

From: "Rep.Kitchens" <Rep.Kitchens@legis.wisconsin.gov>
Date: December 22, 2021 at 4:24:00 PM CST
To: Christie Weber <christiemacdonaldweber@gmail.com>
Subject: FW: Request for meeting with the governor

From: Rep.Kitchens
Sent: Wednesday, December 22, 2021 3:57 PM
To: 'Madden, Zach A - GOV' <zach.madden@wisconsin.gov>
Subject: RE: Request for meeting with the governor

Zach,

I disagree with you on so many points, it is hard to know where to start.

To begin with, the tower is listed on both the State and National Historic Registry. The administration has both a legal and a moral obligation to preserve the tower. You tell me that I have not answered your concerns. Frankly, it is not my job to answer your concerns. The law says that you must submit a plan to the Wisconsin Historical Society. So far, you have done absolutely nothing. The DNR should quit telling me to come up with a plan and do their job.

How can we get the money when there is no plan? The repair of the tower, according to the engineer, will cost less than \$300,000. The DNR expressed concerns that this figure might be low. Even if it is, certainly it can be done for less than \$500,000. If you submitted a plan to the Building Commission in that neighborhood, I have assurances it would be approved. You need a plan that is ready to go out for bid.

Money is not the issue here. If the administration would present a reasonable plan, we would get it funded. The excess in the Knowles-Nelson fund is certainly a possibility. There is also no reason that it could not be covered by ARPA funds. Your claim that all of that money is already allocated is disingenuous. According to the Fiscal Bureau, over \$400M is "allocated" for "future use". Money that is allocated for future use is not allocated at all.

Again, money is not the issue here. The administration simply does not want to repair the tower.

In spite of telling us that the engineering plan was acceptable in March, the DNR spokesman now claims that they have "concerns" with it. That is absurd. We have plans stamped by a Wisconsin-licensed engineer, as they requested. The identical process is now being used to repair the Washington Island tower. Does the administration really intend to claim that the process will not work, when we have an example in the county of how it works?

Finally, the DNR has renewed their claims that the tower must legally be ADA accessible. That is simply not true. This is a repair on an historic structure. It does not need to be ADA accessible. There are several methods in which it might be made accessible, which I would support, but that is a luxury. Right now, we need to preserve the tower.

We will get further legal clarification on the ADA issue, but again, I should not have to do the DNR's work for them.

We will continue to push for the administration to fulfill their legal requirement by submitting a plan to the Historical Society. I am working with them to exert that pressure.

My reason for asking for a meeting with Governor Evers is that I do not believe he understands the issue. He is the one who will be held responsible by the voters, so I think that is important.

I must say, it is difficult to understand why the administration is so opposed to fulfilling their legal responsibility and preserving our beloved tower. The media in our area is solidly in favor of preservation, so this will not be a good issue politically. I am happy to work with you, or anyone else, toward a resolution. The governor could be a hero here. So far, all I see is obstructionism. Whenever we have answered one concern, they have brought out another. They seem determined to stall and let the tower rot.

Rep. Joel Kitchens

From: Madden, Zach A - GOV <zach.madden@wisconsin.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 4:59 PM

To: Rep.Kitchens <Rep.Kitchens@legis.wisconsin.gov>

Subject: RE: Request for meeting with the governor

Adam,

Thank you for reaching out. The Department of Natural Resources has been working on planning a community and stakeholder engagement meeting for the new year to discuss the wide-ranging viewpoints on the future of the tower, and we welcome Rep. Kitchens' and anyone else interested to participate in that process.

Beyond that, there has been no new update that I'm aware of as to your boss' position on AB 444, a new, forthcoming amendment to AB 567, or really any movement on another piece of legislation (either an unobligated stewardship enumeration or GPR) to address the funding for the tower. I have attached here my previous correspondence for your reference outlining the history of the project and what is needed from the Legislature. Barring any movement on any of the above from the Legislature on doing what needs to be done to address this issue, I'm frankly not sure what any discussion would entail. The Legislature needs to find a legitimate and meaningful funding source for the tower, and we remain hopeful you'll be able to accomplish this yet this session. If there are any additional updates on any of the above or other future developments, let me know.

Have a Happy Holidays!

ZM

Zach Madden

Legislative Affairs Director

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From: Rep.Kitchens - LEGIS <Rep.Kitchens@legis.wisconsin.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, December 15, 2021 12:50 PM

To: Madden, Zach A - GOV <zach.madden@wisconsin.gov>

Subject: Request for meeting with the governor

Good afternoon Zach,

Rep. Kitchens wanted me to reach out to you to see if we could schedule a meeting with the governor on the Potawatomi Tower issue?

Given the upcoming holidays, we would be looking at any time after the New Year.

Thank you.

Kindest regards,

Adam Tobias

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