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### **BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE GOES PAPERLESS**

The Navajo Nation Council's Budget and Finance Committee conducted its first paperless meeting today, completing one of the goals it had established earlier this year.

"It was great," Budget and Finance Committee member Richard T. Begaye (Shiprock) said, adding that the conversion to paperless for today's meeting alone likely saved the Navajo Nation a few hundred dollars.

"We would get legislation a couple inches thick," he explained. "If we train all the leaders to use this technology, it will make a big difference in saving money for the nation."

He noted that time was also saved because staff did not have to run around making and distributing copies. Begaye further commended legislative advisor Marjorie Johnson for her role in implementing the change.

For Johnson, the change was exciting.

"All of this was done within 30 minutes," Johnson said. Making copies of legislation for committee members used to take staff a few hours, but with the help of Legislative Branch Computer Operations Manager Steve Hoskie, the scanning of documents and burning of compact discs happened within a much shorter time frame. She added that having the information provided on disc also protects the integrity of the documents.

"There were some glitches, but our committee is doing it. It would save the Navajo Nation time and money if all the committees and the Council were to implement this," Johnson said.

"We're still getting used to it," committee member Danny Simpson (Huerfano) admitted before adding that the change is a long time coming.

Johnson said that while some committee members are more proficient with technology than others, staff have worked with the delegates to teach them how to use their laptops and each committee member now has an email address where she will be able to send relevant documents.

“Once we are able to send the agenda and legislation in advance, they will have time to review documents rather than coming in and seeing them for the first time,” Johnson said.

Laptops were provided for 20<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council delegates to be able to use technology to become more efficient and effective legislators, as well as to increase accessibility to delegates for their constituents.

The Budget and Finance Committee plans to continue conducting paperless meetings. Budget and Finance Committee members include Chairperson Ben Shelly (Thoreau), Vice Chairperson Harold Wauneka (Fort Defiance), Lorenzo Bedonie (Hardrock/Pinon), Richard T. Begaye (Shiprock), Jerry Bodie (Sanostee), Ernest Hubbell (Houck/Lupton/Nahata Dzil), Raymond Maxx (Coalmine Canyon/Toh Nanees Dizi) and Danny Simpson (Huerfano).