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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #696

Wisconsin Veterans Museum and Joint Preservation Storage Facility (Veterans Affairs -- Departmentwide, Veterans Programs, and Museums)

[LFB 2013-15 Budget Summary: Page 491 #8, and Page 492, #10]

CURRENT LAW

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum (WVM) contains exhibits, displays and other presentations related to Wisconsin's participation in U.S. military actions from the Civil War to the present. The museum features dioramas depicting important historical events in which Wisconsin veterans participated and maintains a computer database containing the military records of more than 90,000 Wisconsin Civil War veterans. The museum offers presentations by historians, authors, and museum staff on military history, world events, and the experiences of Wisconsin veterans.

In 2012-13, \$2,505,100 (\$249,200 GPR and \$2,255,900 SEG from the veterans trust fund) is budgeted to support the operations of the museum. In addition, the Veterans Museum Foundation provides additional support for the museum.

The WVM, in partnership with the State Historical Society (SHS) and the Department of Administration (DOA), is planning for two new joint museum facilities. Initially approved in the capital budget for 2005 Wisconsin Act 25 (the 2005-07 biennial budget act), the Joint Preservation Storage Facility (JPSF) will provide space for the storage of WVM and SHS archives, manuscripts, photographic collections and artifacts, as well as new exhibit preparation. Currently, the state plans to build the JPSF on Thornton Avenue in the City of Madison. WVM plans to start moving its collections into the JPSF in mid- to late 2015.

The second facility, the Joint Wisconsin History Museum (JWHM), will provide WVM and SHS with a completely new museum facility. WVM's exhibit and programming space is expected to increase by more than 35,000 square feet by moving to the new facility. 2011 Wisconsin Act 32 (the 2011-13 biennial budget act), provided \$5,000,000 in 2011-13 and

\$70,000,000 in 2015-17 of general fund-supported bonding authority for the construction of the JWHM. The construction for the JWHM is estimated to be completed in early 2017.

GOVERNOR

Increase funding and position authority for DVA as follows:

Executive Staff Assistant and Outreach for the Joint Wisconsin History Museum (LFB Summary, Page 491, #8). Provide 1.0 position, beginning in 2013-14, to serve as an executive staff assistant for the Wisconsin Veterans Museum (\$56,800 in 2013-14 and \$75,200 in 2014-15) and provide funding for outreach activities for the Joint Wisconsin History Museum (\$100,000 annually). The additional position would provide administrative support to the museum's director, permitting management staff to spend more time planning and implementing the relocation of materials to the JWHM and to the JPSF and to address projected future workload increases as a result of these new facilities.

Joint Preservation Storage Facility (LFB Summary, Page 492, #10). Provide 2.0 two-year project positions (\$76,300 in 2013-14 and \$100,500 in 2014-15) to assist staff in documenting, cataloging, and moving items from the WVM to JPSF. In addition, provide \$7,300 annually to support limited-term employees to conduct work for the WVM's archives section and provide \$11,500 in 2013-14 and \$5,300 to purchase enclosures for prints and posters, archival quality boxes, shelf lining, artifact mounts, and packing materials.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. According to a program statement prepared in September, 2012, the current timeline for the JWHM is as follows: (a) the project site will be secured in early 2013; (b) the project team will be selected in July, 2013; (c) the integrated design process will begin in October, 2013; (d) the 10% design documents will be completed in February, 2014; (e) building construction will be complete by early 2017; and (f) the facility will open to the public in mid-2018. DOA will own and operate the facility and WVM and SHS will rent the space from DOA. The memorandum of understanding (MOU) between DVA, SHS, and DOA is scheduled to be completed by May, 2015. The MOU is one of the final planning stages before construction can begin.

2. As part of the capital budget recommendations, the Building Commission provides DOA with an enumeration of \$5,000,000 in general fund supported bonding to continue planning and pre-design activities for the JWHM in the 2013-15 biennium. The enumeration is intended to help WVM and SHS raise funds for the new facility and to hire a consultant to assist the state in exploring public/private development options and creating a financial analysis to be presented to the Legislature in future budget processes.

