



24th Navajo Nation Council

Office of the Speaker

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Spirit of Harmony Delivers Delegate Nez to RDC Chair, Executive Director Appointments Move Forward

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Council Delegate Rickie Nez (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, T'iis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) was selected chair of the Resources and Development Committee of the 24th Navajo Nation Council in its first meeting Feb. 20th.

"I look forward to helping the RDC work fairly, and we're really doing this for the whole Navajo Nation," Delegate Nez said.

He added his leadership strategy is to take a "Captain D" approach, which is making good Decisions, being Dedicated, having a Desire to serve the Nation, and to have Determination.

Council Delegate Thomas Walker, Jr. (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tside Tó'ii) was chosen to be vice chair by the six-member committee.

Both candidates were nominated by their peers to be chair, initially, but the secret ballot selection revealed a tie vote. In the end, Delegate Walker Jr. addressed the committee giving up his run for chair and said he was doing it diplomatically to promote good will and positive relationships.

"It was a special kind of gesture between two leaders," Delegate Walker Jr. said. "It was also about letting the committee and the public know we can all work together, rather than always contesting and challenging each other."

Delegate Nez commended Delegate Walker Jr., and said he is looking forward to working closely with the vice chair, as well as all the members of the RDC.

"He is probably more honorable than any person that I know to do such a thing," Delegate Nez said.

Delegate Walker Jr. was the only person nominated to be vice chair. Once the leadership pair's names were amended into Legislation 0029-19, the main measure passed unanimously.

Committee Briefs

In other committee activity, the RDC considered several executive director appointments.

Legislation 0009-19 requests consent for Dr. Rudy Shebala to be confirmed as executive director of the Division of Natural Resources. It is sponsored by Council Delegate Herman Daniels, Jr. (Shonto, Naa'tsis'áán, Oljato, Ts'áh Bii Kin). The measure passed by unanimous consent.

Legislation 0011-19 requests consent for Garret Silversmith to be confirmed as division director of the Division of Transportation. It is sponsored by Council Delegate Mark Freeland (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse'ii'ahí, Whiterock). The measure passed by unanimous consent.

Legislation 0012-19 requests consent for Dr. Pearl Yellowman to be confirmed as division director of the Division of Community Development. It is sponsored by Delegate Freeland. The measure passed by unanimous consent.

Legislation 0022-19 requests consent for JT J. Willie to be confirmed as executive director of the Division of Economic Development. It is sponsored by Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau). The measure passed by unanimous consent.

Legislation 0027-19 requests consent for Christopher Becenti to be confirmed as executive director of the Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission. It is sponsored by Council Delegate Nelson S. BeGaye (Lukachukai, Rock Point, Round Rock, Tsaile/Wheatfields, Tsé Ch'izhí). The measure passed by a 4-0 vote. Vice Chair Walker Jr. was excused from voting to tend to an emergency matter in his home community.

The favorable votes advance the appointment legislations to Naabik'iyáti' Committee consideration.

Additionally, the committee unanimously passed both Legislation 0020-19 and Legislation 0023-19. The former, sponsored by Delegate Yazzie, certifies Thoreau Chapter's updated Community-Based Land Use Plan, and the latter, sponsored by Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Blue Gap/Tachee, Tselani/Cottonwood), requests FirstNet and AT&T to consult with the Navajo Nation in the development and implementation of the nationwide public safety broadband network.

To help RDC members learn more about the committee's responsibilities overseeing various Navajo Nation departments, programs, and enterprises, the RDC scheduled a series of two-day orientation workshops for the next several weeks leading up to the Navajo Nation Council Spring Session.

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