



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 31, 2013

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**The Budget and Finance Committee approves amending the
Navajo Nation Veterans Trust Fund to provide homes for Navajo Veterans**
Legislation moves on to Law and Order Committee for consideration

LEUPP, Ariz. – During a special meeting on Tuesday, the Budget and Finance Committee approved Legislation No. 0193-13, which seeks to amend the Navajo Nation Veterans Trust Fund to divert two-percent of its set-aside to the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs to construct homes for Navajo Veterans.

The set aside derives from the Navajo Nation General Fund that is generated from all revenues on the reservation and is diverted to the Navajo Nation Veterans Fund yearly in the amount of four-percent.

According to legislation sponsor Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat), by diverting two-percent of the set aside from the Veterans fund to DNVA, it would allow the construction of 15 new homes and minor repairs/renovations for Navajo Veterans in each of the five agencies on the Navajo Nation, through FY2017.

“Once this amendment to the [Veterans] fund is approved, it would be equally distributed between the five Navajo agencies,” said Delegate Shepherd. “We have calculated that in the next four years, we can build about 300 homes for Navajo Veterans.”

Delegate Shepherd also stated that local Veterans would be hired to build the homes, adding that Home Depot has a program called U.S. Communities, which allows an additional 10-20 percent discount on building supplies to construct the homes.

“Home Depot has been working with DNVA with construction costs and the amount it is going to take to build the homes,” said Delegate Shepherd.

Although BFC member Council Delegate Nelson BeGaye (Lukachukai, Rock Point, Round Rock, Tsaile/Wheatfields, Tse Chi’zhi) praised the efforts of the legislation, he also voiced concern over the purchase of building materials for all the housing projects.

“We should gear our business to local entrepreneurs for building supplies and labor, so the money stays within the Navajo Nation,” said Delegate BeGaye.

In regards to Veteran priority, BFC member and Army Veteran Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse'ii'ahi, Whiterock) advised that low-income Veterans be made priority.

“We have to concentrate on the less fortunate Veterans and they need to be a priority when selecting who will receive these homes. At times, they are usually overlooked,” stressed Delegate Simpson. “The more educated and [financially] stable Veterans need to extend a helping hand to the less fortunate ones.”

In response to the concerns posed by BFC members, Delegate Shepherd said that DNVA will look into local businesses for building materials and labor, and that DNVA has already drafted eligibility guidelines for Veterans to apply for the new houses.

BFC chair LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) recommended seeking legal advice in regard to the funding.

“This legislation might require a fund management plan, but I recommend that you confirm this with either the Department of Justice or Legislative Counsel, in terms of the use of the money to build the homes,” said Delegate Bates.

Delegate Shepherd agreed and said that he and DNVA will seek assistance for the fund management plan, if it is required.

“The two-percent set aside is one way we are trying to address the needs of our Navajo Veterans and I am happy to say, we have full support from all five agencies,” said Delegate Shepherd.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Legislation No. 0193-13 passed with a vote of 3-0.

The legislation will now go to the Law and Order Committee for consideration.

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**Resources and Development Committee discusses
leasing data and revenues report from Navajo Land Department**

WINDOW ROCK – The Resources and Development Committee discussed a report from the Navajo Land Department on Tuesday, concerning the department’s revenues from leasing services and filing fees.

The RDC requested for the Navajo Land Department to provide insight about its leasing procedures and processes which would assist the RDC in amending grazing policies.

“The homesite leasing process is tied to grazing issues, we want information about how many leases there are,” said RDC Chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta). “The RDC wants to make sure the Nation is getting its fair share of leasing revenue.”

Currently, the Navajo Land Department receives revenue from: homesite annual and filing fees, surveys, lease payments, right-of-ways services, project reviews, surface damages, and various permits.

Navajo Land Department manager Mike Halona, informed the RDC that the department does not collect revenue from NTUA because they receive a wavier for right-of-way fees and that the Land Department is working to create a system that lists all approved leases on the Navajo Nation.

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) said he would like for the Land Department to provide a listing of entities ‘due and owing’ in order to increase revenues.

Delegate Benally and Delegate Tsosie raised concerns about NTUA right-of-way charges incurred by Navajo chapters during electric power line projects, as chapters have been charged up to \$15,000 per mile, said Delegate Benally.

“If NTUA is charging a right-of-way fee then those fees should be listed as Land Department revenue,” said Delegate Tsosie. “If there is an NTUA waiver for right-of-ways, then they shouldn’t be collecting fees.”

Delegate Benally questioned what a right-of-way fee consisted of and how the NTUA fee compared with the Land Department right-of-way fee.

“A right-of-way fee includes a cultural resources inventory, legal description, archeological survey and labor fees,” said Halona.

Halona also added that NTUA was originally given a right-of-way waiver due to the high demand for infrastructure across the nation, which has led to a rise in right-of-way costs by contracted entities.

“With a right-of-way waiver, the right-of-way costs should have gone down,” said Delegate Tsosie. “These costs are making it more difficult for young Navajo families to return and build a home on the Nation.”

Delegate Benally recommended that all entities involved in the right-of-way leasing process should meet to discuss streamlining the process and to inform others of the financial and technical challenges they each face.

The RDC will vote whether or not to accept the report at the next scheduled meeting.

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For Immediate Release
July 30, 2013

President Shelly Signs NGS Lease Extension Legislation



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly (center) signs the NGS legislation and lease extension while the Navajo negotiating team, Navajo Council Speaker Johnny Naize (front far right), and staff from Salt River Project, including Vice President John Hoopes (seated between Shelly and Naize), witness the signing.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed a 25-year lease extension worth more than \$1 billion in revenue during a signing ceremony Tuesday afternoon. The lease extension is for Navajo Generating Station.

The lease extension brings the Navajo Nation about \$1.3 billion in revenues from Navajo Generation Station through 2044.

“I know for nearly 3 years, we negotiated our way to what is before us today. Countless hours have been devoted to ensuring that Navajo jobs are maintained for an extra 25 years,” said President Shelly before the signing ceremony.

The lease states the Navajo Nation would receive approximately \$42 million a year in lease payments beginning 2019 through 2044. That annual payment is substantially larger than \$608,400 outlined in the original lease approved in 1969.

Another important aspect of the lease extension is jobs, President Shelly said before the signing ceremony.

“We are protecting existing jobs on the Navajo Nation,” said President Shelly. “We are building a job base well into the future. This is part of our drive for economic self-sufficiency.”

Between NGS and Kayenta Mine, the sole coal supplier for NGS, more than 900 people are employed and more than 85 percent are Native American, but most are Navajo.

President Shelly appointed a lease negotiating team shortly after he took office. The eight person negotiating team, led by Navajo Nation Attorney General Harrison Tsosie, finalized terms of the lease before Navajo Council made other amendments.

“We are thankful that the owners are committed for at least 25 years,” Tsosie said.

SRP Vice President John Hoopes said the lease negotiations provided SRP a chance to learn about Navajo people and their values.

“One of the most significant benefits of the negotiations we learned much more about you, your priorities about your culture about the things that you value I hope that will aid our relationship going forward,” Hoopes said during the signing morning.

Navajo Council Speaker Johnny Naize said he was thankful for SRP’s patience as the Council came to agreement regarding the lease extension.

“They stuck with us throughout the time, we continually, things will come out properly as it should be at the end, which it did,” Speaker Naize said.

President Shelly said, “now it’s legal” after signing the lease and legislation.

The lease extension now goes to the other NGS owners for signatures and then to the Department of Interior for final approval. The original lease is scheduled to expire in 2019.

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**Law and Order Committee approves the FY 2013-14
Judicial/Public Safety Facilities Construction Priority Listing**

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee approved Legislation No. 0187-13, the final Judicial/Public Safety Construction Priority listing for fiscal years 2013 and 2014.

Throughout the discussion, LOC members made it clear that sites that are ready to begin construction should be made a priority, including legislation sponsor and LOC vice chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat).

“The final priority listing will be up to the committee, but we recommend that it is structured to reflect construction-ready areas at the top of the list,” said Delegate Shepherd.

Currently, Tuba City and Crownpoint have each constructed a judicial/public safety complex under the Judicial/Public Safety Facilities Fund Management Plan which requires the priority listing to be updated every two years.

Construction is funded through a 1 percent sales tax established in 2007, specifically intended to generate funds for the construction of judicial/public safety facilities on the Navajo Nation.

“Areas that are construction-ready should be funded quickly, such as Chinle, who has completed 100 percent of their assessments, clearances, schematics, and planning design. Right now they are only waiting for funding to begin construction,” said Navajo Nation Judicial Administration director Edward Martin.

Martin also noted that Kayenta is the only site that has begun construction on its corrections and law enforcement buildings, and is seeking funding to begin construction of a new court building.

Speaking in support of the legislation, LOC member Council Delegate Elmer Begay (Dilkon, Greasewood Springs, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone) said, “Dilkon began as a police substation, but it is now growing into a full-fledged judicial/public safety entity. I am very pleased with that, and it will be the same for other areas on the Navajo Nation.”

In a previous report given to the LOC by Navajo Nation Department of Corrections director Delores Greyeyes, she stated that Chinle, Pinon, Dilkon, Kayenta, and Shiprock are construction-ready areas and suggested they be at the top of the priority listing.

Delegate Shepherd also reminded his LOC colleagues that they have the authority to amend the priority listing as they see fit and motioned to amend the priority listing to reflect the suggestions made by Greyeyes.

LOC members voted 3-0 in support of the amended list which consists of Chinle, Dilkon, Pinon, Kayenta, Shiprock, Fort Defiance, Ramah, Aneth, Alamo, and Pueblo Pintado.

Also in attendance was Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels), who commended LOC members for their efforts to establish more judicial/public safety complexes.

“We are a growing nation of over 300,000 people and we need to get these facilities built as soon as possible to avoid the overflow in our corrections, jail, and court systems,” said Delegate Hale.

At the conclusion of the discussion, LOC members voted 3-0 to approve Legislation No. 0187-13.

The Law and Order Committee serves as the final authority for the legislation.

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Speaker Naize responds to President Shelly's veto of Title II amendments

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President issued a press release addressing President Ben Shelly's veto of resolution CJY 28-13, approved by the Navajo Nation Council during the summer session.

Legislation No. 0381-12, sponsored by Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) sought to strikeout language at 2 N.N.C. §183, which currently restricts stipend payments for work sessions, workshops, and training and business meetings with Navajo or non-Navajo entities.

"The changes to Title II are directed at increasing Council attendance at work session meetings and does not increase Council stipends, as indicated by President Shelly's comments," said Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood).

In a memo addressed to Speaker Naize dated July 29, President Shelly states that the legislation "will provide a salary raise for the council delegates."

"For delegates to receive a salary raise it would not only require an increase to the legislative budget, but also two-thirds approval of all Navajo Nation Chapters as mandated in Title II of the Navajo Nation Code — that is not what this legislation does," Speaker Naize said.

Speaker Naize further explained that the proposed change is in response to increased requests for a reduced Council to attend numerous meetings, which often makes it difficult for delegates to prioritize their schedules.

"Departments and programs compete for time to conduct work sessions with delegates that often last beyond an eight-hour work day, resulting in certain issues receiving inadequate attention," stated Speaker Naize. "This legislation provides an incentive to attend meetings with programs to address issues that directly impact Diné people, but does not increase salary for delegates."

Speaker Naize also addressed statements from President Shelly in which he says that a "pay increase" for delegates cannot be justified in a time when all the Nation's programs are anticipating budget cuts.

"I remain mindful of ongoing budget cutbacks due to the federal sequester. However, I assure everyone that if this legislation were implemented, it would not increase or affect the legislative budget, nor that of any other program or department within the Navajo Nation," added Speaker Naize.

The Council can override President Shelly's veto with two-thirds of Council's approval.

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For Immediate Release
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Navajo President Shelly Says be Prepared for Severe Weather

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said people throughout the Navajo Nation need to be prepared to unexpected weather during the monsoon season.

“We have to be prepared for all weather that may come our way. This is the year we usually experience rains. But since we’ve been in a drought, the ground is harder making it less likely to soak up any water. That creates the opportunities for flash flooding. Though we are thankful for all the rain we receive, we must respect the power of water,” President Shelly said.

During this past weekend, the Department of Emergency coordinated efforts to respond to nearly a dozen areas of flooding in different parts of the Navajo Nation.

“Chapters are being asked to assist families. We ask that citizens to be aware of their weather and surroundings. Please be cautious of standing water that may look like it’s not deep; utility crews may not have been able to get to energized power lines that are fallen,” President Shelly said.

Navajo DEM Director Rose Whitehair said that chapters need to be involved in responding to weather emergencies.

“It is extremely critical that chapters list their emergency call and cell phone numbers posted on their closed doors for weekend emergencies. Tribal citizens, Department of Public Safety and CHR’s were desperately trying to contact chapter officials to set up shelters this past weekend but were not able to, due to the fact that no one could be found,” Whitehair said.

“We need to work together. We work for the people of the Navajo Nation and we have to be accountable and responsive in times of need,” President Shelly said.

Here is a list of tips to help preparedness for severe weather:

- Be alert to weather conditions. Stay tuned to your local radio station for weather information.
- During high winds stay away from windows. Take shelter in a solid structure.
- Communities need to identify shelters during high winds and harsh weather for residents of the area.
- If there is flooding in your community, stay out of the area. Do not cross flooded roads, arroyos or bridges. Watch your children and make sure they do not play in standing water or flowing flood waters. Small and large debris is carried by flowing flood waters. Flood waters are contaminated.
- Navajo Tribal Utility Authority cautions against spectators at repair operations due to safety concerns for the public.
- Report all weather damages to the chapter administration first. They will contact the Emergency Operations Center for follow-up, if needed.

