

6/25/18

Dear Shabbona Forward Teams,

In recent weeks, many of you have asked about the status of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nations bingo facility. Whether or not they're moving forward with the project, and/or status of the project? This past Friday I was contacted by Thom Serafin, spokesman for the PBPB who many of you met at our meeting a couple of months ago. It appears that there is a window of opportunity in which they feel they could move this project forward with our support. They've been asked, again, by administrators in Washington D.C., to provide letters of support for the PBPB project and the positive impact it could have on economic development in our community. If you feel this project is beneficial to economic development and the local economy I would encourage you to write a letter of support as soon as possible. This is very time sensitive as Thom is being asked to deliver these letters of support to Washington by this coming Friday June 29th. I have attached a rendering of the bingo facility as well as a letter for anyone who has written a previous letter of support and wishes to re-affirm their support, also important. In addition, attached is a generic letter of support that could be put into a petition form or used as a stand-alone letter of support. Thom will be in Shabbona tomorrow afternoon in order to meet with residence and answer any questions or concerns you may have. If you would like to meet with him one-on-one to ask questions or discuss concerns please email me back so that I can put you in touch with him directly and you can schedule some time with him. He is planning to be at Indian Oaks Country Club tomorrow afternoon to meet and greet members of the community from 3:30pm-5:30pm.

I'm not trying to interject my opinion here, but have been asked by many of you what my position is on this matter. It's important to me that the PBPB has been a very good neighbor over the recent years and have generously supported many local projects. They've supported the SLSP providing assistance for the rearing ponds, the museum expansion, the pathway project, and the business association just to name the things I'm personally familiar with, and I know there are others I'm not thinking of at the moment. And while I'm not a proponent for gambling I feel that ship has sailed in DeKalb County as you do not have to look very far for a place to place a bet. And, I do believe this will positively impact our local economy and create jobs in and near Shabbona. Our number one goal when we began the economic development project was to create local jobs, and in my humble opinion this would do just that, as well as provide a catalyst for other tourism opportunities. I respect all the opinions in our community, this is a complex issue, and welcome the discussion with you regardless of your position, I would like to hear from you.

Thank you, and Best regards,
Jerry Foster



Send letters to: Acting Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs John Tashuda, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street NW, MS 4141, Washington DC 20240

Support for the Proposed Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Bingo Hall in Shabbona

To whom it may concern:

We support the proposed Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation efforts in Shabbona, Illinois, a project rich with our country's history that would provide a critical and uplifting boost for our community where the need for economic development is felt every day. We need jobs. The PBPN's willingness to work together is a blessing in many ways for our community.

The Tribe has been a strong and giving neighbor for years and demonstrated an unwavering commitment to working together with the Village, County and residents to ensure everything is done the right way. Plans for the proposed Prairie Band Potawatomi facility are comprehensive, as well as foundationally and morally strong. And most importantly, the project will bring the type of development and desperately needed jobs that can leave a lasting imprint well into the future.

Shabbona has a proud citizenry and rich history, but this type of new and exciting opportunity is required to bring more jobs, and with more jobs greater prospects for all our residents - moving all of us forward. A recent comprehensive economic development study from researchers at Northern Illinois University has spurred many ideas, as well as generated conversation and enthusiasm among Shabbona and DeKalb County residents. The facility (planned for a number of acres on the Tribe's Shabbona reservation just north of Shabbona Lake Stake Park) hits on many of the key points and visions outlined in their study.

According to estimates, the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation development would create hundreds of construction jobs worth tens of millions of dollars to the local economy. Once built, it would employ hundreds of people with a payroll estimated at more than \$10 million. The tribe's investment would also mean millions of dollars in annual payments and revenue in lieu of property taxes to DeKalb County and Shabbona for infrastructure improvements and local services. That is not to mention the hundreds of thousands of visitors, many of them traveling from outside the area.

In addition to the jobs and positive economic impact on the region, the facility would present Shabbona with a second large tourist attraction to compliment the State Park. This is key to not only attracting outside visitors but encouraging them to stay and spend locally. Furthermore, the facility is planned near the eastern corridor, an area identified as prime for future development in the NIU report due to the heavier traffic from the east.

All in all, this project would truly make a positive difference for residents in our community. Thank you.

Signature _____ Date _____

Phone number _____

Comments:

Send letters to: Acting Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs John Tashuda, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street NW, MS 4141, Washington DC 20240

To whom it may concern:

I want to reaffirm my earlier letter regarding the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation project in Shabbona. And, I wish to emphasize the importance of the jobs and economic development that this project would bring to our village. Illinois is falling behind and leaving our small towns hurting. This project would give our community a much-needed economic lift that will help it survive and flourish. Too many people are leaving our state and our small towns; this project will give our citizens in Shabbona the necessary jobs and economic boost to stay home. We need the continued support and generosity of our tribe. The village will benefit from the tribe's generous collaboration from this project.

Thank you very much.

Signature

Date

**Send letters to: Acting Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs John Tashuda, Department of the Interior,
1849 C Street NW, MS 4141, Washington DC 20240**