss its future governmental structure with the public

"We want input from residents," Wipperfurth said. "We want to know how they feel."

Residents can find notices of the meetings on the town's website, at town hall, at Morrisonville and Windsor post offices and in the DeForest Times-Tribune.

Wipperfurth said the board will also reach out to area communities to hear from them.

"We will be talking to our neighboring municipalities to see what this may or may not mean for our relationships," he said.

"We want them to know that, just because Windsor is exploring these three options, it doesn't mean we're necessarily going to pursue any of them," he added.

Wipperfurth said commissioning studies to review the financial implications of any of the options will not occur until after the board has heard from town committees and residents.

"Based upon public input and the direction of board, those kinds of studies would happen after the several-month process so we know what any potential study should include," Wipperfurth said.

Regarding the possibility of a "new entity" with DeForest - whether through a merger or consolidation - Wipperfurth said the two municipalities would have to ensure they enter it "as equals" rather than one community taking over the other.

"The village has wanted to talk about this [merging or consolidating] for a long time," Wipperfurth said. "We think it's a conversation that needs to be had. But there are some significant philosophical differences between how we operate."

The last time the boards publically discussed future collaboration together was at an informal joint Windsor-DeForest board meeting last December. At that time, officials varied in their opinions about a potential merger. Several village trustees spoke strongly in favor of a merger, while town board members expressed more support for incorporation.

The boards will hold a joint quarterly meeting on May 28, where they will resume the discussion.