



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## President Shelly, Vice President Jim take oath of office



President Shelly takes the oath of office. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and Vice President Rex Lee Jim took the oath of office at noon today and extended their presidency.

The decision to extend the term of office for President Shelly came on the heels of a late night negotiation meeting and subsequent letter of agreement between Executive and Legislative Branches of government.

The terms of the agreement state, “In the spirit of K’é and Hózhó the Executive and Legislative leaders have come together to talk things out in resolving a controversy that would impact the stability of the Navajo Nation.”

The agreement further states that President Shelly will maintain all power and duties under the provisions of the Navajo Nation Code. The president will meet with members of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council during the winter session to discuss the best interests of the Nation moving forward.

Until then, President Shelly and Vice President Jim will maintain

continuity of government until a new president is elected.

Chief Justice Herb Yazzie administered the oath of office at the Office of the President and Vice President. The State Room was packed with cabinet members, OPVP staff and members of the media to witness the event.

Standing in front of the mahogany Great Seal of the Navajo Nation, President Shelly placed his left hand on the Bible and raised his right hand to take his oath of office.

President Shelly repeated the oath after Chief Justice Yazzie:

“I, Ben Shelly, do solemnly swear to continue to uphold and abide by the laws of the Navajo Nation and Treaty of 1868 between the Navajo Nation and the United States of America, and will faithfully execute the Office of the Navajo Nation President, representing the Navajo Nation, and will to the best of my ability continue to preserve, protect and defend the laws and government of the Navajo Nation, and advance the interests of the Navajo people, having due regard for the ethical duties and responsibilities of the

office. So help me God.”

First Lady Martha Shelly held the Bible and witnessed her husband’s historic swearing in ceremony for the second time. Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim was next and took his oath of office for the second term by swearing on his jish (medicine bundle), which was held by his mother.

“I, Rex Lee Jim, do solemnly swear to uphold and abide by the laws of the Navajo Nation and Treaty of 1868 between the Navajo Nation and the United States of America; and will faithfully execute the Office of the Navajo Nation Vice President, representing the Navajo Nation; and will to the best of my ability continue to preserve, protect and defend the laws and government of the Navajo Nation; and advance the interests of the Navajo people, having due regard for the ethical duties and responsibilities of the office. So help me God.”

Vice President Jim signed the affidavit of certification, followed by President Shelly.

“We’ll keep it together until somebody shows up,” President Shelly said after he signed his name.

Cabinet members and others filed through to congratulate the president and vice president. The event was low key and lasted about 15 minutes. A press conference followed, where President Shelly spoke about conducting “business as usual.”

“The standard functions of a president’s protocol, we will continue to do that,” he said. “I will continue to function as a president, that’s what we agreed to.”

Approval or veto of tribal council legislation will continue, he added, noting that his standing as president will move forward with all authorities in place.

President Shelly’s staff and cabinet will continue on, if they chose to, he said. For those choosing to leave, they will be replaced with young Navajo professionals. For his future, the president will return to private business as an entrepreneur.

Other options included running for state and national leadership.

“There’s a lot of work to be done, the Navajo people need help,” he said.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, OPVP staff and cabinet members convened with the president and vice president at the Navajo Nation Museum to discuss plans moving forward.

For the short time in office, staff must give 110 percent or more was the message, in order to complete projects that are still in progress. President Shelly told everybody that maintaining continuity of government was the order of the day.

All of his staff and cabinet members will continue working with the administration until a successor is elected into office.