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Navajo President Shelly Vetoes Bill to Increase Council Stipends

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly vetoed a bill on Monday that would have increased the amount of stipends Navajo Council Delegates receive for attending meetings.

Legislation CJY-28-13 would have amended Title 2 by removing language that defined the type of meetings that Council Delegates could receive stipends for. Essentially, the bill would have allowed stipends for all attended meetings except orientation meetings.

“I have to express my disappointment in the passage of this Legislation,” President Shelly wrote in a memorandum to Navajo Council Speaker Johnny Naize, adding that programs throughout the Navajo Nation government are facing budget cuts as high as 25 percent.

“Additionally, the FY 2014 Indirect Cost (IDC) will decrease \$10 million that will result in employee layoffs. However, working through the budget process we are trying to find ways to alleviate as many lay offs as possible,” President Shelly wrote.

The legislation was passed during the Navajo Council’s summer session with a unanimous vote, 18 – 0.

“I have confidence the Council will recognize the merit of this Veto and understand the counsel my office and oversight committees have advised the programs they obligated to ‘do more with less,’” President Shelly concluded.

The Navajo Council can override President Shelly’s veto with a two-thirds majority vote.

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**Naabik'iyátí' Committee approves \$150,000 to fund
the demolition of the former Tuba City District Court building**

WINDOW ROCK – On Thursday, the Naabik'iyátí' Committee voted in support of Legislation No. 0144-13, approving approximately \$150,000 in supplemental funding from the Undesignated, Unreserved Fund Balance to demolish the former Tuba City District Court building.

On Jan. 17, Navajo Nation Office of Environmental Health/Code Enforcement director Herman Shorty, issued an official 'Order of Permanent Closure' for the former Tuba City District Court building, citing health and safety concerns.

"The [building] inspector confirmed there is a presence of mold, the building foundation is unstable, and the roof is badly dilapidated," said Delegate Begaye. "If we attempt to repair or replace this building, it would cost millions of dollars."

Council Delegate Duane Tsinigine (Bodaway/Gap, Coppermine, K'ai'biit'o, LeChee, Tonalea/Red Lake) questioned whether funding is available through alternative sources.

"Would you be able to use your internal budget to do the demolition if the Naabik'iyátí' Committee did not approve this?" asked Delegate Tsinigine.

"There is another potential source of funds for the demolition, but we are requesting your support to approve funds from the UUFB, which would free up some of our resources to address other judicial facility needs throughout the Navajo Nation," said the director of the Navajo Nation Judicial Administration Edward Martin, in response to the question posed by Delegate Tsinigine.

Several delegates voiced opposition to suggestions that the building be renovated and used by other Navajo Nation departments.

"The Budget and Finance Committee did not approve this legislation with a vote of 0-3, because we believe this building can be repaired and provide much needed office space for other Navajo Nation programs," stressed Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tse Si'ani, Wide Ruins).

Delegate Begaye informed his colleagues that Shorty provided an official evaluation of the building and the findings of a report carried out by a certified building inspector.

"The building is considered officially deteriorated and is beyond any type of feasible repair," stated Delegate Begaye.

After considering several options and reviewing reports provided by the presenters, Naabik'iyátí' Committee members voted 7-3 in support of Legislation No. 0144-13.

The legislation now moves on to the Navajo Nation Council for final consideration.

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**Health, Education, and Human Services Committee votes
to rename the Office of Youth Development to ‘Diné Y.O.U.T.H.’**

WINDOW ROCK – The Health, Education, and Human Services Committee met on Wednesday, to discuss Legislation No. 0199-13, which amends the plan of operation for the Office of Youth Development, housed under the Department of Diné Education.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse’ii’ahi, Whiterock) stated that the bill’s primary intent is to rename the Office of Youth Development to ‘Diné Y.O.U.T.H.’ to move the program in a new direction.

Diné Y.O.U.T.H. advocates for the development of a resilient and healthy generation of youth by providing the following programs: youth career incentives, recreation, youth counseling, high school preparatory and enrichment, and the Boys & Girls Club of Diné Nation.

The program’s acting department manager, Virginia Nelson said the amendments would assist the program in serving Navajo youth up to the age of twenty-four and allow the Boys & Girls Club of Diné Nation to become a sub-affiliate.

Speaking in favor of the bill, Council Delegate Joshua Lavar Butler (Tó Nanees Dizi) said he believes in the youth on the Navajo Nation, and acknowledged the need for consistent leadership within the program.

“I’m concerned about the program’s budget, it is very much reduced and the kids don’t have money to do anything,” said Delegate Butler. “I support the Office of Youth Development, but the program needs the foresight to capture grants and funding for youth-oriented activities.”

Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) motioned to include an amendment on page 4, line 25 of the legislation, that would allow students to maintain the ‘Diné Y.O.U.T.H.’ website.

HEHSC members approved the amendment with a vote of 4-0.

Delegate Witherspoon emphasized the need for the program to establish a College Enrichment Program Database, an on-line listing of various youth opportunities, for the youth to create and maintain.

“The youth can create a website that includes information about academics, athletics, internships, and employment programs at colleges and universities,” said Delegate Witherspoon. “If our kids have the opportunity to experience a college campus, they can begin to imagine themselves as a college student there one day.”

Delegate Simpson also said that he will continue to support legislations to improve youth services and encouraged HEHSC members to seek funding through the Navajo Housing Authority for the development of youth centers.

HEHSC members approved Legislation No. 0199-13 with a vote of 5-0.

The HEHSC serves as final authority for the legislation.

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Navajo President Signs Agreement with PNM for \$1 Million in Job Training



President Ben Shelly (center) signs the memorandum of understanding with PNM while staff from Navajo Technical University, San Juan College, PNM and Council Delegate LoRenzo Bates (far left) watch.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly formalized an agreement Thursday afternoon with Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) that will provide Navajo Nation members with funding for workforce training at colleges in Crownpoint and Farmington.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly joined PNM Chairman, President and CEO Pat Vincent-Collawn to sign a memo of understanding for the new job training initiative at Navajo Nation headquarters in Window Rock, Ariz.

The PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program is part of a \$1 million commitment PNM made this year in recognition of the job impact related to its proposed 2017 closure of two of four units of San Juan Generating Station near Farmington. The two-unit closure is part of an agreement announced Feb. 15, 2013, that would allow San Juan to comply with a federal visibility rule. The \$1 million would be paid in \$200,000 installments over five years and would not be funded through rates.

“Working with PNM, our goal is to provide funding directly to Navajo students in fall 2013 at both Navajo Technical College and San Juan College. We need to invest in our Navajo people and I believe this is an important way to do that. When we invest in our people, they make the Navajo Nation stronger,” President Shelly said.

“PNM is committed to supporting the long-term economic health of the state and the Four Corners area in particular. We are extremely pleased with the collaborative process that has allowed us to craft a meaningful way to invest into job readiness for Navajo members,” Vincent-Collawn said. “The Navajo Nation has demonstrated that same spirit of cooperative collaboration in finding an effective path forward for San Juan to meet the regional haze rule.”

New Mexico Public Regulation Commissioner Theresa Becenti-Aguilar said that when PNM first announced their proposal to shut down units at San Juan Generating Station, she asked that there be no lay off of workers.

“I said, I don’t want to see any lay off of workers. They work hard and we need to keep them working,” she said.

Under the terms of the memorandum of understanding signed yesterday, members of the Navajo Nation can qualify for \$1,000 to \$2,000 in funding per semester at Navajo Technical College in Crownpoint and San Juan College School of Energy in Farmington. The goal is to prepare Navajo members for jobs that are in demand and that are important to the Four Corners area and the Navajo Nation, so only certain certificates and associate’s and bachelor’s degree programs qualify.

Add One / PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program

The fall 2013 semester begins Aug. 19, so Navajo members who are 18 years of age or older are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Details on applying and certificates and degrees that qualify for funding can be found at PNM.com/Navajo. In addition, information on academic eligibility is at www.navajotech.edu/index.php/admissions or by calling (505) 786-4107 and at www.sanjuacollege.edu/energy or by calling (505) 327-5705.

Students who are currently enrolled and meet the eligibility requirements can contact the colleges and qualify for funding for the next semester.

The grants are intended to cover most and in some cases all of the tuition costs for the various degree and certification programs.

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For Immediate Release
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Navajo President Shelly Signs Bill to Change the Name of a Navajo Tribal College



President Shelly (center) signs legislation that changed the name of Navajo Technical College to Navajo Technical University while NTU President Elmer Guy (left), Dean of Instruction Casmir Agbaraji (right center) and Council Delegate LoRenzo Bates (right) witness the bill being signed.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed a bill that formally changes the name of Navajo Technical College to Navajo Technical University during a signing ceremony Thursday afternoon.

“Navajo Technical College is now Navajo Technical University,” President Shelly announced immediately after he signed the bill.

Legislation CJY-30-13 changes the name of the college.

Navajo Technical University President Elmer Guy witnessed the signing.

“This is a great day for our institution of higher learning,” NTU President Guy said.

“It is in the best interest of the Navajo Nation to amend Title 2,” the legislation stated.

The name change is effective immediately.

“We are thankful that we are moving into a new future with Navajo Technical University. I encourage our children and young people to consider NTU to fulfill their educational needs. We are making a change for the better,” President Shelly said.

President Shelly toured the college earlier this week.

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For Immediate Release
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Navajo President Shelly Signs \$3Million Bill for Drought Relief

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed a bill that provides \$3 million for drought relief for the Navajo Nation. He signed the measure Thursday afternoon.

“We need to get help out there to the communities. We declared an emergency because of the drought, now we need to make resources available to help our people. We are in difficult times and thankful for the recent rains, but we still have to create plans to manage the drought,” President Shelly said.

Legislation CJY-44-13 provides about \$1.4 million to the Department of Agriculture for feral horse round ups, and \$202,761 to the Department of Resource Enforcement and the remainder to the Navajo Department of Water Resources for well and windmill repairs.

This legislation is similar to the one President Shelly vetoed early this month because of budget technicalities.

“As a leader, I must adhere to the laws of the Navajo Nation. I support drought relief, and I am thankful that we could work through the laws of our Nation to provide much needed resources to our Navajo departments and Rangers,” President Shelly said.

The money will come from the Undesignated Unreserved Fund Balance.

On July 1, President Shelly declared an emergency because of drought conditions throughout the Navajo Nation.

According to tribal precipitation statistics, Western Agency is about 65 percent below normal precipitation amounts this year, while Fort Defiance Agency is about 63 percent below normal. Northern and Eastern Agency are about 55 percent below average, while Chinle Agency is about 30 percent below average precipitation levels.

President Shelly also signed a memorandum ordering all executive departments to help update and revise a drought management plan.

“We are going to help our people through these tough times. I know it’s difficult with little vegetation for our livestock and small yielding crops. We are strong people and we will persevere through these challenging times,” President Shelly said.

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**Resources and Development Committee recommends
approval of Navajo Nation General Leasing Regulations of 2013**
Naabik'iyátí Committee approves legislation which now moves on to Council

WINDOW ROCK – The Resources and Development Committee on Tuesday, considered Legislation No. 0189-13, which seeks to approve the 2013 Navajo Nation General Leasing Regulations and enacting the same in Title 16 §2301 *ET SEQ.* of the Navajo Nation Code.

The purpose of Legislation No. 0189-13 is to streamline agricultural, religious, educational, recreational, and residential leasing processes by authorizing the Navajo Nation to issue such leases without having to seek the approval of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, excluding mineral and right-of-way leases.

Legislation co-sponsor Council Delegate David Tom (Beclabito, Cove, Gadi'i'áhi/To'Koi, Red Valley, Sheepsprings, Toadlena/Two Grey Hills, Tsé alnáoz't'í) stressed the importance of approving the bill, as it would improve the efficiency of the land leasing process by eliminating the role of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Mike Halona, Department Manager of the Navajo Land Department, added that the legislation serves as an enabling legislation for the Federal 'Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership' Act.

The HEARTH Act was signed by President Obama in July 2012, and gives tribes the authority to process land leases without BIA approval.

The intent of the HEARTH Act is to promote investments in tribal communities and facilitate economic development by reducing the time it takes to approve leases for home and small businesses in Indian Country.

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle) said the approval of the proposed leasing regulations would improve the overall planning processes for future developments by laying the foundation to better understand the geography of Navajo land.

"I do support this initiative and the effort that the Navajo Land Department has made. It would be a great advancement to see leases and maps digitized," said Delegate Pete.

RDC chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) added that the proposed bill would assist all Navajo People, by giving the Nation control over surface land leasing and permits.

“Right now the [land] leasing process is very incompatible with the needs of our chapters, we have the opportunity to make it more compatible with the needs of the people we represent,” added Delegate Benally.

Before the final vote, Halona also explained that with the passage of the legislation, the Navajo Land Department would establish its own land leasing records system and continue to send copies of land transactions to the BIA for their own records.

The RDC approved Legislation No. 0189-13 with a vote of 3-0.

When the legislation was brought before the Naabik’iyáti Committee for consideration on Thursday, primary sponsor Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) asked for his colleagues’ support, calling the bill “a historic and land mark legislation.”

