



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Kayenta Township Commission granted new authorities with the signing of Council resolution

WINDOW ROCK – Members of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council are pleased with the signing of Navajo Nation Council Resolution CO-71-18, which authorizes the Kayenta Township Commission to form wholly owned entities and to extend sovereign immunity and allow the township commission to waive such immunity to the wholly owned entities. Council approved the bill, sponsored by Council Delegate Otto Tso (Tó Nanees Dizi), with a vote of 19-3 on Oct. 18 and President Russell Begaye signed the resolution into law on Friday.

When the bill was presented to the Council in October, Delegate Tso said new authorities outlined in the legislation would allow the township to pursue new economic opportunities to create additional revenue and jobs for local community members.

“Our people need jobs in the western agency especially when you consider the uncertain status of Navajo Generating Station and Kayenta Mine. We don’t know if those jobs will be there in a year or two and if they shut down, it will impact the people in Kayenta and nearby communities,” stated Delegate Tso.

Kayenta Township Commission town manager Gabriel Yazzie said the commission intends to utilize the new authorities to create wholly owned entities that would be eligible to participate in the U.S. Small Business Administration’s 8 (a) Business Development Program, to continue and expand the township’s current solid waste transfer station and enter into contracts with federal entities such as the Indian Health Service.

The township manager thanked the Diné Chamber of Commerce, Navajo Nation Council, and the President who supported the Kayenta Township Commission on the enactment of the legislation.

“This delegation of authority from the 23rd Navajo Nation Council is a major benefit for the community of Kayenta. With the passing of this legislation we can now establish enterprises which will serve our community, create much needed job opportunities for the people of Kayenta, the authority to build out our capital assets and bring in revenue to help continue our goal of making Kayenta one of the top economic communities on the Navajo Nation,” stated Yazzie.

Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta), who represents the Kayenta community as a member of the Navajo Nation Council, also commended the signing of the resolution and noted that it represents another step in the direction of diversifying the local economy for the people of Kayenta.

“I applaud the Kayenta Township Commissioners for thinking outside of the box and moving this initiative forward. The people of Kayenta will soon see the benefits and economic opportunities that this legislation provides,” said Delegate Brown.

The legislation passed by the Council also contains a sunset clause that states that the Kayenta Township Commission shall be required to report to the Resources and Development Committee and the Naabik’iyátí’ Committee in two years to provide an update on the activities undertaken pursuant to the authorities granted.

The legislation is set to expire on Dec. 31, 2020 unless extended by the Navajo Nation Council, but it also provides that such termination shall have no legal effect on any entity created prior to the sunset clause date, including the immunities and privileges granted to such entities.

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