

4 neighboring towns endorse incorporation

No action taken by DeForest or Sun Prairie

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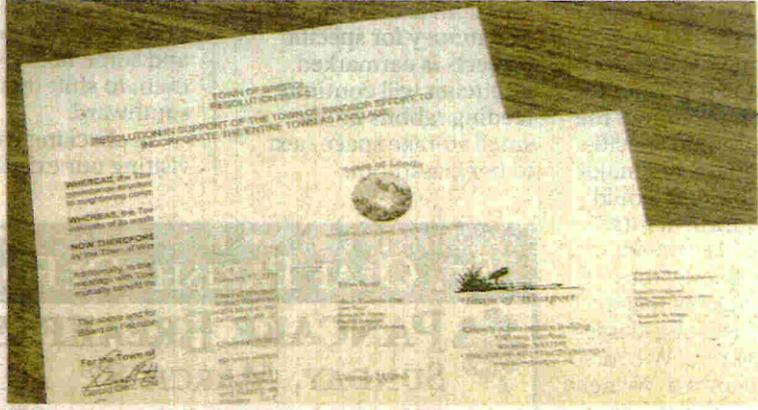
The Town of Windsor has received a nod of support from four bordering municipalities in its bid to incorporate the town as a village.

Governing bodies in the towns of Leeds, Bristol, Vienna, and Westport have all passed official motions or resolutions endorsing Windsor's potential incorporation. Key neighbors including the Village of DeForest and City of Sun Prairie have yet to commit support.

Town of Windsor chairman Bob Wipperfurth has been making appearances before neighboring boards since the town passed a resolution to move forward with incorporation at its Jan. 15 board meeting. The purpose of the visits, according to Wipperfurth, has been to put surrounding towns at ease by explaining Windsor's intentions.

"[Incorporation] is about securing Windsor's future. We're not looking to annex land from anyone," Wipperfurth said. "I think it made them feel good to hear that."

Surrounding unincorporated towns would potentially have the most to lose by Windsor incorporating due to the threat of annexa-



Times-Tribune photo

Representatives for the towns of Bristol, Leeds, Westport and Vienna have approved resolutions in support of Windsor.

tion. Wipperfurth said that the fact neighboring municipalities have supported their plight shows that they trust Windsor to establish boundary agreements upon a successful incorporation.

While Sun Prairie and DeForest remain vital to Windsor's effort, the satisfaction

of potential objectors in the surrounding towns is an important early step in the process.

"Having our neighboring towns endorse us is monumental. They understand why we want to do this," Wipperfurth said.

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The fear of annexation among towns - particularly in the Dane County area - is real. A report by the public finance firm Ehlers commissioned by Windsor late last year found that 2,209 acres of land valued at \$290 million has been annexed from Windsor by DeForest and Sun Prairie over the last 25 years.

Each of the three letters of support (Leeds, Westport, Bristol) obtained by the Times-Tribune reference the desire to begin working on intergovernmental agreements to protect boundaries as soon as possible.

"Entering into a boundary agreement with Windsor is of critical importance to Leeds," town chairman James Foley wrote in a letter dated Feb 17. "The Town of

Leeds believes that discussions and negotiations with Windsor should begin as soon as possible so the agreement is ready to sign promptly after Windsor's incorporation is finalized."

According to Windsor town attorney Connie Anderson, existing agreements could be amended immediately to indicate that they apply to the town's successor - the Village of Windsor.

"I believe that the newly incorporated entity is the successor as a matter of law, provided that the entire town incorporates as a village. Others with expertise concur," she said in an email this week.

Where previous intergov-

ernmental boundary agreements do not exist, Anderson is of the opinion that the town must wait until after incorporation to approve them.

"If the Town incorporates, there may also be new intergovernmental agreements that the new governmental entity wishes to enter into with its neighbors. These need to wait until after the incorporation is finalized," she said.

Wipperfurth has been in contact with officials in Sun Prairie but does not expect to hear from them until after the April election. He expects further discussions with the Village of DeForest during a joint meeting at the end of April.

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