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## President Shelly approves \$3 million for Administrative Service Centers



*Division of Community Development staff meet with chief of staff Deswood Tome earlier this week regarding the appointment of Carl Smith, standing, as the new division director. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— This week, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly approved a \$3 million appropriation for the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development decentralization project.

In 2013, the 22nd Navajo Nation Council Budget and Finance Committee issued a directive to NNDCD to begin decentralizing the Local Governance Support Centers at the agency level. The idea was to deliver services at the local through 16 Administrative Support Centers spread across the Nation at a district level.

“The Local Governance Support Centers did a remarkable job bringing transparency and accountability to the Navajo chapters,” President Shelly said. “The Five Management System was a means of bringing accountability to the local level.

“Before that, some chapters were in a state of disarray,” he added.

The \$3 million appropriation was carried over from the FY 2014 budget to FY 2015 for execution. Originally, the Local Governance Act, Title 26 of the Navajo Nation Code, mandated that LGSCs deliver technical services and training to the 110 chapters at the agency level.

The primary means of tracking chapter finances and related spending was the Five Management System, which provided management for the areas of personnel, fiscal accounting, procurement, records and property.

The FMS helped chapters to become financially sound and ensured the chapter’s funds were accounted for and properly budgeted. FMS certification meant chapters qualified for LGA certification

and more autonomy for their respective chapter government.

The FMS also raised awareness at the chapters for deficiencies in their accounting systems. Some chapters were audited and faced subsequent sanctions, but the LGSCs worked with them to improve their performance and implementation of the FMS through corrective action plans.

Recently, the Resources and Development Committee of the Navajo Nation Council approved the plan of operation for the Administrative Service Centers. The budget approved

Administrative Service Centers will be filled. The attorneys hired will work under the supervision of the Navajo Nation Department of Justice.

“Staffing the Administrative Service Centers within chapter houses was a safety concern. We must ensure our employees are working in a safe and viable workspace,” President Shelly said.

Repairs and other improvements to the Administrative Service Center sites will be funded by the \$3 million budget. The funds will also be used to purchase office

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by President Shelly will fund 26 full time employees. The positions range from attorneys, accountants and planners.

The mission of the Administrative Service Centers is to provide technical assistance to chapters in the areas of project management, post-LGA certification, implementation of the FMS and capacity building.

NNDCD carried over the LGSC budget of \$1.2 million for FY 2014 into FY 2015. Combined with the \$3 million budget President Shelly approved, the remaining vacant positions for the

equipment, tribal vehicles and training for new staff.

“Our chapters need assistance with planning, whether it’s for the land use plans, feasibility studies or long range plans. These new service centers will cut out the bureaucracy of having to travel to Window Rock for planning assistance,” President Shelly said.

NNDCD wrapped up a two-day Navajo Nation Planning Workshop for all 110 chapters on March 10 through 12 at Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort.