



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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MEDIA CONTACTS

Jared Touchin (928) 221-9253

Jolene Holgate (928) 380-4174

Crystalyne Curley (928) 286-7918

nnlb.communications@gmail.com

Resources and Development Committee recertifies Red Mesa Chapter's community-based land use plan

RED MESA, Utah – On Wednesday, the Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0421-17, recertifying Red Mesa Chapter's community-based land use plan. The chapter's first community land use was approved by the RDC in 2008. Red Mesa is located approximately 72-miles west of Farmington, N.M.

Pursuant to Title 26 of the Navajo Nation Code, chapter governments shall reevaluate and readjust their community land use plan every five years to meet the needs of their changing community and submit their plan for approval by the RDC.

Legislation sponsor RDC member Council Delegate Davis Filfred (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa), commended the chapter's community-based land use plan committee, chapter administrators and officials, and community members for working diligently to complete the plan.

"The plan reflects the goals and priorities in the areas of residential, commercial, industrial, and public purposes," stated Delegate Filfred, who represents the community of Red Mesa.

Red Mesa Chapter's community plan includes economic development, public safety, education, utilities, communications, housing, community services, grazing, land preservation, recreation, and transportation.

Red Mesa Chapter president Herman Farley, highlighted challenges that affect the chapter's progression including chapter service area boundaries, oil and gas leases within the community, and environmental damages from abandoned uranium mines and oil drilling.

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle) agreed that chapter service area boundaries need to be analyzed and addressed to deter chapter and community disputes.

"According to Navajo law there are no legal chapter boundaries, however, only grazing districts have boundaries and is recognized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The committee needs to address this," said Delegate Pete.

RDC vice chair Council Delegate Benjamin L. Bennett (Crystal, Fort Defiance, Red Lake, Sawmill) also commended the chapter for completing the community plan.

“Good job to the chapter for finishing the plan because not all 110 chapters are capable of completing it. There are many sanctioned chapters and it is harder for those chapters to achieve any goals and priorities. Thank you for avoiding that,” said Delegate Bennett.

Following the meeting, the committee approved a directive for Navajo Nation Division of Community Development, Navajo Nation Office of the Auditor General, Administrative Service Centers, Office of the President and Vice President, and Navajo Nation Ethics and Rules Office to meet in January regarding the status of sanctioned chapters, chapter white collar crimes, and chapter vacancies.

The Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0421-17 with a 3-0 vote and serves as the final authority for the bill.

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