



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Resources and Development Committee receives report from Administrative Services Centers

LEUPP, Ariz. – Last week, the Resources and Development Committee received a report from the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development’s Administrative Service Centers director Johnny Johnson regarding ongoing initiatives and challenges that the program is experiencing, including their plan of operation, budget, and personnel.

In 2014, the Administrative Service Centers was established under the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development to provide administrative support, technical assistance, and financial management and guidance to Navajo chapters.

RDC chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) said that updated reports from the Administrative Service Centers is essential to discuss challenges and proposed improvements to the new program, which replaced the Local Governance Support Centers.

“There has been numerous barriers and complaints since the establishment of the Administrative Service Centers. However, the committee is determined to improve the program to provide the best resources for local governance. To improve the program, input and recommendations from chapters are strongly needed,” said Delegate Shepherd.

During the discussion, RDC member Council Delegate Davis Filfred (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa) raised concerns regarding sanctioned chapters, and the chapter officials and administrations failure to implement Corrective Action Plans, or CAPs, effectively.

“According to the report, there are many chapters who are not addressing their sanctioned-status and fail to implement their CAPs every election term. Chapter officials should be held accountable to get there chapters out of sanction and if they fail to do so, they should not run for chapter official positions again,” said Delegate Filfred.

In response to Delegate Filfred, auditor general Elizabeth Begay from the Navajo Nation Office of the Auditor General said that chapters do not receive technical support to implement CAPs. She added that recommendations from a previous audit carried out for the Local Governance Support

Centers should be considered because her office does not want the Administrative Service Centers to incur the same mistakes.

RDC member Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii) raised concerns regarding \$3 million that was appropriated and approved by the Navajo Nation Council in 2015 to establish and implement the Administrative Service Centers program.

“As I look at their budget report, approximately \$800,000 was expended from the \$3 million and the remaining \$2 million was reverted back to the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance and personnel lapse account. Administrative Service Centers need to be held accountable for not expending the funds because the funding could’ve improved the program,” said Delegate Phelps.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Delegate Filfred recommended that the committee, Navajo Nation Division of Community Development, Administrative Service Centers, chapter administration and officials, and Navajo Nation Office of Management and Budget, schedule a work session to begin the improvement plan for the service centers program.

The Resources and Development Committee approved the report with a vote of 3-0, and will schedule the work session at a later date.

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