



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Resources and Development Committee grants approval of natural gas pipeline right-of-way in Red Mesa Chapter area, approves budget carryover

WINDOW ROCK – The Resources and Development Committee passed two pieces of legislation on Tuesday – one relating to the granting of a natural gas pipeline right-of-way and the other relating to the approval of a Fiscal Year 2012 budget carryover to Fiscal Year 2013 for the Navajo Nation Design and Engineering Services.

With a vote of 3-0, the RDC elected to approve Legislation No. 0084-13, which grants a right-of-way to Nacogdoches Oil and Gas, Inc. to operate and maintain a four-inch and six-inch diameter natural gas pipeline on, over, and across Navajo Nation trust lands within the Red Mesa Chapter.

Council Delegate Roscoe D. Smith (Crystal, Fort Defiance, Red Lake, Sawmill), the legislation’s sponsor, requested for RDC approval of the right-of-way, alongside Navajo Nation Minerals Department official Ram Das and Nacogdoches Oil and Gas, Inc. representative Kitty Wood.

The pipeline is approximately 5.8 miles in length, and has been in the ground since the 1960’s.

The previous owner’s right-of-way had expired, Das explained, and Nacogdoches had applied to take over the right-of-way.

Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) was the first to respond to the presentation, asking if any issues, incidences of spills, or complaints by residents living near the pipeline had ever arisen during its history.

“There should be assurances from them that they will be good neighbors,” said Delegate Tsosie, bringing attention to cases in the past where Navajo Nation residents in other areas have protested against right-of-way assignments for various concerns.

Kitty Wood, representative for Nacogdoches, said that she had recently spoken with the company’s owner, Mike Finley, who had indicated that there have been no “protests” to his knowledge.

Wood also mentioned recent correspondence with the Minerals Department, where a representative there said there have been no active complaints against the Nacogdoches company since it has been doing business with the Navajo Nation.

Legislation No. 0090-13, a bill approving the FY 2012 indirect cost unspent recovery funds carryover budget into FY 2013 for the Design and Engineering Services in the approximate amount of \$64,000, was the second legislative item to be considered by the RDC.

Delegate Tsoie inquired as to what DES was planning to buy with the funds since nearly half of the requested amount was allocated for general supplies.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts'ah Bii Kin) said he was not sure, but iterated that the detailed line item budget and justification form states that general office supplies are identified as pens, paper, desktop equipment, and the like.

“Keep in mind that these are not recurring costs,” said Delegate Nez, so funds cannot be used to cover operation expenses such as personnel.

The Resources and Development Committee voted 3-0 in favor of approving the requested budget carryover.

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