



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Navajo Nation finalizes loan agreement to construct the Twin Arrows Travel Center



PHOTO: Navajo Nation Council members and President Russell Begaye finalizing loan documents for the construction of the Twin Arrows Travel Center at a signing ceremony held at Fire Rock Navajo Casino in Church Rock, N.M. on May 23, 2018.

CHURCH ROCK, N.M. – Council Delegates Seth Damon, Otto Tso, and Tom Chee gathered with Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise officials and President Russell Begaye at Fire Rock Navajo Casino on Wednesday, to finalize loan documents for the construction of the new Twin Arrows Travel Center, which will be located near the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort – 24-miles east of Flagstaff, Ariz.

In July 2016, the 23rd Navajo Nation Council approved legislation sponsored by Council Delegate Leonard Tsoisie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake), adopting the Síhasin Fund Twin Arrows Travel Center Development

Expenditure Plan to build a convenience store, gas station, and truck service station near the Interstate 40 exit to the gaming facility.

“It’s good to see Navajo gaming progressing. The Navajo Nation Council and its Síhasin Fund Subcommittee saw the economic development afforded by I-40 traffic and patrons at Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort and despite obstacles, pushed forward. We will now see a grand travel center,” stated Delegate Tsosie.

Council Delegate Seth Damon (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Lichíí’, Rock Springs, Tsayatoh) was also in attendance for the signing ceremony and extended his appreciation to everyone involved in pushing for the project.

“Through the challenges, the leadership of the Navajo Nation, the Gaming Enterprise, and many others remained persistent and today is the culmination of all of those efforts. We look forward to seeing the growth of the gaming industry, the revenue, the jobs, and many other benefits that the travel center will produce,” Delegate Damon said.

According to Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise CEO Brian Parrish, the new development will benefit the Nation’s overall economy by attracting more visitors to the gaming facility, creating more jobs, increasing tax revenues from retail sales and construction costs, business site lease fees, and by establishing infrastructure to support future projects in the area. The enterprise contributed over \$2 million for the site development costs including providing electricity and water infrastructure and telecommunications.

The funding for the project is provided through the \$554 million trust mismanagement settlement funds that the Navajo Nation received in 2014 from the federal government, which is held in an account known as the Síhasin Fund that was established in 2014.

The enterprise will receive \$2.5 million for the planning, development, and construction of infrastructure and an additional \$3.5 million for the planning, development, and construction of the travel center. An additional \$4 million will be loaned to the Gaming Enterprise for overall construction purposes, which will be paid back to the Navajo Nation with interest.

The legislation also included a provision that requires the funds to be audited on an annual basis with the audit report submitted to the Council’s Naabik’iyátí’ Committee, the Office of the Controller, and the Office of the President and Vice President.

Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) said the initiative is another example of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council's support for projects that produce revenue and jobs for the Navajo people. He also thanked the Gaming Enterprise officials and many others that persevered to secure funding for the project.

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