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## **Three Branch Chiefs Agree How to Split \$152.5 million FY2012 Navajo Nation Operating Budget**

**Window Rock, AZ** – The three branch chiefs of the Navajo Nation Government met last Thursday and Friday to discuss the budget outline regarding the Fiscal Year 2012 Navajo Nation Operating Budget. The three branches were assigned the following amounts as a funding base determined by a percentage of the overall tribal budget; Legislative Branch \$13.1 million (8.56 percent), Judicial Branch \$ 13.2 million (8.68 percent), and Executive Branch \$105 million (68.83 percent). In addition to these amounts were \$4 million (2.62 percent) for chapter capital costs and \$17.2 million (11.31 percent) for “fixed costs,” resulting in an overall tribal budget amount of \$152.5 million.

“For some time now, the Legislative Branch has worked with a little more than 8 percent of the total Navajo Nation Operating Budget, said Navajo Nation Council Speaker Johnny Naize. “Not only do we need to remain at that level but we’ll also need additional funds to address the increased workload for the 24 Council Delegates.”

“Although some thought a smaller Council would mean a smaller budget, the opposite has happened. The increase in Chapter representation has lead to an increase of meeting and on-reservation travel expenses,” continued Naize. “We need to make sure we don’t lose the voice of the people because we have to ration the Delegates ability to serve community needs and concerns.”

Navajo Nation Controller Mark Grant also announced that there is a possibility that additional revenue could become available, raising the total FY2012 budget to \$170 million. Minus the already established base of \$152.5 million, this would leave an additional \$17.5 million to split among the three branches.

It was agreed that the \$17.5 million should go to service the \$21 million shortfall in the Unreserved Undesignated Fund Balance (UUFB) to improve the Nation’s financial standing. The UUFB requires a funding level that is 10 percent of the prior fiscal year’s budget at all times.

“While It is fiscally responsible to address this deficit and make sure we keep the fund in the black for the future,” said Naize. “Once this obligation is met, I will request additional funds for the Navajo Nation Council to address the increased costs and workload that will ensure the Navajo people’s needs and concerns are properly represented.”

Now that the budget amounts have been agreed to, the recommendations will be sent for consideration by the Budget & Finance Committee of the Navajo Nation Council.