“We are taking what has been the responsibility of the BIA for years, and giving it to the Navajo Nation,” Delegate Begaye stated.

The initiative was met with skepticism from Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins), who cautioned that assuming the responsibility of land leasing would create more “red tape” within the Nation’s government and questioned if the Nation has funds to assume the responsibility.

“Is this something that will come out of the Nation’s General Funds or are there federal dollars for it?” Delegate Curley asked.

Delegate Pete expressed optimism over the legislation and said that he hopes it will lead to land reform across the Navajo Nation.

“I hope with this legislation, we can set up a mechanism to use our land effectively,” Delegate Pete said.

After an hour of discussion, Naabik’iyáti Committee members unanimously approved Legislation No. 0189-13, with a 10-0 vote.

The legislation now moves on to the Navajo Nation Council for final consideration.

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For Immediate Release: July 24, 2013
PNM Contact: Valerie Smith, 505-241-4438
Navajo Nation Contact: Erny Zah, (928) 871-7884

Navajo Nation and PNM Announce Workforce Training Program

(Window Rock, Ariz.) – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly will join PNM Chairman, President and CEO Pat Vincent-Collawn, as well as representatives of the Navajo Technical College and San Juan College School of Energy on July 25 to announce a new job training initiative for Navajo members.

President Shelly and Vincent-Collawn will sign a memo of understanding regarding the jobs initiative. Officials from local Navajo Nation Chapters of Upper Fruitland, Nenahnezad, San Juan, Tse Daa Kaan and Tiis Tsoh Sikaad are expected to attend the ceremony. Also attending are the presidents of the two participating colleges: Toni H. Pendergrass, Ph.D., president for San Juan College, and Elmer Guy, Ph.D., president for Navajo Technical College.

Representatives of the media are invited to attend the announcement.

WHAT:	Ceremonial signing of memo of understanding to launch the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program
WHEN:	3 p.m. Thursday, July 25, 2013
WHERE:	Navajo Nation Headquarters, President's Office, One Tribal Hill Drive, Window Rock, Ariz.
WHO:	Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, PNM Chairman, President & CEO Pat Vincent-Collawn, Navajo Technical College, San Juan College School of Energy

(END)



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For Immediate Release
July 23, 2013

Navajo President Shelly Signs Three Bills into Law

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed three different bills into law Tuesday, all of which were passed by the Navajo Nation Council last week during their summer session.

“With my signature, I am pleased to know that we are making progress in the Navajo Nation. Some of these changes are being made slowly, but we are preserving through and patiently creating change in the government that is stable,” President Shelly said.

First, the President’s signature on legislation CJY-37-13 took another step to create the Narbona Growth Fund, a holding corporation. Pending the Secretary of Interior approval, the fund could provide tax incentives enticing large corporations to expand their businesses on the Navajo Nation. In addition, the fund could also provide an avenue for potential business to operate as a joint venture, LLC, or as other corporations and would be able to perform business without federal taxes.

“We set this up from Division of Economic Development and the President’s Office to provide income to the people. When the fund gains traction, it will generate income. We envision that this action will attract manufacturing to the Nation. As an example, Raytheon Corporation, which exists on the Nation, if they received a new contract to build more defense systems and if they choose to go under this new corporation, they will be exempt from federal taxes. The company can save millions of dollars, which they can put into the Fund or the business,” Albert Damon, DED director, said.

Another incentive is that once the fund is set up as a federal charter, the Navajo Nation people would act as preferred stockholders and would eventually earn dividends from the Narbona Growth Fund.

“We are creating new ways to care for our people,” President Shelly said. “We also hoping the Narbona Growth Fund will be a way to lure big businesses to the Navajo Nation. I want to see retail, manufacturing and other businesses help strengthen our Navajo economy,” President Shelly said.

President Shelly signed legislation CJY-36-13 that strengthens Navajo sovereignty by providing \$354,297 to the Real Estate Department to develop a Navajo Land Title Data System.

The new system would incorporate a digital database for land records on the Navajo Nation. Goals of the new system would be to enhance data storage, protect data, establish Internet protocols that allows Navajo home site lease holders to pay their home site lease payments over the Internet, and create an online tracking system for land lease applications.

“We need to update one of the most important databases in the Navajo Nation. Having better records will strengthen our long term planning and will help keep accurate records of our lands. We need that to strengthen our sovereignty going forward. Strong record keeping is a sign of a strong nation,” President Shelly said.

The third bill President Shelly signed approves was use permits for Navajo Tribal Utility Authority for the San Juan River Animas La Plata Water Supply Project and the San Juan River “Run of the River or Native Flow” Water Project.

Legislation CYJ-34-13 establishes water permits for NTUA to supply water to the Shiprock area from the two water projects. In 2012 a water pipeline was completed that allows more water and the permits provide the approval to use more than 7,200 acre feet of water from the two water projects.

“Providing clean and safe drinking water to the Navajo Nation has always been high on my priority list. This water is part of the Southern Ute Settlement Act of 2000 and we are benefitting from the water settlement. The local Shiprock area will now have more safe drinking water to their availability making the community safer and healthier,” President Shelly said.

###

Navajo chapters face road damage from monsoon rains



Heavy rainfall on July 19 resulted in floods that damaged roads in the Northern Navajo Agency. Pictured here is the heavy damage on Navajo Route 5081 near Burnham Chapter. Navajo Division of Transportation crews conducted 55.2 miles of roadway assessments last week and are now mobilizing for road repairs this week for chapter residents. (Photo by Cornelius Kenny)

BURNHAM, N.M.-The monsoon rains have been a godsend for many Navajo communities over the past month.

However, these heavy rains have also created challenges for chapters across the reservation, as local dirt roads are often washed out from the flash floods.

Last week, Navajo Division of Transportation Road Department crews began assessing road washouts in the Northern Navajo Agency.

Safety is the priority in these efforts.

Paulson Chaco, NDOT director, advised motorists

to be safe when traveling the damaged roads.

“We have our crews out on the roads conducting assessments and mobilizing for road repairs. However, we must also be prudent in preventing our equipment from getting stuck or damaged during these repairs,” Chaco said.

On July 17, heavy equipment operators Cornelius Kenny and Orren Lee conducted road assessments near Tiis Tsoh Sikaad and Burnham on Navajo Routes 5080 and 5081 for a total of 55.2 miles.

For N5080, they assessed 15.2 miles of road and encountered a low water crossing area

that needed work but was still passable; a washout that was repaired by the chapter with a backhoe and was passable; washouts that needed some grading; a cattle guard that needed cleaning; and miles of washboard.

They noted areas that needed graveling from the washout conditions.

For N5081, they encountered water on the roadway but passage was still possible in two wheel drive; several areas of roadway that had the shoulders washed out and are in need repair; one area that was damaged and merges into one lane; heavy damage on

one portion of the road that was washed out and is passable only with four wheel drive; and two areas that need to be completely rebuilt from major flood damage.

Senior heavy equipment operator Roscoe Tsosie said his crews are out working on the washout emergencies throughout the reservation and noted many chapters are demanding immediate response.

However, he said NDOT crews must still wait on pools of water to dissipate and for mud to dry before heavy equipment can be taken in for roadway repairs. This is to ensure equipment does not get

stuck in the muddy conditions.

“There are some chapters that are taking matters into their own hands and using backhoes to repair the roads,” Tsosie said. “We don’t advise this because sometimes they damage the roadway further and we have to go back in there for repairs.”

He said crews understand the immediacy for repairs and are working to address these needs as expeditiously as possible.

N5081 near Burnham faced several areas of heavy erosion

“There are some chapters that are taking matters into their own hands. We don’t advise this because they sometimes damage the roadway further and we have to go back in there for repairs.”

from the floods. Some culverts were exposed from the heavy rain and some were crushed and heavily damaged. The assessment phase identified areas in need of repair and crews are onsite this week to conduct maintenance activities.

On July 16, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad Chapter president Lester Begay declared a state of emergency for his chapter.

He stated some homes were flooded and others had damaged roofs. Nine earthen dams serving as water reserves for livestock were compromised.

His biggest concern was that 90 percent of school bus routes washed away.

“Emergency vehicles will not be able to reach remote families fast enough,” Begay said.

The severe thunderstorms on July 19 created floods, he said, and noted one car was stuck in the flash flood and required emergency intervention.

The Chinle Navajo Agency faces similar circumstances.

Heavy rains on July 19 resulted in a waterline break in the Burnside area; a four-inch mainline was exposed and damaged west of Pinon rodeo grounds; power outages in two areas of Pinon; two-inch waterline in Kitsillie was leaking near the wash; and some residents in Smoke Signal were without water.

Navajo Tribal Utility Authority crews were not able to access some of the areas for repair due to the flooding. Again, the emergency situation is acknowledged, but approach must be taken with proper precautions to prevent crews from getting stuck.

NDOT advises travelers in these affected communities to use common sense judgment in navigating these routes until repairs can be made. If it looks like passage is not possible, then do not attempt to drive through the flooded areas.

Again, crews are onsite and working on repairs of these flooded areas. NDOT is working with our partners at the BIA, counties and state DOTs to address these issues.

Information: www.navajodot.org



Navajo Route 5081 faced the worst damage from the flooding. NDOT advises motorists to avoid roads like this all together. Exercise common sense and do not attempt to cross roads that are impassable. (Photo by Cornelius Kenny)



Navajo Route 5080 did see flooded roads but damages are not as severe as N5081, also located in the Northern Navajo Agency. NDOT crews are mobilizing this week for road maintenance activities. (Photo by Cornelius Kenny)



While the monsoon rains have been a blessing because of drought conditions, they brought challenges like the flash floods that have hit many Navajo chapters. NDOT is working on road repairs. (Photo by Cornelius Kenny)



DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 19, 2013

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Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture Begins Navajo Nation Wide Feral Livestock Removal

WINDOW ROCK, AZ. – Legislation 0202-13 passed. This will allow immediate protection and management of Navajo Natural Resources.

On July 18, 2013, Legislation No. 0202-13 passed. Relating to Emergency: Approving a Supplemental Appropriation Request from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Minimum Fund Balance in the Amount of \$3,000,000 to the Navajo Department of Water Resources, for Addressing the Extreme Drought Conditions on the Navajo Nation; \$897,239 to the Department of Agriculture for Feral Livestock Round-Ups; and \$202,761 to the Department of Resource Enforcement for Livestock Round-Ups. The Legislation will become effective upon the signature of the Navajo Nation President.

The NNDA is gearing up to implement the legislation by working with our partners and the Navajo communities to achieve Navajo Nation wide Feral Livestock Round Up events. NNDA will work with Navajo Chapters to immediately begin an intense schedule of feral livestock round-ups up until the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2013 and will follow all Navajo laws and regulations regarding the feral livestock round-up. All chapters are encourage to pass multi-year round up legislation and to contact the NNDA to schedule multiple round up events in August and September 2013. The legislation included \$250,000 total for payment to those chapter with past round-ups and current round-ups.

The Navajo Nation Veterinary Livestock and Veterinarian Program will be on site during the round-ups to provide limited castration and sterilization services, a limited number will be provided at no cost. NNDA will hire a minimum of 20 temporary laborers by the second week of August 2013 and are currently accepting applications. Individuals with horses, vehicles and stock trailers along with the livestock management skills are needed. Applications can be secured on the NNDA and Department of Personnel Management website along with the job description - www.agriculture.navajo-nsn.gov.

As communicated by the NNDA through tribal ranch meetings, grazing meetings, annual agriculture conference and presentations at the local level, the continuous drought condition has taken a heavy toll on Mother Earth and Father Sky. Additional conditions such animal overpopulation, extreme temperatures, and high winds all combine to cause forage degradation, erosion, and loss of top soil.

Thus it is important to address the animal overpopulation to allow the land to rest and to allow communities to begin conservation and rangeland improvement activities.

The recent legislation as supported by the Navajo Nation government resulted from concerns expressed in every community regarding natural resources and the need to better protect and manage these resources. NNDA is pleased to work with each community in carrying out the goals and objectives of the legislation. We look forward to better protecting and managing Navajo natural resources for the use and enjoyment by current and future generations of Navajo people, animals and wildlife. For more information call (928) 871-6605.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 19, 2013

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Navajo Nation Council approves indenture of lease agreement for the Navajo Generating Station

WINDOW ROCK – The Navajo Nation Council on Thursday, approved Legislation No. 0177-13, rescinding CAP-21-13, and approving amendment one to the indenture of lease for an additional 25 years, beginning in 2019 for the Navajo Generating Station.

On Apr. 29, the Council approved the indenture of lease under a previous bill, Legislation No. 0042-13. Terms of the amended legislation were deemed unacceptable by NGS owners.

Negotiations between NGS owners and the Navajo Nation continued, and Legislation No. 0177-13 was drafted to reflect the new terms of the negotiations.

Legislation sponsor Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood), urged the Council to approve the agreement to preserve hundreds of jobs for Navajo people employed by NGS and millions of dollars in annual revenue for the Nation.

Council initially considered the new legislation on Wednesday, and voted 11-10 to table the bill to provide clarification over an amendment proposed by Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill).

The proposed amendment sought to change outdated deadlines, to allow for the Navajo Nation to remain eligible for a signing bonus, contingent upon approval from the Council and President Ben Shelly, by the deadlines outlined in the legislation.

Council approved the amendment with a vote of 21-0.

Immediately following the passage of the first amendment, Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) motioned for a second amendment to address potential water rights claims for the Navajo Nation.

