



## Navajo Nation Council – Office of the Speaker

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### NEWS RELEASE:

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## To’Nanees’Dizi (Tuba City) Chapter reopened

*Limited services provided during interim period*

**TUBA CITY, Ariz.** — Navajo Nation Council Delegate Joshua Lavar Butler announced the reopening of the To’Nanees’Dizi (Tuba City) Chapter House as of 1 pm on Friday, Feb. 10 with only one staff person.

The chapter house was temporarily closed at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 7, to ensure that chapter property was secure and to support ongoing investigations and financial monitoring.

The chapter house will provide limited services until new chapter officials are sworn in. Services will include: the issuance of wood permits and sale of remaining wood.

Four of the five-member Council of Naataanii, chapter officials of the To’Nanees’Dizi Chapter, were removed October to November 2011 by the Navajo Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA) as a result of an investigation by the Navajo Ethics & Rules Office. Chapter officials were accused of illegally paying themselves bonuses totaling more than \$80,000.

Charlene Nez, the current Secretary-Treasurer, remains in her current capacity after agreeing to serve in her elected position for no more than 60-days or until the new officials are seated and sworn in.

According to Council Delegate Butler, all chapter bank accounts at Wells Fargo Bank in Tuba City will remain frozen until further notice. Accounts were frozen in accordance with 2 N.N.C. Title 26, the chapter’s Five Management System, and the To’Nanees’Dizi Chapter Ordinance.

Butler met with staff from the Local Governance Support Center and Nez in Tuba City on Friday, Feb. 10, when the decision was made to reopen the chapter house.

“The reopening of the chapter house was made at the urging of local constituents that needed wood permits,” Butler said. “It was important to ensure some services are not disrupted during this interim period.”

“We also met to devise a plan to provide a continuity of services for community members, to safeguard documents, to protect chapter property, to address chapter liabilities, to pay utility bills, to address dismissal of staff and most importantly – the appointment of new chapter officials,” Butler added. “The appointment of chapter officials is vitally important to get our chapter back on track. This process will include the announcement of vacancies by the Navajo Elections Administration, a date will be set and they will help facilitate this process.”

Butler hopes the Local Governance Support Center, through the Navajo Division of Community Development, become co-executors of the chapter to help oversee administrative duties until new chapter officials are appointed.

“The bottom line is that we need to get new officials back in and I hope we can expedite this within the next 30-days,” Butler said. “I thank the Local Governance Support Center for helping in this effort; they have been extremely helpful in every step of the way.”

For more information, contact the Local Governance Support Center in Tuba City at 928-283-3340.

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