

Always do the best you can for the betterment of the people. We are currently enduring an unprecedented emergency, and this continues to be the mindset that I utilize when considering the safest options for our community at this time. This lesson from my childhood is part of the foundation of who I am and how I approach my life today. I firmly believe that it's possible to compromise to achieve goals for all our people, so long as you know the principles that can never be compromised; and so long as we're willing to listen to each other. Working together helps us to move forward.

My name is Raphael Wahwassuck. I am asking for your support to continue as your representative in Tribal Council seat #3. I have lived most of my life here on our reservation and continue to raise my family here. I have also been privileged to witness and participate in many of our great accomplishments over the years and it has been an honor to serve as a representative for our people, for YOU. Igwien for giving me a chance. During my time in office, my years of experience working within our Tribal government proved to be a benefit towards understanding the impacts we as Leaders can have on our community and people. I have been able to draw from my experiences of working with national organizations and other Native communities to improve the quality of life for our people. I am proud of the teams that I have worked with and the developments that I have taken the lead on as a Council member for our people. Over the past year and a half, some of those items include:

- Collaboratively spearheading the first ever “Native Recognition Night” with our tribal programs and local school district and continuing for a second year, with plans to make this an annual event.
- Improved relationship with the local school district to improve the overall Native Student experience by way of serving on the USD 337 district site council and the RVHS site council, attending numerous meetings and providing educational settings with staff members about Potawatomi history and culture.
- Increased communication with local, state, and federal elected officials. This includes regular meetings with the Jackson County Commissioners discussing collaborations to benefit the PBPN community.
- Meeting with Governor Kelly and her cabinet to educate state officials and promote legislation at the state level for the benefit of all Kansas tribes.
- Our Council has made a conscious effort to have our voices recognized with our federal officials. Through the introductions made in D.C., it has opened communications with many of the policy makers at the Federal level, with the hope of bringing resolution to PBPN’s interests that have been working their way through Federal offices for many years.
- A huge initiative in progress is the development and planning of a museum to preserve our history through the Tribal Historic Preservation Office/NAGPRA duties.
- One of the initiatives that I am most proud of, is the coordination with other Potawatomi officials to conduct the Economic Summit to find ways to bring together our resources and strengthen all our communities. Again, working together helps us to move forward.

Our Tribal Council hold the most crucial offices for our Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation and through its leadership, can come a more vital life for our people. Leadership comes with great responsibility; a responsibility to listen and to be an advocate for the people. It is our responsibility as members of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation to ensure that we have the right people in these positions to be our advocates. I take my ability to represent our people to heart, and utilize a very conscientious approach

by thoroughly reading, researching, asking questions, and reflecting on all the decisions requested of me. I am always available to meet with any Tribal Member who would like to discuss the future of our people as this is why I am here: to be a voice for all our people.

I look forward to another opportunity to bring my ideas and knowledge to our Council to contribute to our continued success and future endeavors. My experience serving as a Tribal Council Member, my education, previous work experience, and most importantly, my devotion to our future, the future of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, will continue to enable me to be an effective member of our Tribal Council.

Leadership does not come without sacrifice, and I thank my family and friends for supporting and encouraging me to continue to be a representative for the people. Thank you for your consideration.

K̄tamik̄t̄f̄ewitwak wīt̄ n̄ishnabeȳek mine k̄t̄āsh̄ēwenmak.

Respectfully,

Raphael J. Wahwassuck