Delegate Begaye's amendment proposed adding language to the agreement, ensuring that NGS non-participating members will not oppose the Navajo Nation in its pursuit of claims to Arizona's 50,000 acre-foot allocation of the Upper Colorado River Basin water.

"This will help our attorneys fight to get our water rights," said Delegate Begaye. "We're only asking that NGS not get in the way of our water claims, we're not opposing the NGS."

The majority of Thursday's debate centered on Delegate Begaye's proposed amendment, which drew opposition from several delegates who argued that passing the amendment would jeopardize the entire bill.

“If this is a deal killer, and if NGS closes down, then that water is up for grabs so remember that,” said Council Delegate LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland), referring to water currently used to operate the NGS.

Supporters of the proposed amendment argued that it would make the legislation stronger and assist future claims to water made by the Nation.

“We don’t want the owners of NGS opposing our water rights,” Delegate Tsosie said. “Let’s send this back to them, and make a strong stand once again.”

Although Council voted 12-11 in support of the amendment, Delegate Bates later motioned to remove the approved amendment which raised objections and questions from several delegates.

Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) urged delegates to vote down the amendment proposed by Delegate Bates.

“Why is it so hard to stand up for what is right?” asked Delegate Witherspoon of his Council colleagues. “Water is going to be gold in the future, and wars will be fought over it. We need to fight for our rights.”

Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) spoke in favor of the amendment and the legislation as a whole.

“If the amendment was truly just for water I would stand in support, but this amendment is trying to kill the legislation,” said Delegate Benally. “I want this legislation to pass. I want my people to be employed. I want a good life for my people.”

Also speaking in support of the legislation was Council Delegate Joshua Lavar Butler (Tó Nanees Dizi), who advocated for jobs, economic development, and transition to green energy production.

“We are not creating jobs fast enough, and the unemployment rate is reaching close to 65 percent,” said Delegate Butler. “We don’t have a vibrant green economy to transition to right now.”

Delegate Bates continued to urge Council to remove Delegate Begaye’s amendment, stating that the Nation would be able to pursue water rights whether or not the NGS lease extension was approved.

After a lengthy discussion, Council members voted 12-11 to remove the previous amendment.

Near the end of the debate, Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin) proposed a fourth amendment to add six chapters to a list of “NGS Community Chapters” who will benefit from a chapter fund established and administered by the NGS owners.

The six chapters include Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, and Ts’ah Bii Kin, in addition to the existing list that includes Bodaway/Gap, Cameron, Coalmine Mesa, Coppermine, K’ai’Bii’To, LeChee, Shonto, Tonalea, and Tuba City.

Council voted 12-11 in favor of the amendment.

After six hours of debate and the approval of four amendments, Council members approved Legislation No. 0177-13 with a 16-6 vote.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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22nd Navajo Nation Council approves energy development agreement between the Navajo Nation and Nabeeho' Power, L.L.C.

WINDOW ROCK – On the final day of the summer session, the 22nd Navajo Nation Council approved Legislation No. 0457-12, approving on an energy development agreement between Nabeeho' Power, L.L.C. and the Navajo Nation.

Legislation No. 0457-12 permits the development of a solar power system and other infrastructure related to the capture, distribution, and transmission of solar energy on approximately 300 acres of land in the community of Iyanbito.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Charles Damon II (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Lichíí', Rock Springs, Tsayatoh) asked the Council to support the bill, noting that it received positive recommendations when considered by the Resources and Development Committee and Naabik'íyáti' Committee.

"The solar system industry is really booming and we would like to be a part of it so the Navajo People can benefit," said Delegate Damon.

Amber Schillinger, owner of Nabeeho' Power, L.L.C., said that she aspires to help Navajo People by bringing employment and economic development opportunities to Iyanbito.

"I would like to have the chance to create jobs and keep our Navajo scholarships here on the Nation," Schillinger said.

The bill is a contentious issue for the Iyanbito Chapter, resulting in the submission of eight chapter resolutions opposing the solar project.

Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) explained to his colleagues that chapter constituents had many unanswered questions regarding the solar project, and motioned to table the legislation until those questions were answered.

The motion to table the legislation failed with a vote of 6-9.

"There are many questions the chapter has brought fourth," said Delegate Yazzie. "In all fairness, we need more clarification to make a solid decision."

Several Council members questioned the solar project's initial financing and requested assurance that the land would not sit undeveloped during the 25-year lifetime of the energy agreement.

Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) explained the challenges that entrepreneurs face when starting a business on the Nation.

"Often we have model projects that don't move forward because their financing is not reputable," said Delegate Witherspoon. "Projects like this also face opposition from chapters, tribal administration, the Navajo Department of Justice, and even our own Energy Task Force."

Council Delegate LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) motioned for an amendment, requiring Nabeeho' Power, L.L.C. to acquire and complete financing no later than 365 days after the signing of the bill. Failure to comply would require the energy agreement be reconsidered by the applicable oversight.

"I propose this amendment so that we are not sitting on this project 25-years down the road," said Delegate Bates.

The amendment passed with a vote of 10-5.

Speaking in support of the bill, Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) commended Nabeeho' Power, L.L.C. for working through the administrative process to create an economic opportunity.

"We should encourage young Navajo People to come home with their new found knowledge and start businesses," said Delegate Tsosie. "Our words are empty if we tell our children to work hard and then turn them away when they try to start business."

Delegate Yazzie asked Council members to respect the wishes of the elders in Iyanbito.

"I am glad we are debating this, but I stand with the people of Iyanbito and will vote against this bill," said Delegate Yazzie.

At the conclusion of the debate, Council members approved Legislation No. 0457-12 with a vote of 11-5.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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22nd Navajo Nation Council approves legislation allowing Navajo Technical College to be named a university

WINDOW ROCK – The 22nd Navajo Nation Council on Wednesday approved Legislation No. 0154-13, amending Title 15 §§ 1201 through 1209 of the Navajo Nation Code; changing ‘Navajo Technical College’ to ‘Navajo Technical University’ and establishing the Navajo Technical University Institutional Review Board.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Simpson previously introduced a similar bill, Legislation No. 0077-13, during the 2013 Spring Session, however it was voted down on Apr. 16 by the Council to allow time for the sponsor to develop an improved version.

Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse’ii’ahi, Whiterock) asked the Council to support the enhancement of the quality of higher education offered on the Navajo Nation.

Delegate Simpson explained that the proposed IRB, would review and approve all social science and animal research conducted by students.

“Past leaders knew changes would be made to NTC, this is one of them,” said Delegate Simpson.

The legislation drew support from Council members, yet a majority of the discussion centered around concerns over how the IRB would work with the Navajo Nation IRB, established under the Navajo Division of Health.

Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) said he thought the proposed IRB policies were inadequate and requested that the bill be tabled until sufficient policies were created.

“I support NTC becoming a university, however these policies are not ready,” said Delegate Witherspoon. “My concern is to protect the Nation from potentially detrimental research.”

Although there was apprehension about the function of the proposed IRB, Council Delegate Leonard Tsoie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) argued that the Navajo Nation IRB’s process prolongs research efforts for students.

“It’s my understanding that students don’t want to conduct research on the Nation, because the Navajo Nation IRB does not regularly meet,” said Delegate Tsosie. “Prolonged research jeopardizes their schooling.”

Speaking in favor of the bill, Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) stated that he believed the bill encourages students to develop research that impacts the entire world, not only the Nation.

Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii) proposed an amendment to the bill, inserting ‘U.S.’ before the ‘Department of Health and Human Services’ on page 11, line 16 of the bill.

The amendment passed with a vote 17-0.

After a lengthy discussion, the Council approved Legislation No. 0154-13 with a vote of 21-0.

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July 18, 2013

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22nd Navajo Nation Council votes down Junk Food Sales Tax of 2013

WINDOW ROCK – On Wednesday, the Navajo Nation Council voted down Legislation No. 0085-13, which sought to enact the Navajo Nation Junk Food Sales Tax Act of 2013 and to approve the elimination of the sales tax on fresh fruits and vegetables.

“This legislation is to address the obesity and diabetes problem on the Navajo Nation,” said bill prime sponsor Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Negeezi, Nahodishgish, Tse’ii’ahi, Whiterock).

The Junk Food Sales Tax would impose a two-percent sales tax on junk food, in addition to the regular five-percent sales tax already in place, stated Delegate Simpson. He added that the extra two-percent junk food tax would be allocated to health and wellness programs at the chapter level.

Prior to the discussion, Diné Community Advocacy Alliance representative Denisa Livingston gave a presentation to Council illustrating the effect junk food has had on the Navajo people.

“We have the right to have healthy foods that give us power, not unhealthy foods that make us powerless. The right to [healthy] food is a human right,” said Livingston.

“The education on these health issues is already out there through programs, advertisements, and media outlets, but this health epidemic still exists within our community,” stressed Delegate Simpson.

The legislation was met with concerned opposition by Council members in regards to the sales tax increase.

“I don’t believe increasing taxes of our Navajo people is the solution,” said Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta), insisting that there are other options to discourage Navajo people from buying unhealthy foods.

Council Delegate Mel Begay (Coyote Canyon, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Tohatchi, Bahastl’a’a’) raised further concern over fear that the tax increase would drive Navajo citizens to off-reservation businesses with lower sales tax on food.

“The increase of taxes will draw business away from the Navajo Nation,” said Delegate Begay, suggesting that the tax increase would drive the price of food up on the reservation in an attempt to recoup tax loss revenue due to the proposed elimination of the sales tax on fruits and vegetables.

Although some delegates opposed the increase in sales tax on junk food, several delegates commended the overall intent of promoting healthy living, and suggested other alternatives.

“We need to look into the federal government’s Farm Bill. We can find resources that will encourage Navajo people to start growing their own food again,” said Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dził, Tse Si’ani, Wide Ruins).

The federal Farm Bill of 2013 allows farmers and ranchers to have programs and funding available to them which assist in producing higher output of their farms, such as corn or livestock.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Delegate Benally praised the good intentions of DCAA, and said there needs to be further discussion on how to solve obesity and diabetes problems without increasing taxes on Navajo people.

The Council voted down Legislation No. 0085-13, with a 8-10 vote.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Wednesday, July 17, 2013

NAVAJO REPORTER VOLUME 1 AND 2 NOW AVAILABLE

The Navajo Reporter Volumes 1 and 2 have been reprinted and combined into one book, which is now available for purchase through the Supreme Court of the Navajo Nation.

The Navajo Reporter includes the official reports of cases decided in the Navajo Nation Supreme Court and selected District Court decisions. The Volume 1 and 2 book contains cases from January 1969 through December 1979.

The Navajo Reporter Volume 1 and 2 is priced at \$50 plus the current 5 percent Navajo Nation sales tax. There is an additional charge for shipping. The Navajo Reporter Volume 3, Volume 4, Volume 6, Volume 7 and Volume 8 are also available for purchase through the Supreme Court.

For more information, please contact Supreme Court Clerk Michael Smith at (928) 871-7010 or michaelsmith@navajo-nsn.gov.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Wednesday, July 17, 2013

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD BEGINS FOR JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT

The Navajo Nation Judicial Branch is pursuing funding through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant that will expand on and improve the automated case management system that currently supports the Navajo Nation justice community.

The grant will provide \$78,233 that will partly fund the purchase of JusticeWeb, an online application that will enable users to its features: E-Filing, E-View, E-Discovery and E-Payment. The online accessibility will allow users anywhere to make online payments, access necessary forms and view court documents.

The application is now on the www.navajocourts.org site for a 30 day public comment period ending August 17, 2013. Comments may be sent to Karen Francis, Government Relations Officer, at karenfrancis@navajo-nsn.gov.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 16, 2013

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**22nd Navajo Nation Council affirms sovereignty by
amending extradition and detention provisions for major crimes**

WINDOW ROCK – On day two of the Summer Session, the Navajo Nation Council passed Legislation No. 0049-13, amending extradition and detention provisions under Title 7 and Title 17 of the Navajo Nation Code.

The legislation requires that non-Navajo authorities must provide proof of criminal charges against an accused individual, the accused individual be given the opportunity for a hearing in tribal court and notified of their right to legal counsel, and that the individual is provided due process in accordance with Navajo Nation laws, prior to their extradition.

Legislation co-sponsor Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichí, Steamboat) said the legislation was developed over the course of four years, in an effort to clarify extradition procedures and to assert Navajo sovereignty in such procedures.

Since the proposed legislation entailed amendments to the Navajo Nation Judicial Reform Act under Title 7, it required a two-thirds vote, or sixteen votes of approval, to pass the legislation.

Navajo Nation chief prosecutor Bernadine Martin, explained to members of the Council that confusion over extradition practices became apparent in 2009, when a Navajo individual suspected of murder was removed from a tribal jail and taken in to custody by federal authorities without the appropriate due process, in violation of Navajo Nation laws and the Treaty of 1868.

Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) spoke in support of the legislation, asserting that it would move the Nation forward in establishing its sovereignty.

“Congress, federal courts, and others do not take our Treaty seriously,” said Delegate Tsosie. “It’s important for us as Navajo leaders to stand up for the Treaty, and have it be recognized.”

Referencing the Treaty of 1868, Delegate Tsosie argued that the Navajo Nation should uphold specific language in the Treaty, which asserts the right of the Navajo Nation to refuse the extradition of individuals if specific procedures are not followed.

Also speaking in support of Navajo sovereignty, Council Delegate Roscoe Smith (Crystal, Fort Defiance, Red Lake, Sawmill) expressed dissatisfaction with past incidences of federal authorities removing Navajo individuals suspected of major crimes, without adhering to Navajo laws.

