

My name is Joseph “Zeke” Rupnick, and I am asking for your support to continue as your representative as the Tribal Council Chairman. It has been an honor for me to serve as your Chairman and to represent the Nation during this time when we are experiencing an unprecedented emergency. My background and foundation have helped lead the Nation as I considered all possibilities, then petitioned Council to consider and act on the safest options for our community during each phase of the pandemic. This required constant evaluation and fluid leadership to help us navigate through a complex and everchanging environment. It could not have been done without compromise and teamwork. We must be willing to listen to each other and work together. By working together, we will continue to move forward and face any new threat that comes our way. We have witnessed many great accomplishments over the years and with your support, I feel we will continue to achieve great things. All this could not have been done without the support of the People and I want to say Igwien for giving me a chance.

I have always been told to do whatever you can for the betterment of the people and for the past four years, that is what I have been trying to achieve. As Chairman, I feel it is my responsibility to ask the hard questions when considering options that are presented to Council for consideration. These questions must take into account our constitution and laws by which our Nation operates and what impact that has for our overall community. Perhaps because of those questions, we have been able to meet the challenges presented to us and have allowed us to fight for the betterment of the people. Just when we think we are making progress, it appears many want to hold us down. We have witnessed repeated attempts by the federal government and its agencies to re-engineer the government-to-government relationship between tribes contrary to longstanding norms and federal case law. Now more than ever, we must remain vigilant and hold the government accountable and preserve our rights under federal law. During these last four years I have been a loud voice for the Nation at all levels of Government to advocate for our rights and to ensure the trust responsibility is maintained.

During my time in office, my years of experience working in different industries proved to be an asset to understand the impact we as Leaders have when making decisions to provide for our community and the people. I have been able to draw from my experiences to work with various leaders on all levels, to improve the quality of life we have, and I am proud of the work I have done to date. However, there is still much more to do. As many know, I have been actively pursuing our claim in Illinois. I feel we are now closer than we have ever been to having this issue finalized. All the meetings to date with various leaders in Illinois have resulted in bipartisan support in the General Assembly supporting our claim. This work has resulted in the passage of two resolutions, one in the House and one in the Senate, encouraging the federal government to enact legislation to address the ownership of the reservation and to support S.3242 which is a bill filed in the U.S. Congress.

If this pandemic has shown us anything, it has made clear the need to diversify and look at other areas that can provide revenue even during down times. Two areas that I have advocated for are the start of the 150/75 highway interchange project and our new hemp facility. The 150/75 project was passed by General Council and has been sitting idly for far too long. We looked at the previous feasibility study and compared that to the study recently done to ensure that what will be built there enhances amenities offered at the casino and will not compete with them. I’m proud to say things are starting to move and I’m looking forward to the day when things are actually being built. I am also proud to support the work the LLC has done with the creation of our Prairie Band AG business and our hemp facilities. This is an industry that is just starting, and with support, I feel it can expand into other areas that will help provide

for the Nation and its members. These are just two of the areas we have made progress in and I am continuously looking at other industries to bring to the table.

Again, this pandemic has also shown us vulnerabilities in our infrastructure. While it is good to expand beyond our casino in other ventures, we still need systems to support them. With the recent passage of the Infrastructure and Jobs Act, there will be funding available to Tribes to enhance broadband and I have been pushing to get this started. We currently have a plan in place and as soon as funding is released, we will begin this project.

I take my job very seriously and I believe it is my responsibility to represent the members of this Nation as best as I can by thoroughly reading, researching, and asking questions, to ensure I understand the issues at hand. My experience and my education have provided me with the ability to be a successful Tribal Council Chairman, but really, it is my devotion to our future, the future of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, that has driven me to be an effective member of our Tribal Council. I look forward to another opportunity where I can bring my ideas and knowledge to our Council which will contribute to our continued successes and future endeavors. I want to thank you in advance for your support. It would be an honor for me to serve this Nation as the Tribal Council Chairman. Thank you for your consideration. Mijwetch

Joseph P. Rupnick