

Gronik hires adviser for potential gov bid

Posted on Tuesday, May 30, 2017

Milwaukee businessman Andy Gronik tells WisPolitics.com he's hired Maura Tracy to serve as a senior adviser while he decides whether to run for gov.

Tracy was campaign manager for Terri Bonoff's unsuccessful bid for a Minnesota congressional seat last fall and previously worked as a field director for the Wisconsin Democratic Party in 2012. Her other campaign work includes Anthony Weiner's failed New York mayoral bid, and she has previous stints with the state party as well as working as a legislative aide in Wisconsin.

Gronik wrote in an email to WisPolitics.com that Tracy is helping him make a final decision on whether to run and he will form a committee if he decides to become a candidate. Gronik wrote personal spending to test the waters does not trigger registration requirements and "Both the State Elections Board and the GAB were clear about that, even before the recent deregulatory changes to state law." Gronik said he has been following private legal advice as he considers a bid.

The state GOP filed a complaint against Gronik with the state Ethics Commission earlier this spring. The complaint charges he violated Wisconsin elections law by commissioning a poll gauging his prospects for a gubernatorial run without registering a formal committee with the state. It also took aim at the Stage W group he created, alleging it is essentially a campaign committee.

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

The state GOP questioned the appropriateness of hiring staff without creating a campaign committee.

"This is yet more evidence that Andy Gronik is nothing more than an out-of-touch con artist who has been secretly building a shady political operation outside the

view of the public,” said state GOP spokesman Alec Zimmerman.

Gronik said he’s responded to the earlier state GOP complaint and is confident it will be dismissed.

“The reality is that the Republicans do not have a playbook for me,” Gronik wrote. “Their efforts to define me speaks to their fear of someone with the skills to get our state growing again and put the people of Wisconsin first.”

The state Dem Party convention is this coming weekend in suburban Madison. The party has decided not to allow potential 2018 gov candidates to address the convention. But Gronik and Matt Flynn, a former state party chair who’s also considering a bid, are hosting hospitality suites on Friday.

See more on the hospitality suites:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/potential-guv-candidates--wont-address-convention-but-two-will-have-hospitality-suites/>