“There’s a process, and that process was not honored in a government-to-government relationship,” said Delegate Smith. “A government actually crossed our borders, came into our land, and dictated our Nation.”

“When do we begin to stand up for the sovereignty of the Navajo Nation?” asked Delegate Smith of his Council colleagues.

Although the legislation was met with overwhelming support, several Council members questioned specific language and terminology in the legislation.

Council Delegates Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii) and LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) inquired as to what the term “Indian” is defined as, in the language of the legislation.

“The word ‘Indian’ to us, is a registered first American who has a certificate of Indian blood, but other nations do not have a clear definition or requirement for membership. How would the courts define that definition?” asked Delegate Phelps.

Navajo Nation assistant attorney general Paul Spruhan, said the legislation uses the term “Indian” in the same context as the federal government, explaining that the broad definition was intentionally utilized to provide flexibility in addressing future cases involving Navajos who may not be an enrolled member, or an individual who is part Navajo and enrolled in a different tribe.

Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin) reminded Council members that the Nation has established numerous cross-commission agreements with various law enforcement agencies, and cautioned that the “hot pursuit” clause in such agreements, may allow non-Navajo authorities to take individuals into custody without following the extradition process in certain situations.

“I know there is a time frame, or some type of guidance that allows the state and the feds to come in, and due to the fresh pursuit clause, they don’t need any extradition signed if it’s in that time frame,” said Delegate Nez.

While several delegates praised the legislation, a few acknowledged that the extradition laws and procedures will need further amendments and adjustments in the future.

Council members also approved one amendment to address specific wording in the legislation, and also to allow for monetary compensation for individuals who are wrongfully detained and extradited.

At the conclusion of discussion, Council members voted 19-0 to approve Legislation No. 0049-13.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 15, 2013

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**Speaker Naize delivers report centered on energy issues to the
22nd Navajo Nation Council on the first day of the Summer Session**

WINDOW ROCK—On the first day of the Navajo Nation Council Summer Session, Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) delivered a written report to fellow Council colleagues highlighting progress on critical issues facing the Nation.

Speaker Naize’s report began with mentioning the need to address drought conditions as it pertains to livestock throughout the Navajo Nation.

“Water is becoming scarce in certain regions of our Nation so we must use extra precautions to protect the well-being of your livestock,” mentioned Speaker Naize in the report.

On June 28 during a special session, the Council approved Legislation No. 0190-13, allocating \$3 million for the Navajo Department of Water to address severe drought conditions. However, President Ben Shelly issued a line-item veto for the funding, citing non-compliance with the Navajo Nation Appropriations Act, in a memo dated July 8.

A large portion of Speaker Naize’s report centered on energy issues, including ongoing negotiations between the Navajo Nation and SRP officials over the Navajo Generating Station lease extension.

“This lease amendment negotiation has been a long and arduous process,” stated Speaker Naize in his written report. “It is my feeling that we have provided the best opportunity given the circumstances to convey our perspective to this negotiation.”

Legislation No. 0042-13, the NGS lease extension passed by Council during a special session held on Apr. 29, was deemed unacceptable by SRP officials due to certain amendments added prior to the passage of the legislation.

As a result, Speaker Naize sponsored Legislation No. 0177-13, seeking an agreement between all parties regarding the indenture of lease.

Speaker’s report described the proposed legislation as, “an amicable agreement that provides a compromise that ensures adequate protection for SRP and the Navajo Nation, and provides a workable solution for the plant to continue its operations.”

The report also touched upon the pending acquisition of the BHP Navajo Mine by the Navajo Transitional Energy Company, LLC.

Speaker Naize explained in the report that the mine purchase has recently stalled due to the possible deregulation of the retail energy market in the state of Arizona, and remains hopeful that the deregulation issue will be resolved by Oct. of this year, and allow for the completion of the mine purchase.

Aside from energy issues, Speaker Naize's report also focused on the negotiations between the Navajo Nation and Zuni Tribe over approximately 21,000 acres of parceled land known as the Fort Wingate Army Depot, located six-miles east of Gallup, NM.

Members of the Fort Wingate Task Force, the Eastern Navajo Land Commission, and Speaker Naize met with New Mexico Congressman Ben Lujan (District-3), New Mexico Congressman Steve Pearce (District-2), Alaska Congressman Don Young, and Pueblo of Zuni Governor Arlen Quetawki, Sr. on July 8, to negotiate a fair and equitable division of land with the Zuni Tribe, according to the report.

"I want to ensure my colleagues that the negotiation took into consideration all the perspectives of our people and we worked to gain the best division of land considering the situation," stated Speaker Naize's written report.

On the federal level, Speaker Naize noted that he along with President Ben Shelly, Navajo Nation Department of Justice, Eastern Navajo Land Commission, and personnel from the Navajo Land Department met with officials from the Cobell Land Buy-Back Program on June 19, to discuss a plan of action and development of the Navajo Nation's Land Buy-Back Program.

Other topics addressed in Speaker Naize's report included the newly opened Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort and the need to continue pursuing the needs of Navajo Veterans.

The Navajo Nation Council voted 10-3 to accept the report.

To view a copy of Speaker Naize's Summer Council Session report, please visit:

<http://www.navajonationcouncil.org/pressReleases/2013/JUL/3rd%20Quarter%20Report.pdf>

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For Immediate Release
July 15, 2013

Navajo President Shelly and Vice President Jim Deliver State of the Navajo Nation

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and Vice President Rex Lee Jim jointly delivered the State of the Navajo Nation report during the opening day of Navajo Council’s Summer Session Monday afternoon.

President Shelly and Vice President delivered their speech almost entirely in the Navajo language and mostly followed the written report. The Council voted 17-1 and approved the report.

According to the written report, President Shelly and Vice President Jim outlined several ongoing projects from the most recent information regarding FEMA reimbursements, the 4G broadband project, Navajo Transitional Energy Company and a job training initiative in which Public Service Company of New Mexico will provide Navajo students \$1 million through the next five years.

“Working with PNM, our goal is to provide funding directly to Navajo students in fall 2013 at both Navajo Technical College and San Juan College. We need to invest in our people and I believe this is an important way to do that,” the President’s report stated.

PNM plans to provide \$200,000 a year to help pay for job training for Navajo students. PNM proposed the plan to President Shelly nearly a year ago after the U.S. EPA ruled that PNM owned San Juan Generating Station had to reduce emissions to reduce haze.

“Through this process, the Navajo Nation has been involved and worked actively with the U.S. EPA, New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez and the New Mexico Environment Department, and PNM,” the report stated.

The report also updated the Council about the 4G LTE broadband project which is expected to be completed soon. The project received more than \$30 million through American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and when completed would bring a 4G LTE network to the Navajo Nation.

President Shelly also updated the Council about NTEC and the potential of a Navajo owned coalmine.

NTEC is a transitional company that was started to buyout BHP-Billiton's Navajo Mine. When the mine is purchased, BHP-Billiton would manage the mine until 2016. Experts expect the mine to generate as much as \$200 million annually for the Navajo Nation.

Though the deal isn't finalized, President Shelly said previously signed Memorandums of Understanding with Lawrence Livermore and Sandia National Laboratories would help the Navajo Nation explore the future of coal energy for the Navajo Nation.

The President's report stated that about \$5.5 million has been reimbursed to the Navajo Nation from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Some of the reimbursements have been nearly a decade in waiting.

"We are thankful that the Department of Emergency Management was able to complete tasks that were left undone for nearly a decade. They are now putting forth new uniform practices that will ensure that in the future, reimbursement payments will be processed in a much more efficient manner. This could not have been done without the assistance from the Chapters and administrative staff," the President's report stated.

Vice President Jim updated the Council about Na Nizhoozhi Center in Gallup and the work he and President Shelly have been doing.

NCI is schedule to close and reopen under a different name and the Navajo Nation has 25 weeks to finalize a plan that includes the Navajo Nation managing the detox facility.

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For Immediate Release
July 12, 2013

Navajo President Shelly Vetoes \$155 Million Bond Legislation

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly vetoed the \$155 million bond legislation because the language in the legislation needs to be more defined.

“Overall, the bond would benefit our Navajo Nation, but we need to make sure that the language in the legislation reflects the needs of our banking institution. The bonds would help the Navajo Nation, but our plan must be solid,” President Shelly said.

“In order to make Legislation CJN 24-13 sufficient for any financial institution to offer, sell and issue a bond, necessary amendments are required,” President Shelly wrote in a justification memorandum to Navajo Council Speaker Johnny Naize.

President Shelly continued that the language in the legislation needed to be more expressed and defined regarding bond authorization of issuance and sale documents, project qualification language, and for the loan agreement with Navajo Tribal Utility Authority.

President Shelly also indicated “the Navajo Nation would benefit from the bond legislation,” however, the amount should be reduced from \$155 million to \$120 million.

President Shelly also attached a June 12 memorandum from Budget and Finance Committee Chairman LoRenzo Bates stating that the bond legislation needed to have language changes.

“While the 2013 Bond Legislation provides good, general, preliminary authorization for the Bond issue and for the Economic Development and Infrastructure Projects described therein, it does not address a number of critical matters necessary to offer, sell and issue the Bonds and is therefore insufficient to permit the Nation to proceed the issuance of Bonds and the financing of the Projects without either amendments or later action by the Council,” Chairman Bates wrote.

The memorandum was addressed to President Shelly, Speaker Naize and Council Delegate Katherine Benally.

Chairman Bates then writes in detail some of the needed amendments the legislation needed, much of which President Shelly stated in his veto memorandum.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 12, 2013

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**Naabik'íyátí Committee approves supplemental funding
from the UUFB for the Navajo Nation Employee Housing Program**

Legislation moves on to the Council for final consideration

WINDOW ROCK – On Thursday, the Naabik'íyátí Committee approved Legislation No. 0137-13 for supplemental funding in the amount of \$420,000 for the Navajo Nation Employee Housing Program from the Undesignated, Unreserved Fund Balance.

The funding will be used for various purposes including renovation, asbestos clean-up, mold remediation, renovation equipment, and the disposal of supplies and renovation debris, for several employee housing units.

“We are looking for direction from this committee to finally initiate these critical issues regarding the state of our employee housing,” said legislation sponsor Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels).

The Navajo Nation Employee Housing Committee is tasked with assigning housing units at the request of Navajo Nation employees including political appointees, judges, employees occupying professional positions, and regular-status employees.

The legislation was met with concerns and questions from several Naabik'íyátí Committee members.

“I cannot fathom the explanation as to why we have these types of problems when we have so much money” said Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dził, Tse Sí'ani, Wide Ruins).

According to Delegate Hale, employee housing concerns have previously been brought to the attention of the Employee Housing Committee. However, funding has yet to be secured for such issues.

“The housing committee is comprised of members from the executive, legislative, and judicial branch, but it is difficult to get anything accomplished when we constantly do not make quorum to address these issues,” Delegate Hale stated.

“This issue is becoming very political regarding housing needs and committee members need to focus on renovating these houses and get the process going immediately,” added Delegate Hale.

In concurrence, Delegate Curley stated, “We need to get away from our own personal interests and address the needs of the Navajo Nation [employees].”

In reference to funding shortfalls, Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock), brought attention to and questioned the purpose of rental fees paid by employee housing tenants.

“When rent is collected from the tenants, where do those funds go?” asked Delegate Begaye.

In regard to the concerns raised by fellow committee colleagues, Council Delegate LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) requested that a report be provided to the Navajo Nation Council regarding employee housing revenues and expenditures.

Delegate Hale said that a report will be provided when the legislation is introduced to the Council.

Naabik’iyátí Committee members voted 9-0 to approve Legislation No. 0137-13.

The legislation is currently on the proposed agenda for the Navajo Nation Council Summer Session, scheduled to begin on July 15.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 12, 2013

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Navajo Nation Council Summer Session to be streamed live on the web

WINDOW ROCK – The Navajo Nation Council Summer Session will once again be streamed live on the web through the Council’s designated USTREAM channel, beginning Monday, July 15.

“Once again, I am honored to invite Diné people from all corners of the world to tune into Council’s USTREAM channel to view Council’s proceedings throughout the duration of the Summer Session,” said Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood).

The live broadcast marks the fifth time a regular Council session has been streamed live since the first broadcast during the 2012 Fall Session.

This is a great opportunity to engage our veterans overseas, students living off the reservation, and many others and to provide them the opportunity to become informed on issues affecting our Nation, said Speaker Naize.

The purpose of this endeavor is to expand and diversify the ways in which Diné citizens participate in their government – an objective for which many Council Delegates have advocated.

The Office of the Speaker continues its partnership with the Navajo Nation Office of Broadcast Services to provide this regular service to the Diné people.

Visit <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/navajo-nation-council> to view the live-streamed proceedings of the Council’s Summer Session. Alternatively, viewers may log onto the USTREAM home page and search for ‘Navajo Nation Council’ in the search box.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 12, 2013

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**Health, Education, and Human Services Committee
approves legislation to amend the Navajo Nation Veterans Trust Fund**

Legislation would allow for annual construction of 15 homes in each of the five Navajo agencies

DILKON, Ariz. – On Wednesday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee approved Legislation No. 0193-13, a bill seeking to amend the Navajo Nation Veterans Trust Fund, 12 N.N.C. §1171.

