



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 17, 2013

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Krista Thompson | 928.637.5603  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
nrlb.communications@gmail.com

**Law and Order Committee approves report on public safety activities at the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Monday, the Law and Order committee approved a report regarding the public safety activities taking place at the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort, located approximately 24-miles east of Flagstaff, Ariz.

According to the report, Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise legal counsel Michelle Dodson, states that the Arizona State Gaming Compact between the Navajo Nation and the Arizona Department of Gaming requires that a law enforcement, fire safety/suppression, medical emergency, and security operation plan be implemented at gaming sites.

“We have entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety to be present at the casino at all times and respond to all local calls,” said Dodson.

“Currently, with the shortage of manpower, police coverage has been lacking and is costing us \$25,000 per month.”

LOC vice chair and former law enforcement officer, Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat) sympathized with the NNGE regarding the lack of manpower and shift rotation of police officers.

“We can develop an improved rotating shift schedule of Navajo officers and ask for assistance from the Coconino County Police Department, to ensure efficient coverage of the gaming site,” said Delegate Shepherd.

Delegate Shepherd also recommended that the LOC meet with Coconino County officials to develop a cross-commissioning agreement between the county and the Navajo Nation.

Dodson said in order to comply with Arizona gaming laws, law enforcement and fire safety must be on the gaming premises 24/7, while noting that the majority of public safety calls are criminal and alcohol-related incidents.

“As a committee, we want to tax alcohol in the casino so that funding revenue can be diverted to public safety and social services programs,” said LOC chair Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie

(Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau). "This will improve cost-sharing between NNGE and NNDPS."

Other concerns for NNGE include transporting offenders from the casino to jail facilities, emergency response time, developing a future plan for a police/fire substation, and getting support to propose a fire safety fund management plan that would begin the process of obtaining resources for fire personnel, said Dodson.

"I see that NNGE has submitted or will submit an application to the Navajo Nation Capital Improvement Office to be added to the capital projects list, but how soon were you hoping to obtain a substation?" asked LOC member Council Delegate Duane Tsinigine (Bodaway/Gap, Coppermine, K'ai'bii'to, LeChee, Tonalea/Red Lake).

Dodson said NNGE hopes to be included in the FY2015 CIO funding list, however, the substation is needed as soon as possible. Going through a private developer is too expensive and completing a capital projects proposal with the aid of NNDPS would move the project forward, added Dodson.

"We have not heard from the fire department and I think it is important to involve them in these discussions to better develop and implement these public safety plans so the Nation is in compliance with the ADOG," said Delegate Yazzie.

At the end of the discussion, LOC members commended NNGE for their diligence and strive to improve public safety for casino and resort guests, and for establishing a helipad for medical emergencies.

At the conclusion of the discussion, LOC voted 3-0 to accept the report.

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