



THE NAVAJO NATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

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Navajo President Joe Shirley, Jr., signs casino loan agreements for \$100 million Twin Arrows, \$35 million Upper Fruitland casinos

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – As one of the final acts of his presidency, on Thursday Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., and Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise CEO Robert Winter signed documents to complete a \$100 million loan to construct the Twin Arrow Casino Resort Project near Flagstaff.

And on Dec. 27, they signed documents for a \$35 million loan for the Upper Fruitland casino.

“It’s all for the people,” the President said. “I cannot thank you enough on behalf of the people. Thank you for being there for us, and thank you for trusting us with your money. I would have you believe that the Navajo Nation is good for it.”

The loan agreements are between the Navajo Nation and the Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise, said NNGE Chief Financial Officer Derrick Watchman.

Construction of the \$150 million Twin Arrows project is scheduled to begin on March 15 and be completed on June 15 2012, he said.

Mr. Winter said the project will reflect Navajo like no other casino.

“This will be a resort-casino that will express Navajo culture from the moment people enter the property to the

moment they leave,” he said. “It will be the only such casino that is structure that way in the entire state of Arizona.”



Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., and Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise CEO Robert Winter, third from left, on Jan. 6 signed documents to complete a \$100 million loan to construct the Twin Arrow Casino Resort Project near Flagstaff. Pictured from left to right are Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise staff Controller Ramsey Harrison, Government Affairs Director Phefelia Bradley, CEO Bob Winter, CFO Derrick Watchman, President Shirley, Council Delegate Leonard Chee, attorney Chris Cantrell, project manager Mary West, and Council Delegate Raymond Maxx.

He said the project was put into place quickly because of the cooperation among the Navajo executive and legislative branches, the Navajo-Hopi Land Commission, the Navajo Department of Justice, the Gaming Enterprise and the federal government.

“I can say without a doubt that this was the finest example of government working together that I’ve ever

seen in any of the previous positions that I've had," Mr. Winter said. "We were able to accomplish something here, Mr. President, that I've never seen done anywhere else, including working for state governments and for the federal government."

The Twin Arrows project will be something that the Navajo people will be extremely proud of, he said. The project will put approximately \$25 million in wages and benefits into Navajo families' pockets, he said.

He said the project was on a fast track from day one.

"We achieved getting the land into trust in record time," he said. "Approximately one month after the application was filed, the land in trust application was approved by the Department of Interior."

President Shirley expressed his appreciation to all involved and emphasized that it is done on behalf of the people, and to meet the needs of the elderly, the veterans, the children, and the land.

"That's a lot of money. Certainly in due time we're going to pay that back, and then to multiply that, and somewhere down the road if we can multiply that 10 times, it's a billion dollars," he said. "That's the prayer behind it."

"I for one would like to believe we're still going to have casinos 30, 40, 50 years down the road continuing to generate revenues," he said.

"The presidency and the Nation's council, working together, have made a lot of accomplishments," President

Shirley said. "We've gone where no leadership has going before. Certainly here and there we had our disagreements. But then we always remembered we're also kin. Kinship is still very strong here on Navajoland. With kinship come *k'e*, and that's not going to go away. That's something that's forever."

He said he appreciated council delegates standing up for the people to get the people casinos.

He also gave much credit to Mr. Winter and his staff, whom he said has brought the Navajo Nation a long ways.

"Thank you for looking out for our people," the President said. "Thank you for getting us to this point today. These things don't just happen. It takes people working together. Working with the people we brought casinos to Navajoland. Then we had the leadership working together to make it happen. Then the Gaming Enterprise Board working together to get the job done."

The President also thanked Council Delegates Raymond Maxx of the Navajo-Hopi Land Commission, Leonard Chee of Leupp and LoRenzo Bates of Upper Fruitland.

"I want you to know we appreciate that on behalf of our people, on behalf of our Nation, on behalf of our government," he said. "It takes good leadership, effective leadership, to get the job done. Thank you for being very generous with your land."