Proposed amendments would provide for the equal distribution of the annual comprehensive budgeted amount between the Navajo Nation Veterans Affairs Trust Fund and the Department of Navajo Veteran Affairs, to construct 15 homes and to provide minor renovations and repairs for Navajo Veterans in each of the five agencies for the next four years.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) explained that he has received support and recommendations from representatives of the five Navajo agencies.

“The chapters each have a waiting list of veterans, waiting to have a home built,” said Delegate Shepherd. “By utilizing the 2014 fiscal year revenue projections, we can start building 15 homes every year for the next four years, that’s 300 homes across the Navajo Nation.”

In order to begin the process of designating funds for the construction of homes, Delegate Shepherd is attempting to change the codification of veteran housing assistance.

Speaking in support of the bill, HEHSC member Council Delegate Kenneth Maryboy (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa) asked for Delegate Shepherd to revise the bill to prevent future inefficiencies.

“I work with veterans from my chapters, and they have grown extremely frustrated to the point where they don’t even come to meetings anymore,” said Delegate Maryboy. “This legislation is needed in each of my chapters.”

Delegate Maryboy noted that efforts to assist chapter veterans come to a halt once they reach the Local Governance Support Center, housed under the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development.

HEHSC member Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii) also expressed his support for the bill, while questioning whether funds could be utilized for chapters located on Navajo partitioned lands.

“As a member of the Navajo-Hopi Land Commission, we have faced challenges when assisting those chapters due to the land status. It would be useful to also include language that allows for funds to be utilized by those chapters,” said Delegate Phelps.

Although HEHSC members said they believe the bill was drafted with the good intentions, HEHSC member Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) was concerned that the legislation would create unhealthy expectations among veterans.

“I would like to see veterans be encouraged to participate and qualify for the other housing programs, so that we might expand the amount we are able to assist,” said Delegate Witherspoon. “I also do not want these funds centralized in the individual agencies.”

At the conclusion of the discussion, HEHSC vice chair Council Delegate Charles Damon II (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Lichíí’, Rock Springs, Tsayatoh) commended Delegate Shepherd for sponsoring the legislation.

It separates the Nation’s dependence on Navajo Housing Authority’s federal funding, according to Delegate Damon.

In response to the comments of HEHSC members, Delegate Shepherd assured his colleagues that the bill will address each of their concerns by the time the legislation reaches the Naabik’íyáti’ Committee.

HEHSC members approved Legislation No. 0193-13 with a vote of 3-1.

The bill now moves forward to the Budget and Finance Committee, Law and Order Committee, Naabik’íyáti’ Committee, and the 22nd Navajo Nation Council for final consideration.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 11, 2013

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**Resources and Development Committee votes to approve
Navajo Housing Authority's proposed 2014 Navajo Nation Housing Plan**

WINDOW ROCK – The Resources and Development Committee on Tuesday, approved Legislation No. 0168-13, the fiscal year 2014 Navajo Nation Housing Plan for the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 Indian Housing Block Grant funding.

The Navajo Nation Housing Plan, consisting of housing needs, budgets, audits, certifications, and program descriptions, serves as the official Indian Housing Plan for the Navajo Nation, an annual requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) emphasized the need to approve the Housing Plan prior to submitting the finalized document by the July 18 deadline set, by the U.S. Department of HUD.

“I am aware there are some questions about how this legislation that will affect development projects that chapters have submitted to Navajo Housing Authority,” said Delegate Begaye. “I believe many of those questions can be answered with the proposed housing plan.”

Aneva Yazzie, Navajo Housing Authority CEO, added that changes have been made to the U.S. Department of HUD Indian Housing Plan guidelines.

“U.S. Department of HUD has decided to consolidate prior year appropriations into one single grant,” said Yazzie. “The list of expenditures, reflect projects that need to be rolled over versus what was actually expended.”

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle) questioned NHA's ability to thoroughly explain HUD processes and if the proposed plan would increase housing developments.

“I have requested information about some of these projects, that still hasn't been provided or explained to me,” said Delegate Pete. “The Nation must solidify some of the housing plan's deficiencies before we send this to U.S. Department of HUD.”

Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreón, Whitehorse Lake) was also displeased with the housing plan's listing of projects and contractors and questioned if the proposed plan would fairly appropriate funds to chapters that do not have NHA housing developments.

“The way this [housing plan] is put together, we will be talking about the same things next year,” said Delegate Tsosie. “We aren’t going to be making any changes to the Nation’s number one issue – housing.”

RDC chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) expressed concern over the growing number of families in need of a home.

“Two years ago, the RDC made housing a priority for the Nation, I think we need to get back on track to build homes,” said Delegate Benally. “We have young families reaching the age of 18 and they’re joining the group of 40,000 families still in need of a home.”

After a lengthy discussion, the RDC requested for NHA to further investigate the Ft. Defiance Housing Corporation debacle, provide the RDC with a copy of NHA’s project prioritization process, and a listing of chapters without NHA housing developments.

The RDC approved Legislation No. 0168-13 with a vote of 4- 1.

The Resources and Development Committee serves as the final authority for the legislation.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org

U.S. Route 491 detour route now open to essential traffic



Left, the New Mexico Department of Transportation opened the temporary detour route on U.S. Route 491 late Tuesday afternoon. The detour has the capacity to provide commercial vehicle access. Top right, road crews are still paving the detour, which has standard 12-foot lanes with 4-foot shoulders. The road will also be striped for safety. Bottom right, road crew members worked through gusting winds whipping dust across the work site. (Photos by Rick Abasta)

NASCHITTI, N.M.-On July 9, 2013, the New Mexico Department of Transportation opened the U.S. Route 491 temporary detour route to restore essential traffic on the roadway.

The detour route was opened late in the afternoon on the eastern side of the damaged roadway.

NMDOT encourages motorists to exercise extreme caution when traveling the detour route. Reduced speed limits are in place and will be enforced.

The speed limit for travel through the detour route is 25 mph.

Jermiah Herrera, technician supervisor for NMDOT, said motorists must remain vigilant when traveling the detour route.

"Take the reduction in speed into consideration when you are traveling. Remain vigilant and mind the signage," Herrera said. "Have some consideration for others on the road because not everybody is a local."

He said NMDOT is currently paving the detour route, which will be standard 12-foot lanes with 4-foot shoulders.

Herrera did not have a timeframe for completion of the main U.S. Route 491 roadway.

"It's going to be a while before it gets back to normal," he said.

Information: www.navajodot.org or www.dot.state.nm.us



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IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 9, 2013

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THE UNVEILING OF THE NEW ‘NAVAJO ZOO’ COFFEE



David Mikesic, Zoologist of the Navajo Zoo introduces each coffee blend as he describes the character of each animal at the tribally sanctioned zoo on July 9, 2013. (Photo by Geri Hongeva, Division of Natural Resources)

WINDOW ROCK, AZ. - During the past year, the Navajo Nation Zoo and Kachina Tea & Coffee Company have combined efforts to lay the ground work for the development of a line of strategically-sourced, artistically-roasted and respectfully hand-packaged coffees.

Today, it is with great pleasure, a genuine sense of pride and a humbling appreciation for the support of the Navajo Community at every level that we are proud to announce the fruits of our collective labor have successfully come to fruition, the Navajo Zoo Coffee blends.

In ‘Culturally Lateral Collaboration’ The Kachina Tea & Coffee Company and The Navajo Nation Zoo are now able to function under the terms of a signed Memorandum of Agreement having been approved by the Navajo Nation Council and Office of the President and Vice-President, through judicial resolution, on February 25, 2013.

This collaboration provides for an equal portion of the net proceeds from the sale of each coffee and Zoo related product to be shared by the Navajo Zoo and Kachina Tea and Coffee Company.

The revenue directed to the Navajo Zoo from coffee and product sales will greatly benefit the animals and the future development of the Zoo facility for the enjoyment and education of all its visitors in particular the children of the Southwest.

Those revenues realized by the Kachina Tea and Coffee Co. will be developmentally directed into the system with provisional intent. It is our objective to present, in a reasonable time frame, a proposal for consideration suggesting the development of a facility enabling the roasting of the coffee and production of a number of additional complimentary healthy culinary items in or near Window Rock under the terms described in the MOA rendering the project not only community supportive but community inclusive as well.

The Navajo Nation Zoo (www.navajozoo.org) in Window Rock, Arizona was dedicated as the only Native American owned-and-operated Zoo in the country on July 4, 1977. Today, we continue to operate as “A Sanctuary for Nature and the Spirit” as most of the Zoo residents make their home with us as a result of having been orphaned or injured and consequently unable to live in the wild. Most of the animals housed at the Navajo Nation Zoo are native to the Navajo Nation encompassing 17 million panoramic acres across the Southwest and all are reflective in a significant way of the traditions, legends and stories of The Navajo People.



Samantha Enos, Kachina Tea & Coffee Marketing Assistant talks about how you can buy the coffee and how it will benefit the Navajo Zoo, July 9, 2013. (Photo by Geri Hongeva, Division of Natural Resources)

Kachina Tea & Coffee Company (www.kachinatea.com) realized its beginnings in Malibu Canyon, California in the early 2000s, with the design of creating a line of natural botanical tea blends in an effort to lend nutritional and psychosocial support to friends and family experiencing certain types of functional inconveniences as well as those focused on a life style assisting in their objective to “Eat Healthy, Live Right and Stay Well”.

With 25 years of continuing clinical practice as a Respiratory Therapist and a carefully designed multifaceted support and information sharing network, Keith Duquitto, the founder of Kachina Tea & Coffee Co. has enabled the company to slowly and strategically evolve into an extraordinary organizational system. With a diverse collection of healthcare professionals as colleagues and continuing associations with a number of major medical research and development centers around the country available for support, the best interests of a larger community being served has, and continues, to carefully develop over time.

The Navajo Zoo and Kachina Tea & Coffee Co. would like to announce the development and ongoing production of our first four carefully chosen, extraordinary coffee blends that proudly and appropriately feature four representative animals from the Navajo Zoo.

The first featured four include:

- 1) **Espresso Italiano** – a medium-strong espresso roast featuring the orphaned Kay-bah, the Navajo Zoo’s rugged lioness (cougar);
- 2) **An Elegant Kona Blend** – a simple and elegant roast blended with Hawaiian Kona beans with notes of tropical flowers and ripe persimmon featuring the orphaned Naabahi – one of the Navajo Zoo’s endearing male bobcats;
- 3) **Chuska Chai’s Hazelnut** – a fruity, smooth coffee with a hint of natural flavoring from Oregon-grown hazelnuts featuring the Navajo Zoo’s native tassel-eared squirrel; and
- 4) **A Regal Decaf** – a rich, deeply dimensioned and sweet decaffeinated blend perfectly represented by the Navajo Zoo’s male Ringtail.

Currently, these coffee blends are being artistically blended by a young master coffee roaster and good friend in Las Vegas, Nevada and a seasoned coffee importer and roaster in Northern California packaged and shipped from our Las Vegas store.

Each blend of coffee will be offered in a 7 oz. quantity, which is a perfect sample size to find your favorite, or function as a Zoo supportive gift for others.



Keith Duquitto, owner of Kachina Tea & Coffee shares his passion in helping the Navajo Zoo and using the best ingredients at his store. He also buys NAPI products for baking goods and ready to make popcorn, July 9, 2013. (Photo by Geri Hongeva, Division of Natural Resources)

Coffees will be available for sale at the Kachina Tea Company store in Las Vegas NV, and will be available on their website in time. In the Window Rock AZ area, coffee will be available at the Navajo Nation Zoo, The Navajo Nation Museum, and other locations in the future.

More information call David Mikesic at the Navajo Nation Zoo (928) 871- 6574 or Samatha Enos, Kachina Tea & Coffee Co. Marketing Assistant (505) 686-3045, or visit www.NavajoZoo.org.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Tuesday, July 9, 2013

SUPREME COURT ISSUES OPINION IN *HAUNGOOAH V. GREYEVES*

On June 4, 2013, the Supreme Court issued its opinion in *Dean Haungooah v. Delores Greyeyes, Director, Department of Corrections, No. SC-CV-06-13*, regarding a petition for writ of habeas corpus filed by a homeless, non-Navajo Indian who had been arrested on a bench warrant without first being served with a probation revocation petition, then ordered to be incarcerated after his probation was revoked. The Court had previously granted the writ and ordered the petitioner's immediate release following an expedited hearing.

The Court found an illegal detention because the court had issued a bench warrant for the defendant's arrest without the petition for revocation of probation having been served, and without making a probable cause determination of futility that defendant would respond to service. The Court held that otherwise, a defendant must be properly served with a summons and notice of proceedings. Additionally, the Court did not find the defendant waived his right to an attorney, which the Court stated is a fundamental right. There must be meaningful notice and explanation of the right to the defendant before a waiver is accepted, and the circumstances were not present in this case. Finally, defendant was detained prior to trial. The Court stated that for a temporary commitment order to be issued, there must be specific findings why it is necessary, which were absent in this case.

In regards to the defendant's homelessness, the Court stated that pursuant to Diné beenahaz'áanii, the judicial and legal system has options and obligations to offer assistance and to apply restorative justice rather than strictly applying punitive justice. When it is known that a defendant is in need of assistance, the Navajo justice system should help defendants obtain rehabilitative services for treatment.

The period for reconsideration having ended, the opinion is now available on the www.navajocourts.org website.

