



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PRESIDENT BEGAYE AND VICE PRESIDENT NEZ WELCOME NEW POLICE CHIEF FRANCISCO AT SWEARING-IN CEREMONY



The Navajo Nation received a new Chief of Police today as Phillip Francisco, formerly of the Farmington Police Department, was sworn-in by Associate Justice Elenor Shirley. Chief Francisco took the Oath of Office commenting that he looks forward to his new position and wants to improve safety across the Navajo Nation.

WINDOW ROCK-Today, President Russell Begaye and Vice President Jonathan Nez joined members of the Navajo Nation Public Safety Division along with members of the 23rd NN Council at the swearing-in ceremony of the new Navajo Chief of Police, Phillip Francisco.

“One goal our administration had set forth was to hire a Chief of Police,” President Begaye said. “We searched long and hard and appreciate the efforts of Director Delmar for staying the course in looking for this individual.”

There are many challenges coming into this position, said President Begaye. The size of the Navajo Nation in proportion to the number of officers on staff being one of them. Another being the prioritization of calls that come in and how many officers are on hand to respond.

“Because we don’t have enough officers on the ground, calls must be prioritized,” he said. “In many cases, there are more officers out there serving smaller communities than the number of officers serving the entire Navajo Nation.”

Bringing a police chief aboard has been a huge challenge for the Navajo Nation said the president.

“For a chief of police to step into a situation like this is a real challenge. We understand this,” he said. “For us, we are saying thank you, Chief Francisco.”

President Begaye pledged the support of the Begaye-Nez administration in assisting the new chief.

Vice President Jonathan Nez said today was a celebration, not only for the new police chief but also a celebration of a home-

coming.

“We appreciate all of our tribal members that have come home to help our people,” he said.

The vice president urged the Navajo Nation to continue the teaching of respect for leadership and also for law enforcement.

“We need to help our leadership as well as the men and women in uniform,” he said. “We need to instill this respect back into our people. Respect for authority is the foundation of who we are as the Navajo people.”

Upon being sworn in by Associate Justice Eleanor Shirley, Chief Francisco said he was excited to be a part of the Navajo Nation Police Department (NNPD). He said in the near eight years the position has remained vacant, there have been many changes in communication that have impacted how law enforcement is perceived.

“There has been an increase in real time communication that had also increased scrutiny to officers. The opinions and expectations of officers has increased significantly,” Chief Francisco said. “The Navajo Nation faces unique challenges beyond going nearly a decade without leadership.”

Francisco said looking toward his new position, he wants to improve safety across the Nation and secure the protection of culture.



New Navajo Nation Police Chief Phillip Francisco stands between Vice President Jonathan Nez (left) and President Russell Begaye at a swearing-in ceremony that took place at the Navajo Nation Museum on Monday, Aug. 22.

“Through my experiences there are lessons I’ve learned. One person can not do it all. It takes a team working together to accomplish a mission. The Navajo Nation Police Department will have to work as a team to achieve their goals.”

Francisco said he is honored to accept the position of Navajo Nation Chief of Police and will serve Nation, the communities and neighboring communities with honor and dignity.

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