

# City Council Approves Sewer and Paving LID for Part of Devils Lake

April 23, 2013

At its regular meeting last night, the Lincoln City Council formally approved a Local Improvement District (LID) for sewerage and paving the roads in an area on the west side of Devils Lake. Formation of the LID was initiated by a petition signed by a large majority of the property owners in a 58 lot area just north of the Regatta Grounds.

"This has been a long time coming for everyone in the Lincoln City area", said Brian Green, the chief petitioner and the leader of the effort to form the LID. "Eliminating septic system pollution of Devils Lake has been talked about for the 35 years I have lived here. For the first time, something has actually been done. The possibility of extending sewer and eliminating septic systems around Devils Lake now seems realistic", Green said. Green is a member of the Board of Directors of the Devils Lake Water Improvement District. He said the formation of this LID could be the blueprint for property owners to voluntarily extend sewer to other areas around Devils Lake in the future.

"The beauty of this process is that the LID was created only because it was supported by a majority of the property owners in the LID even when they knew from the outset that they would have to foot the entire bill. None of the cost will be paid by the City or any taxpayer except those owning property inside the LID," said Green.

Green also said that the cost to each property for installing the sewer lines and eventually hooking up to sewer is about the same as replacing a failing septic system. "All septic systems fail eventually. Most of the septic systems are at the end of their useful life of 20 to 30 years, but property owners will still have another 15 years to hook up. With the cost of new septic systems going up and the cost of sewer systems coming down thanks to new technology, most people also realize they will save money over the long run if they install and hook up to a new sewer system," he said. Seventy percent of the existing homeowners, all of whom are currently on septic systems, signed the petition for creation of the LID.

Green said the vast majority of property owners were also willing to pay the cost of the sewer and road improvements because they would add substantial value to their property. "Property values are not only tied to the

health, beauty and usefulness of Devils Lake”, he said, “but the availability of sewer will also eliminate the need to set aside lot area for a septic system when attempting to construct a new home, or adding on to an old one. This adds substantial flexibility and value for each property”.

Of the 58 lots in the LID, 44 will have sewer line extended to the property line and paved roadway frontage at a total cost of approximately \$6,500.00 per lot. An additional 13 lots already have paved roadway. They will receive only sewer line at a cost of about \$3,400.00 per lot. Fifteen year financing will be available for all of these costs. All properties with existing homes will be required to hook up to sewer within 15 years at an additional total cost of approximately \$16,000.00 including the City’s Systems Development Charge (SDC) of \$5,573.00. The City will permit property owners who hook up to the sewer within two years to pay the SDC at a low interest rate over 15 years.