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U.S. Route 491 closed due to road damage from heavy rain



On July 5, 2013, heavy rains damaged the roadway on U.S. Route 491 between Naschitti and Sheep Springs. Motorists are advised to take alternate detour routes on U.S. Highway 371 to reach the Four Corners, or Navajo Route 12 to reach Window Rock. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

NASCHITTI, N.M.-U.S. Route 491 is closed to traffic both directions between Sheep Springs and Naschitti, near milepost 44, after heavy rains collapsed a portion of the roadway on night of July 5, 2013.

New Mexico Department of Transportation crews are onsite developing detours and scoping a permanent solution.

Jeremiah Herrera is the NMDOT supervisor on the scene.

Herrera said three channels of water undermined a 24-foot-by-15-foot rise culvert. The rushing water bent the western side of the culvert up and caused the roadway to drop approximately 2.5-feet.

NMDOT has a detour

route in place for emergency vehicles and detour route for essential traffic could be completed as early as July 10. Crewmembers are currently installing pipe and grading the area.

In the interim, all other motorists are advised to travel the detour route on U.S. 371 for transportation in the Four Corners area.

For travelers headed to Window Rock, another route is available on Navajo Route 12 in Sheep Springs.

Navajo Division of Transportation Director Paulson Chaco met with NMDOT officials July 6 to assess the damage.

"I met with Larry Maynard,

District 6 engineer, to offer our assistance from the Navajo Nation but he said New Mexico DOT crews had the situation under control, Chaco said.

Navajo DOT was contacted Friday night regarding the road collapse.

In an email to Chaco, Maynard stated, "Permanent structure should be designed and constructed within four weeks, plus a week for roadway features."

The road collapse occurred on the old two-lane road segment of U.S. Route 491, south of Sheep Springs.

Navajo DOT and Senator John Pinto (D-Dist. 3) have been lobbying federal and state officials for the completion of

the four-lane construction of U.S. Route 491, citing several safety considerations, including dilapidated infrastructure.

Four-lane construction remains to be completed from Sheep Springs, south to Twin Lakes, a distance of 26.1 miles and a cost of \$102.9 million.

On the evening of July 6, the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management convened at the Navajo Transportation Complex in Tse Bonito regarding the road closure.

The closure of U.S. Route 491 in the Eastern Navajo Agency occurred more than four months after a dry slide closed U.S. 89 in the Western Navajo Agency.

The importance of restoring traffic through this main artery of the Four Corners was not lost on the commission, which drafted an emergency declaration.

CEM-13-07-06 was passed by a vote of 3-0. Commissioner Benjamin Bennett made the motion to approve the declaration and was seconded by Commissioner Eugenia Quintana.

Chairman Herman Shorty signed the declaration and sent it to Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly for his concurrence.

The declaration states, “The Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management hereby declares a State of Emergency for the Navajo Nation along U.S. Highway 491 due to a culvert washout from torrential thunderstorms posing a substantial public safety risk to travelers traversing the route and thereby severing, interfering and disrupting public transportation, emergency transport, normal and commercial traffic to the traveling public.”

The declaration begins the process for appropriate Navajo Nation entities to immediately begin coordination with all relevant agencies for the use of resources to meet the accessibility needs of the traveling public.

This includes activation of available emergency resources such as funding to cover personnel, equipment, and other means as determined fit and feasible to restore and sustain vital community infrastructure.

Information:
www.navajodot.org



Three channels of water traveling from the Chuska Mountains undermined a culvert and caused a portion of U.S. Route 491 to collapse. NDOT crews are working on a detour route. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Left, crewmembers install pipes for the detour route to restore essential traffic. Middle, the damaged culvert is visible as a forklift delivers a new pipe. Right, the roadway collapsed 2.5 feet from rushing water. (Photos by Rick Abasta)



This wide angle view provides an extensive look at the damage caused on U.S. Route 491 between Naschitti and Sheep Springs on July 5. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 5, 2013

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**Health, Education, and Human Services Committee
discusses status report from the Navajo Area Agency on Aging**

WINDOW ROCK – The Health, Education, and Human Services Committee received a report on Wednesday, related to the possible reorganization and regionalization of the Navajo Area Agency on Aging.

The Navajo Area Agency on Aging is housed under the Navajo Nation Division of Health, tasked with ensuring that Navajo elders receive all available benefits and services such as: Dine Elderly Protection, Foster Grandparents Program, Navajo Family Caregiver Program, Food Delivery, Nutrition Services, and Ombudsman.

Rosalyn Curtis, director of Navajo Area Agency on Aging, updated the HEHSC members on the agency's progress to address a recommendation from the Navajo Nation Auditor General to revise the service mapping.

"NAAA was asked to increase employee work hours without the additional funds to do so," said Curtis. "As an effort do that, we have made changes to the service mapping for food deliveries."

HEHSC member Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii) inquired as to whether the Nation's senior citizen centers would be impacted by the mapping revisions.

"I am unsure how familiar council delegates are with the operation of senior citizen centers," said Delegate Phelps. "However, we must continue being proactive in modifications to direct services for our elderly."

Advocating for his chapter, Council Delegate Joshua Lavar Butler (Tó Nanees Dizi) said Tuba City residents are unhappy with NAAA.

"I am unsure if NAAA has truly been proactive in improving services to the elderly in Tuba City," said Delegate Butler. "I am going to request that NAAA secure a new accountant to ensure you are working to do so."

Council Delegate Kenneth Maryboy (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa) said he was alarmed by the report and emphasized the importance of continuing food deliveries to very rural areas of the Nation.

“My chapters are experiencing a serious drought, NAAA employees must continue checking on the elderly to make sure they’re safe,” said Delegate Maryboy. “Unfortunately we have some elderly people who are not monitored at all.”

HEHSC chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) assured Curtis, that the HEHSC would work with NAAA throughout the budget process to ensure that the elderly are not neglected.

“It’s very sad to know that we have elderly who rely on the visits from NAAA employees,” said Delegate Hale. “If the committee and NAAA continue communicating with each other during the budget season, we can secure funding for services like eye glasses, food delivery, and dentures.”

HEHSC members voted 2-2 on the report, requiring NAAA to provide a follow-up report with Larry Curley, director of Navajo Division of Health.

HEHSC’s next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 10 at 1 p.m. at the Dilkon Chapter House.

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**Budget and Finance Committee receives report from
the Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management**

Status update of FEMA grants allocated to chapters

WINDOW ROCK – On Tuesday, the Budget and Finance Committee received a report from the Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management. DEM director Rosalita Whitehair updated the BFC on the status of the Federal Emergency Management Agency grants that were allocated to chapters throughout the Navajo Nation.

BFC vice chair Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin) requested the report to be added to Tuesdays’ agenda, due to the urgent nature of the matter.

According to Whitehair, FEMA has allocated funds to chapters that were in need of emergency relief in their areas due to natural disasters that occurred over the last eight to nine years.

“Currently, we are working on the oldest emergency projects first, which date back to 2005,” said Whitehair.

When chapters submit emergency declarations, they receive assistance from FEMA in the form of a reimbursement check that covers 75-percent of the project costs. However, the chapters are responsible for a 25-percent match-cost to ensure the project is 100-percent complete, stated Whitehair.

BFC member Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse’ii’ahi, Whiterock) expressed concern regarding two deadlines on a memorandum sent to chapters from DEM, dated June 13.

“There are two dates on the memo, which I think might be confusing chapters as to when they need to complete their project,” said Delegate Simpson.

Whitehair explained that chapters receive checks up front when they receive FEMA funding. However, they must use the funds for the specific scope of work outlined in their project plan, and the actual physical construction must be completed by Aug. 1, 2013.

“Once the scope of work is completed, our department and chapters must have the reconciliation of financial paperwork completed by Sept. 30, 2013 for FEMA to review,” said Whitehair.

“Chapters have asked how these funds are to be used and some are even returning the checks for fear they are spending it in the incorrect manner,” said Delegate Nez regarding reimbursement checks.

In response to the confusion over FEMA policies, Whitehair explained that there are different emergency categories that chapters can refer to in the FEMA public funds policy handbook.

Category A and B, are funds for immediate use in emergencies and may be utilized as the chapter sees fit, said Whitehair. Category C through G, are for permanent projects that are funded when chapters have established a specific scope of work, which they cannot deviate from.

Whitehair added, “FEMA will not grant any more extensions to the deadline, although many requests have already been made.”

At the end of the discussion, Whitehair stressed that if chapters have any questions or need further clarification regarding FEMA grants, they need to contact the DEM office as soon as possible.

“I commend the partnership between DEM and the Office of the Controller for getting checks out to chapters quickly,” said Delegate Nez.

BFC voted 3-0 to accept the report.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Law and Order Committee receives
update regarding the Dilkon Justice Center**

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee received an update regarding the development of the Dilkon Justice Center from Navajo Nation Design & Engineering Services, Navajo Nation Department of Corrections, Dilkon Judicial District, Dilkon Chapter officials, and Johnson Smithipong & Rosamond architecture firm.

Johnson Smithipong & Rosamond engineer Bill Draper said the development began in 2009 on a 10-acre site, which will encompass a judicial complex, police department, and corrections center.

“Thus far, we have completed a 15,000 square-foot court building, and hope to complete the detention center and police department,” said Draper, adding that the justice center is far along in the process and with additional funding the project could be completed in early 2015.

“We are trying to identify construction funds and at the same time, continue lobbying efforts to obtain additional monies for maintenance and operation of the facilities after completion,” said Council Delegate Elmer Begay (Dilkon, Greasewood Springs, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone). “They have been working on this [Justice Center] project for the past seven years.”

Navajo Nation Department of Corrections director Delores Greyeyes and Lt. Emerson Lee, provided LOC members with statistics showing the impact of the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort has had on crime.

“The opening of Twin Arrows has impacted crime rates, which have increased in the Dilkon district,” said Greyeyes. “Not just for law enforcement, but for patrol, corrections, and investigations.”

According to the Greyeyes, arrestees are transported to Tuba City or Window Rock for processing, which entails a three-to-four hour roundtrip for officers.

Greyeyes and Lt. Lee said they hope the LOC will amend the Judicial/Public Safety Complex Priority Listing to move Dilkon to the top of the list, referencing their report which states they are further along in the process than other districts on the Navajo Nation.

“The report you provided will help in deciding the final priority listing and how the committee will prioritize the projects,” said LOC vice chair Council Delegate Alton Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat).

“Other than the Navajo Nation as the primary funding source for this project, I hope you are looking for outside additional funding,” Delegate Shepherd added.

The majority of the project was funded by the Navajo Nation and 638 contract funds, but the Bureau of Indian Affairs needs to be held accountable to their treaty responsibility and assist financially to complete the justice center, said Greyeyes.

According to Greyeyes, a letter will be drafted asking for additional funding from the BIA .

At the conclusion of the report, Delegate Shepherd said the final priority listing will include information from the report, which is currently open for public comment.

The committee voted 3-0 to accept the report.

The legislation to finalize the priority listing will be considered at the next LOC meeting on July 8 at 10:00 a.m.

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**Resources and Development Committee votes to approve
the funding of Chapter Infrastructure Improvement Priority Projects**

WINDOW ROCK – The Resources and Development Committee considered Legislation No. 0118-13, which seeks to approve the Navajo Nation Chapters’ Infrastructure Improvement Priority Projects for fiscal years 2013 through 2018.

Legislation No. 0118-13 was previously tabled by the RDC on Mar. 30, to allow for the collection of supporting chapter resolutions by the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels), said the legislation’s primary purpose is to use the interest from the Permanent Trust Fund to build proposed infrastructure projects.

“The chapters have taken the time to thoroughly re-assess their community needs and produce a chapter resolution,” said Delegate Hale. “The legislation will create capital for our chapters.”

RDC chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) noted that 97 of the Nation’s 110 chapters submitted supporting resolutions, confirming their project proposals.

“The projects that were included in the original document are 2-years-old,” said Delegate Benally. “The RDC asked for resolutions to ensure current chapter needs are being addressed.”

Although a majority of Chapters submitted supporting resolutions for their projects, Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) was skeptical of the proposed funding amounts.

“Some proposals concern me, \$50 million for one project is not feasible,” said Delegate Tsosie. “We need to look at the true needs of the Nation, like the elder and youth sectors.”

Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle) questioned if the proposals should require a funding limit to ensure funds are maximized to their full potential.

“These proposals need a funding ceiling and solid prioritization process to maximize the funds,” said Delegate Pete. “I don’t see much sense in adding the chapter resolutions to the legislation’s documents.”

Delegate Tsosie argued that the proposal listing neglected the true needs of the people, and questioned the relevance of the chapter resolutions.

“The people tell me they want the roads graded, not proposals for a chapter house parking lot,” said Delegate Tsosie. “When you only have 25 votes on a chapter resolution, and have a population of over 1000, that’s not democracy.”

Speaking in support of the legislation, Council Delegate Roscoe Smith (Crystal, Fort Defiance, Red Lake, Sawmill) said he was excited to witness the Nation’s investments return in the form of capital development.

“Here is an opportunity for each chapter to build something tangible by utilizing the Permanent Trust Fund interest,” said Delegate Smith.

Council Delegate George Apachito (Alamo, Ramah, Tohajiilee) stressed that recommendations from each of the 24 Council Delegates to prioritize the proposals must be considered.

“We need to keep working on the prioritization process in order to be fair,” said Delegate Apachito. “I am optimistic of the legislation’s potential, my chapters will be happy to see additions to their communities.”

After a lengthy discussion, RDC members voted 2-2, requiring RDC chair Delegate Benally to cast a tie-breaking vote.

