



July 14, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

President Begaye announces new appointments to NNTRC, Navajo DOT



Last week, President Russell Begaye and Vice President Jonathan Nez announced new cabinet appointments on KTNN AM 660, while they were in Washington, D.C. The appointments were for Teresa Hopkins and Garret Silversmith for Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission and Navajo Division of Transportation, respectively. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye and Vice President Jonathan Nez announced new appointments to their cabinet this week.

M. Teresa Hopkins has been appointed as executive director of the Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission. She previously worked for the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch as deputy director for the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Hopkins was employed with the Judicial Branch for more than eight years, also serving as director of Special Projects and project manager of the Navajo Nation Integrated Justice Information Sharing Project.

She was responsible for all information technology related projects, planning and implementation of a new court case management system, execution of an archived court records system and other duties.

“If you look at her background, it’s always been in telecommunications. She has a very strong background and is very knowledgeable,” said President Begaye. “She was operating her own business in telecommunications.

“We selected her to be executive director of Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission. We know that she will really move the Navajo Nation forward,” he added.

Hopkins was appreciative for the opportunity and said, “I am honored to have been selected to join the Begaye-Nez team. It is my hope that I will exceed their expectations.”

The second appointment to Begaye-Nez cabinet was Garret Silversmith as executive director of Navajo Division of Transportation.

“We really looked across the Navajo Nation and outside the tribe to find somebody for this position,” President Begaye said.

He said Silversmith most recently worked for BIA Department of Transportation in Chinle Agency and is knowledgeable with funding from the Federal Highway Administration and the processes for road construction and maintenance.

“Navajo Nation is going to be assuming all responsibilities in the area of roads. The division director for NDOT needs to understand roads, from planning, assessments and engineering,” President Begaye said. “Garret knows all of that. He’s young, intelligent and has very strong leadership.

“He did a lot of work on the Nation and now, he is going to help us. We are very excited about Garret Silversmith heading up NDOT,” he added.

Since 2012, Silversmith served as the supervisory highway engineer for the BIA DOT in Chinle. Prior to that, beginning in 2003, he served as a civil engineer to Bighorse Engineers.

Silversmith received his bachelor’s of science degree in civil engineering from New Mexico State University in 1993.

He previously served as a staff engineer for Nation’s Gas Technologies, Inc. and as a project engineer with Navajo Housing Authority.

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