President Shelly approves FTA grant and purchase of allotment land

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—On Dec. 30, 2014, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly enacted two bills to provide funding to the Navajo Transit System and approval of purchasing individual allotment land.

Legislation No. CD-65-14 was for approval of the $166,000 grant to the Navajo Transit System from the Federal Transit Administration for public transportation operation. Also included was approval of the indirect cost rate of 10 percent.

“The Navajo Transit System continues to provide important services to the Navajo people, that of mobility,” President Shelly said. “I applaud their tenacity in seeking funds outside the Nation to continue their mission of public transportation.

“I hereby sign into law the foregoing legislation, pursuant to 2 NNC Subsection 1005 (C) (10), on this 30th day of December 2014,” he added.

The FTA awarded the Navajo Transit System the grant award of $166,000 on Jan. 8, 2013. The maximum rate of 10 percent was levied on the FTA, which waived the Navajo Nation indirect cost rate of 16.95 percent.

The FTA is an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation that is tasked with providing financial and technical assistance to local public transit systems. With headquarters in Washington, D.C. and 10 regional offices, the FTA oversees public transportation including buses, subways, light rail, commuter rail, monorail, passenger ferry boats, trolleys, inclined railways and other modes of transportation.

The resolution was approved by a vote of 18-0 by the Navajo Nation Council on Dec. 23. Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates signed the resolution on Dec. 29 before sending it to the Office of the President and Vice President.

Legislation No. CD-67-14 was for approval of purchasing of individual allotment land for 160 acres located within the Ramah Chapter by Roy Chap Martinez. The cost of the purchase, including closing costs, amounted to $128,000.

Martinez made contact with the BIA Southwest Regional Estate Office and expressed his decision to sell his allotment to the Navajo Nation. On Sept. 24, 2013, Martinez agreed to the purchase price of $800 per acre for a total sale price of $128,000.

The Navajo Land Acquisition Trust Fund will cover the purchase price of the land, which will be utilized for the development of residential subdivisions, mutual help housing, home site leasing and community development purposes for the Ramah Chapter.

“I hereby execute the real estate purchase agreement on behalf of the Navajo Nation for purchase of lands held by the Roy Chap Martinez allotment,” President Shelly said. “The Navajo Nation will utilize this land to build homes for those living in the Ramah Chapter boundaries.”

The Navajo Nation Council approved the legislation by a vote of 18-0 on Dec. 23 and was signed by Speaker Pro Tem Bates on Dec. 29 before it reached President Shelly’s desk for approval.

-30-