“I will support the addition of the chapter resolutions and the final legislation when it goes to the Council,” said Delegate Benally.

The RDC approved Legislation No. 0118-13 with a vote of 3-2.

The legislation now moves on to the Budget and Finance Committee and Naabik’íyáti’ Committee before it goes to the Navajo Nation Council for final consideration.

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Speaker Naize encourages a safe and joyful Fourth of July celebration

WINDOW ROCK – Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) wishes all families throughout the Navajo Nation a joyful and safe Fourth of July weekend.

“I encourage our Navajo people to spend time with their family, friends, and loved ones and to take part in events scheduled throughout the Navajo Nation including in the Fourth of July celebrations in Window Rock and Kayenta, and please do so in a safe and responsible manner,” said Speaker Naize.

In reference to the recent loss of 19 firefighters in the Yarnell Hill wildfire, Speaker Naize said he urges the public to abide by the Navajo Nation’s ban on open fires and fireworks to prevent fires from occurring.

Speaker Naize also acknowledged the fact that some will partake in the consumption of alcohol in celebration of the holiday, and urged those individuals to do so responsibly and to have a designated driver.

“In recent years, we’ve seen an increase in accidents and fatalities involving alcohol and DUI,” said Speaker Naize. “I want everyone to enjoy the holiday and remain safe with their families.”

Throughout the weekend, Speaker Naize plans to attend several events including the premiere of Star Wars Episode 4, translated to the Navajo language. Public viewings of the film are scheduled throughout the weekend, beginning July 3 through July 5.

In addition to the Fourth of July and PRCA Rodeo in Window Rock, Speaker Naize will also attend the Kayenta Fourth of July events and rodeo currently underway.

For a complete listing of scheduled events please visit <http://www.navajonationfair.com/> and <http://kayentatownship.net/blog/>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Navajo Nation Branch Chiefs give report on the impacts of sequestration

Discussion on the sequester and its effects on the Navajo Nation

WINDOW ROCK – Last Friday, the three-branch chiefs gave a comprehensive report to the Budget and Finance Committee on the impact of the sequester and discussed how it will affect each branch, in terms of funding.

The reports focused on the potential effects of the sequester once it is implemented by the federal government, which could be as early as this current fiscal year.

Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) reported that the legislative branch does not receive federal funds for personnel or operation costs.

“We do receive Indirect Cost funds, which at this time is subject to a decrease of five-to-eight percent,” said Speaker Naize. “IDC funds are also used by the Navajo Nation Council and its committees.”

Speaker Naize presented a FY2014 budget projection that included the potential financial state of the legislative branch with a five-percent decrease.

“If the sequester comes into effect, there will definitely be decreases in our branch,” Speaker Naize added in regards to the report.

Navajo Nation Chief Justice Herb Yazzie reported that the judicial branch would feel major effects of the sequester once it is implemented.

According to Chief Justice Yazzie’s written report, the judicial branch receives federal funding from the PL 93-638 contract, which will decrease due to the sequester.

“General funds will have to be relied on for continued operational costs,” according to Chief Justice Yazzie’s report.

“The level of service the judicial department provides will decrease, while the amount of caseloads will increase, and impact many other services the branch is responsible for,” stressed Chief Justice Yazzie.

The judicial branch impact report stated, "We will continue to challenge the federal government in meeting its federal trust responsibilities. We will continue to challenge the lack of adequate funding for contract support costs."

Chief of Staff for the Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President Arbin Mitchell delivered a report on behalf of the executive branch.

"The sequester is going to cut deep into the [executive] budget," said Mitchell.

According to Mitchell, the sequester will impact indirect costs, fixed costs, fringe benefits, administrative building repair and equipment.

Mitchell also reported that the executive branch projects a \$13 million budget for FY2014, a \$2 million decrease from FY2013.

Near the conclusion of the discussion, Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts'ah Bii Kin) said, "The Council is ready for something new with the budgeting process," pointing out that the process is in need of reform.

The BFC voted 4-0 to accept the report.

The BFC is scheduled to meet to further discuss the FY2014 budget on July 3 at 10 a.m. in the Budget and Finance Conference Room in Window Rock.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org



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IMMEDIATE RELEASE : July 2, 2013



June 28, 2013, Daisy Holiday, 78, meets Bucky Covington after the concert at Monument Valley High School, UT.. (Photo by Geri Hongoeva, Navajo Parks and Recreation)

“Bucky Covington gains new fans at Monument Valley”

MONUMENT VALLEY, UT- The Annual Tse’ Bii Nidzisgai Community Celebration once again is a favorable event for all ages. On June 28th, Navajo Parks and Recreation organized an eventful day for the community of Monument Valley and Oljato area. Events included; a Horse Clinic, beach volleyball, fun walk, Navajo story telling, traditional Navajo songs and a concert by country music artist Bucky Covington.

The annual event is a team effort with Navajo Nation Special Diabetes, Navajo Agriculture, Monument Valley tour operators, the View Hotel, Goulding’s Lodge, Monument Valley High School, UT, Monument Valley Vendors Association and Navajo Parks and Recreation. Together, the community celebration was a good gathering, it reinforced friendships and initiated new connections.

Jimmy Cody, Dorothy Bigman, Davis Boys and Joe Tohonnie Jr. drew the crowd and kept the elders dancing despite the heat at the Monument Valley Welcome Center. Many elders came to the community celebration for the Navajo songs and social dancing, it is an opportunity to be with family and friends. Navajo social dances remains very popular.

The Horse Clinic allowed the owners to learn more about equine health and also an opportunity to have their horses cared for. “The clinic was great because the Navajo presenters incorporated traditional teachings they learned from their elders to share with the community,” stated Larry Holiday. Horses were brought to the event to get some dental work done and some hoof care.

A new event this year, was the beach volleyball. With sand being plentiful, it was easy to create a sand volleyball court. The Navajo Special Diabetes, Kayenta Indian Health Service and Educational Health from Kayenta all coordinated the volleyball tournament to promote physical activity for the youth. “We were proactive and approached Navajo Parks and Recreation to add this event,” explained Dorene Sullivan from Navajo Special Diabetes. Our goal is to prevent childhood obesity, added Sullivan. Champions of the beach volleyball tournament is a team named Coppertone.



June 28, 2013, Coppertone, champions of the beach volleyball tournament: Afton Sullivan, Nehemiah Manheimer, KJ Martinez, Sabrina Seaton.. (Photo by Geri Hongeva, Navajo Parks and Recreation)

The closing performer was an artist who is no stranger to the Navajo Nation, in 2009, country music artist Bucky Covington entertained the Navajo Nation Fair crowd in Window Rock, Az. It was Covington’s first time in Monument Valley but immediately gained new fans. “Wow! Look at that,” he exclaimed in between songs, as he stood on stage looking at the sunset. But you all see that everyday, added Covington, amazed by the beautiful Monument Valley horizon.

Martin L. Begaye, Department Manager stated “Navajo Parks and Recreation Department started the tradition of the Monument Valley Community Celebration about eleven years ago and we’re proud to continue the annual tradition of expressing our appreciation to the people of Oljato and Monument Valley through this event.”

More information please visit www.NavajoNationParks.org

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July 2, 2013

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**Speaker Naize expresses condolences for the families of the
19 firefighters who lost their lives fighting the Yarnell Hill wildfire**



Photo: Speaker Johnny Naize (left) addresses mourners and the families of the 19 firefighters who lost their lives fighting the Yarnell Hill fire at a memorial service held in Prescott, Ariz.

PRESCOTT, Ariz. – On behalf of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council, Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) expressed condolences for the community of Prescott and the families of the 19 firefighters who lost their lives fighting the Yarnell Hill wildfire, during a memorial service held in Prescott, on Monday.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you as you mourn the loss of your husbands, sons, and fathers,” said Speaker Naize. “Their bravery and courage in the line of duty will always remain in our hearts and minds.”

The 19 young men were part of the elite group of firefighters known as the Granite Mountain Hotshots, who were killed battling a wildfire near the town of Yarnell, on Sunday.

“We pray that the site of the fallen firefighters will be a sacred place, and that the rain will come today, tomorrow — to restore the land, and the hearts and minds of all you,” said Speaker Naize to the approximately 1,000 people who attended the service.

Speaker Naize, whose son is currently battling the same fire that took the lives of the 19 firefighters, acknowledged and expressed appreciation for the Navajo Nation's own hotshot firefighters, and thanked dozens of firefighters seated in the audience.

Other dignitaries offered condolences including, Prescott Mayor Marlin Kuykendall, U.S. Rep. Paul Gosar who represents the affected area, U.S. Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, U.S. Rep. David Schweikert, U.S. Rep. Matt Salmon, U.S. Rep. Trent Franks, and Arizona Attorney General Tom Horne.

Near the conclusion of the memorial service, members of the Prescott Fire Department and hotshot crews joined together for a moment of silence to honor the fallen firefighters.

On Monday, Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer ordered that all state flags be flown at half-staff from sunrise on July 1 through sunset on July 3.

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Navajo President Shelly Declares Emergency Due to Drought Conditions

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly declared a State of Emergency for persisting drought conditions on the Navajo Nation.

“We recognize that much of our land is dry, our wells aren’t producing water like they have in the past, and now we must do what we can to help our people who are suffering in these dry conditions,” President Shelly said.

President Shelly signed the declaration on Monday. President Shelly also signed memorandum directing all executive branch divisions to formulate plans to assist in drought relief.

“I am directing all Executive Branch divisions to pull its resources together to immediately develop a plan to coordinate necessary service to the Nation,” President Shelly wrote.

Division directors are formulating a comprehensive plan that includes response and public education regarding drought land, livestock, and agricultural management.

According to tribal precipitation statistics, Western Agency is about 65 percent below normal precipitation amounts this year, while Fort Defiance Agency is about 63 percent below normal. Northern and Eastern Agency are about 55 percent below average, while Chinle Agency is about 30 percent below average precipitation levels.

The declaration allows chapters to use emergency funds to assist with drought conditions and also allows the Navajo Nation to seek a federal disaster from President Barack Obama.

“For every department, division and chapter that is working on the drought, please maintain all your records. If we get a federal disaster declaration, we will need those records for possible reimbursement,” President Shelly said.

President Shelly, however, cautioned against spending large amounts of money to combat drought conditions.

“We can’t fix every problem by throwing money at it. We have to be creative and think about new ways to get through this drought. We need long term solutions and practices,” President Shelly said.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration officials expect above normal temperatures to continue through the summer months with below average precipitation.

About 5,000 lakes and ponds exist on the Navajo Nation and as dry conditions prevail, pressure will be put on existing wells, the emergency declaration states.

“We are going to do everything we can to bring our people through this drought. We have many needs, and we are a strong people. Water is precious and we have to learn how to conserve and change our practices to make sure we prevail through these drought conditions,” President Shelly said.

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Navajo Nation Council votes down legislation to remove the Tribally Designated Housing Entity from the Navajo Housing Authority

WINDOW ROCK – The 22nd Navajo Nation Council considered Legislation No. 0011-13 last Friday, which sought to transfer the Tribally Designated Housing Entity from the Navajo Housing Authority to the proposed Navajo Nation Housing Commission.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels), advocated for the establishment of the Navajo Nation Housing Commission to act as the manager of funding received through the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act.

“I come forth with this legislation to address the growing frustration with Navajo Housing Authority,” said Delegate Hale. “NHA will still exist, but as a separate sub-contracting enterprise.”

The Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996 reorganized housing assistance provided to Native Americans through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Council Delegate Elmer Begay (Dilkon, Greasewood Springs, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone) expressed concern over the possibility of increased intervention by government entities in the affairs of the Nation’s enterprises.

“In order to start moving forward, we must stop this habit of always being in control,” Delegate Begay said. “The Council must think about what the chapters want.”

Although some delegates spoke in opposition of the legislation, others were not hesitant to express their frustration with NHA.

Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) expressed dissatisfaction with a lack of funding for housing in his chapters.

“Some chapters have been fortunate to receive housing. However my chapters have not received housing for 50 years,” said Delegate Tsosie. “NHA’s lack of performance has put the Nation in a funding crisis.”

Delegate Tsosie added that Navajo people have grown accustomed to inadequate NHA subdivisions, asserting his support for the legislation.

Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts'ah Bii Kin) cautioned that the removal of TDHE from NHA would signify instability within the Nation's government.

"Some chapters are extremely proactive when working and planning with NHA," Nez said. "We should not punish those chapters by jeopardizing these funds, especially during the sequestration."

Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle) stated that NHA is not creative when expending funds, noting that he has been waiting for such a legislation to come before the full Council.

"If we do not make change, it might be perceived as the Council approving the reversion of federal funds. I cannot allow that," Delegate Pete said.

Council Delegate LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) inquired as to how the proposed housing commission would work with chapters to expend funds.

"NHA has worked with Northern Navajo Agency chapters to explain what they have to do to see development," said Delegate Bates. "I'm unsure if the new commission can do that."

Due to numerous concerns over the proposed plan of operation, Council Delegate Mel Begay (Coyote Canyon, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Tohatchi, Bahastl'a'a') attempted to table the legislation. The motion failed with a 8-12 vote.

Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) encouraged her colleagues to support the proposed housing commission and to move forward in a positive direction, in light of the recent conflict with NHA.

"We have tried to work with NHA, but instead they choose to file lawsuits against the Council," said Delegate Benally. "The Council has the power to do great things for our people; the commission is one of those things."

After a lengthy discussion, Council voted down the legislation with a 9-11 vote.

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