



THE NAVAJO NATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL 11, 2008

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After three-and-a-half year wait, Navajo President Joe Shirley, Jr., signs documents to make Navajo gaming a reality at Church Rock

CHURCH ROCK, N.M. – After waiting since November 2004 when Navajo voters approved gaming, Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., today signed the \$35 million loan documents that will allow work to finally get underway on the first Navajo casino.

McCabe. Among the documents signed were the loan agreement, promissory note, certification, architect assignment, the business site lease, and account control agreement.

“You’re making history on behalf of the Navajo Nation for being the chapter who will have the first casino built on your land because you wanted it,” President Shirley told approximately 120 people filling the Church Rock Chapter House. “You wanted it for yourselves because it means revenues for the chapter, it means revenue for the young, for our people. Thanks for plowing the way, Church Rock Chapter.”



Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., and Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise CEO Robert Winter share a laugh following the signing of the \$35 million loan agreement that will launch operations of the Gaming Enterprise. Last to sign the documents is Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise Board of Directors Chairman Sean McCabe. Helping to keep the documents in order is attorney Doug Goe of the firm of Orrick, Harrington & Sutcliffe.

The President joked that he wanted to be the first person to pull the slot machine arm once the casino opens in October.

“This is the beginning of our journey, the road to success,” he said.

Signing with the President was Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise CEO Robert Winter and Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise Board of Directors Chairman Sean

This now clears the way for work to begin on the approximately 27,000-square-foot sprung structure-style casino to be built along Interstate 40. The casino is expected to have 300 slot machines, table games, entertainment and a small café.

The loan package comes from the Navajo Nation’s own Land Acquisition Trust Fund. The Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise will pay it back at 11 percent interest.

Selected to design the casino project is the national architectural firm of JCJ Architecture, which recently opened a Phoenix office, and Dyron Murphy Architects, P.C., a Navajo-owned architectural firm based in Albuquerque which has designed numerous buildings across the Navajo Nation.

The general contractor is The Killian Group, a nationally-renowned Top 400 general contractor.

President Shirley said the Navajo Nation will begin to benefit from the Church Rock casino by providing employment to Navajos who work during construction, giving work to Navajo sub-contractors, and finally starting revenue flow to the Nation through the four percent sales tax paid during construction.

The Gaming Enterprise has already received close to 300 applications for its 200-plus casino positions.

The first person President Shirley thanked today was Navajo Nation Gaming CEO Robert Winter who relocated from New Jersey to help the Navajo Nation, he said.

“On behalf of the Navajo Nation I want to say thank you to Mr. Bob Winter,” the President said. “He came out of retirement after several successful careers. He brought us a long ways and that’s why we’re here today.”

The President said he left his family and put up with Navajo politics, “shepherding the long documents through, and for getting us to this point, seeing our casino through and managing it.”

The President also thanked the Gaming Enterprise Board of Directors, Chairman Sean McCabe, Martin Lieberman,

Jack Jackson, Jr., Maureen Curley, Tanya Curley, and the most recently-confirmed member, Quincy Natah.

The President offered special praise to Navajo Nation Gaming Regulatory Office Director Eddie Lockett for helping to negotiate an historic \$140 million package to lease surplus gaming machines to three Arizona tribes.



President Shirley tells about 100 people crowded into the Church Rock Chapter House that that are making history being the first chapter to develop a casino on their land. He said they worked hard for it, and they will soon see jobs come into their community.

“I call him my brother,” the President said. “He’s very diligent. He’s got a lot of heart. He left the Valley of the Sun nearly three years ago to help us out.”

The President thanked Navajo Nation Controller Mark Grant and his team at the Division of Finance, Navajo Nation Attorney General Louis Denetsosie and his staff at the Department of Justice, as well as the Navajo Nation Resources Committee, Budget and Finance Committee, and Economic Development Committee.

Groundbreaking for the casino is expected in May.

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