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October 29, 2013

MEDIA CONTACTS

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253

Krista Thompson | 928.637.5603

Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174

nnlb.communications@gmail.com

Resources and Development Committee approves financial audit and corrective action plan for Navajo Mountain Chapter

LECHEE, Ariz. – On Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee approved the financial audit and corrective action plan for the Navajo Mountain Chapter.

The audit was conducted and submitted by the Navajo Nation Office of the Auditor General and the Navajo Mountain Chapter submitted the corrective action plan with the assistance of the Local Governance Support Center.

“In collaboration between the new chapter officials, LGSC, and the auditor general, they were able to develop a corrective action plan in response to the findings in the audit report,” said legislation sponsor Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin).

According to the audit report, there were three major findings: chapter internal controls were deficient, chapter did not consistently comply with applicable laws and funding guidelines, and \$129,000 in unauthorized checks were issued by the former Community Services Coordinator.

Auditor General Elizabeth Begay, stated that the audit findings are a result of the previous chapter administration that did not correctly account for spending, debauched reconciliation, lack of financial reports, misappropriation of funds, and other budget related issues.

“I am very surprised these sort of things are going on at such a small chapter because they are not dealing with large amounts of money or transactions. However, I am glad the current administration is doing their best to correct the problems,” said RDC member Leonard Pete (Chinle).

RDC member Council Delegate David Tom (Beclabito, Cove, Gad’i’ahí/Tó’koi, Red Valley, Sheep Springs, Toadlena/Two Grey Hills, Tsé Ahnáz’tl’í) asked what would occur if the chapter did not implement the CAP.

“At this point, if the CAP is not implemented by the Navajo Mountain Chapter, or they do not adhere to the guidelines, there will be consequences and sanctions,” said Begay. “For instance, the official’s stipends could be withheld, or a 10 percent withholding of the operating budget.”

At the conclusion of the meeting, RDC chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) stressed the importance of financial check off sheets, reports, and other budget monitoring tools that are available to all chapters and programs for efficient record-keeping.

“The long-range vision of the CAP is for the Navajo Mountain Chapter to be government certified, and after approval of this legislation, they are closer in achieving this goal,” said Delegate Nez.

RDC voted 4-0 to approve Legislation 0259-13. The legislation now goes to the Budget and Finance Committee for consideration.

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