Executive Assistant Position

3. AB 40 would provide \$56,800 in 2013-14 and \$75,200 in 2014-15 to support 1.0 position to serve as an executive assistant to the WVM Museum Director. The executive assistant

position would: (a) perform some routine administrative functions usually handled by the executive director and other museum staff; (b) assist with scheduling, attending, and coordinating meetings; (c) create programmatic material for both the JWHM and the JPSF; and (d) identify and help apply for potential grants for the museum. To date, DVA has reallocated staff to perform these functions.

4. The Department indicates that it will be increasingly difficult for WVM to keep up with planning and design of the JWHM if additional staff is not provided. For example, DVA indicates that, without the position, it may take longer to complete the MOU between DVA, SHS and DOA than under the current schedule anticipates.

5. DVA staff meet at least weekly to plan for the JWHM, but some planning activities, such as the development of the financial plan, have required more frequent meetings. Often these meetings include six full-time museum staff, although senior staff meetings regarding the project budget and staffing only require two to three staff members. Other activities may require nine full-time staff or nearly all WVM staff. The Museum Director and Assistant Director are present at almost every planning activity for both JWHM and JPSF. WVM and SHS leadership have been meeting for at least two hours per week for planning purposes.

6. Preparation for the new facilities also requires staff time to develop planning documents, research financial and programmatic information from other museums, contact consultants, and plan the storage layout for the preservation facility.

7. DVA indicates approximately 25% of the Museum Director's time is currently devoted to JWHM planning on average. Sometimes up to 50% of the Museum Director's time may be used for planning purposes. More of the Museum Director's time is expected to be used for planning in the future.

Project Positions for Cataloging and Packing Museum Materials

8. The bill would provide \$70,500 in 2013-14 and \$98,100 in 2014-15 to support 2.0 two-year project positions for cataloging and packing WVM collections that will be moved to the JPSF. These project positions were originally funded as two-year project positions as part of 2011 Act 32 and began in January, 2012. As of March, 2013, 46% of the 23,289 objects have been inventoried and photographed. Object inventory is expected to be completed by July, 2014. The Department indicates the process has taken somewhat longer than originally anticipated because every object needs to be photographed at high quality and processing the photographs has taken more time than expected.

9. The project positions will also be entering information from card catalogs into computer databases, updating thousands of existing records that are missing information, and packing the 23,289 physical objects for transportation to the new facility. In addition, the project positions will catalogue and pack approximately 20,000 books and 773 linear feet of posters and periodicals for transportation to the JPSF.

Outreach

10. The bill would provide \$100,000 annually for outreach activities for the JWHM. DVA intends to create a website, videos, documents, and present these materials to veterans and organizations throughout the state. DVA indicates there are three primary reasons these outreach activities should begin well before the JWHM begins construction. First, JWHM will require both public and private investment for the facility to be completed. DVA and SHS hope to raise \$34,000,000 to \$40,000,000 in private donations for the project. Second, DVA hopes to increase awareness for the project, both to increase visitation when the facility is completed and to increase community involvement in the planning and design process. Third, the Department indicates additional exhibit objects may be needed to meet the goals of the new facility and early outreach will help attract donations that will improve WVM's collection.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Adopt all of the Governor's recommendations.

2. Modify the bill by choosing one or more of the following:

a. Delete funding and position authority for the executive assistant position. Reduce funding by \$56,800 in 2013-14 and by \$75,200 in 2014-15 and delete 1.0 position, beginning in 2013-14.

ALT 2a	Change to Bill	
	Funding	Positions
SEG	-\$132,000	- 1.00

b. Delete funding for staff to assist in cataloging and packing museum materials. Reduce funding by \$70,500 in 2013-14 and \$98,100 in 2014-15 and delete 2.0 two-year project positions, beginning in 2013-14.

ALT 2b	Change to Bill	
	Funding	Positions
SEG	-\$168,600	- 2.00

c. Delete funding for outreach activities. Reduce funding in the bill by \$100,000 annually.

ALT 2c	Change to Bill	
	Funding	
SEG	- \$200,000	

3. Delete all funding and position increases in the bill related to the Joint Wisconsin History Museum (LFB Summary, Page 491, #8) and the Joint Preservation Storage Facility (LFB Summary, Page 492, #10).

ALT 3	Change to Bill	
	Funding	Positions
SEG	- \$540,200	- 3.00

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