



EO:TTM# B2 N11J  
JUN 23 11:10

June 19, 2024 10:00am

## TOHATCHI CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

- I. **MEETING CALL TO ORDER: 12:35 PM**
- II. **ROLL CALL: President Sonny Moore, Vice President Mike Halona, Secretary/Treasurer Jean Crawford, and Grazing Office Gerald Moore**
- III. **INVOCATION: Larson Manuelito**
- IV. **REVIEW/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**  
**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Priscilla Duncan 2<sup>nd</sup> Shirley Chato Vote: 16-0-1**
- V. **APPROVAL OF MAY 29, 2024 MEETING MINUTES:**  
**Motion to include to read on your own:**  
**Motion: Shirley Chato 2<sup>nd</sup> Mike Begay Vote: 16-0-1**
- VI. **PRESENTERS:**
  1. **Laris Manuelito** – I am running for Vice President for Tohatchi Chapter. Being an active member of our community, I see so many things that we need. I am also a decorated combat veteran. I did six years in army and 1 combat tour that's where I was decorated. I was a system analysis and dealt with Command Sergeant Majors and Generals where I honed my leadership skills to be able to answer questions at that level. I also worked for Congress for 2 years, I worked for Congresswomen Teresa Leger Fernandez and going up to the halls of Congress and working at that level and learning Congressional language and Congressional legislation on both sides of the aisle. This has given me insight on how it works from the Federal all the way down to here, the local level. I also worked as a Legislative Assistant for former Council Delegate Halona for 3 years right before the pandemic hit. That was my 1<sup>st</sup> actual professional experience in any kind of government. I grew up in a political family all the way up to my grandfather to my father. My father has been an active member for so long, my grandmothers were very industrious people. My mother is from Hardrock, Arizona and she was the only daughter and she had 7 brothers and 5 of them were military and 3 did not come home. A lot of people ask me why "Navajo" is not my 1<sup>st</sup> language, I tell them my father grew up in the boarding school era where they were shamed and things were done to them to keep them from speaking their Navajo language. He taught me English 1<sup>st</sup> so that I would be able to communicate in the white man's world. It's very unique because Navajo is very important and our culture, so I'm learning it. My platform includes assisting the veterans, elderly, and our children and one of my main themes is "it's not if we can do it, it's when and how can we do it." I would like to see a brand new and bigger Senior Center for our community with more technology which can offer more. And our children, I really want to look at Headstart because that's where it really starts. Having them home grown is what they are calling it now. We want to keep them in our community all the way to high school. My ultimate goal is to finish as an Elementary or High School teacher here in Tohatchi. My first education is astrophysics and I need one more year (my 4<sup>th</sup> year) to complete but I had to move home to care for my mother. I also studied Native American studies and Law. With these platforms I really want to work toward and be progressive yet also staying relevant, culturally. I think it's time we keep our culture and traditions alive, unknowns are always a scary thing, but if we have leaders who are able to lead you and know what's ahead then we will be

okay. I would appreciate your vote and support during this coming election.

Now, update on my store: I call myself a pure entrepreneur meaning I do not work, I developed my own business independently with partnership with several people and entities, but the development came from COVID. There's where the actual thought of the store came to be, if we didn't have to go off into town and we stayed here, we would have a centralized food sustainability. We would have been a lot better off during COVID. Moving forward, I went to W/R to tell them I want to open a business, so they gave me a land withdrawal form to complete along with requirements of land and arch surveys. Two months later I got a hold of the source list and worked with companies who believed in the project. Now, with Indigenous Designs we have the finally renderings, she actually put 2 more stores on the 6-acre lot. I have provided the conceptual rendering of the drawings of the store. You can see the floor plans of the store from the different angles including the parking lot.

So, the store itself is 55,000 sq feet and we had to add 5,000 feet. I actually started with 55,000 sq feet but I had to take 5,000 off because it would be cheaper but they added 5,000 sq. feet because of the upstairs. This store is independently own by myself for the time being, but once I incorporate into a corporation, I will bring on partners. It's two-story, and upstairs will have a commons area where people can have classes, a barista area where people can have coffee, and there will be 2 areas where you can sit and eat. This area will have Wi-Fi available to all. The whole premises of the store is to give you a new experience. The produce side will be on the right side and will flow around to the full-service bakery. I want to hire people who want to work and who have excellent customer service skills, but after COVID it's hard to find people who want to work. I'll be competing with Walmart so I go and see what they are doing, what technology they are using. The store will also have a butcher shop selling mutton which will be supplied by wolf springs and a sushi area.

The store will have a stairwell and an elevator and will be ADA compliant. There will be special parking area for the elders and the veterans. The building will have HVACs which are COVID compliant and all other viruses out there. All this will cost more, but it's worth it. There will be 24-hour security, the parking will have RV and truckers parking as well. We are going to build the infrastructure for the other 2 stores on the premises but we don't know actually what it's going to be as of yet. I want to have a public meeting to give information and also to do a survey. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, I'll give feedback from the surveys to look at what the community wants to see at the store.

The store parking lot will have a place where vendors can setup to sell their goods or I can sell the items inside the store depending on what the store needs. The other is the farm to table concept, I'm want to work with Red Willow Farm and the other farms on Navajo. I want to keep the produce local and buy local as well. I'm also currently working with Chinle business site owner about the possibility of a store in Chinle.

- 2. Kevin Mitchell** – Provided a short video from Jvanna Hanks, Deputy Superintendent with GMCS talking about the achievements from the past school year. They thanked their teachers and staff for their guidance and support and went over some of the programs like Academics Athletic Artistic College and Career Ready and our Heritage Language programs. There were 122 students who graduated with career technical certificates on their high school diplomas and 62 students graduated with an Associate degree along with their high diplomas. GMCS has also provided 337 paid internship opportunities. As we see more students receive more opportunities at a young age and decide what their future could look like. During the summer, staff will be working tirelessly to get ready for the next year so when the students return, they will be ready to learn.

**Kevin** – Again, this video was put together by Jvana Hanks and I wanted to share it with the Chapter. Just to let you know, all our graduations went very well. I also attended the UNM native American graduation and we had 8 students from District 14 who received their nursing and business degrees. I am very proud of

them all because it shows GMCS is doing something great.

**3. Vice President Halona** – (Vice President Halona had given this presentation at our Planning meeting.)

I'll go over it again briefly. The Energy Summit was held in Albuquerque, NM at the Marriott Pyramid on June 3-6<sup>th</sup>. We got to hear from the different entities and companies who went over the different technology that's available currently. There is a lot of money available for renewable energy infrastructure, some private, government, and investors. So, there are a lot of companies who want to develop on Navajo. They want to help Navajo because they've heard MGS closed down and the Nation is lost over \$40 million a year. In 2031, the 4 corners plant will be shutdown, and San Juan is already shutdown. With the elimination of fossil fuel around the state and now they want us to move toward renewable energy. The Navajo Nation has charging station for our tourist who drive electric vehicles. So, it's all heading in that direction, and hydrogen might be next. These companies want to help Navajo create revenue to make up the lost and because of this some of our direct services to Navajo has decrease. The Nation will need around \$2 billion just to operate and meet the needs of the people. The summit was well attended by Navajo leadership and some people from surrounding states. Navajo Nation needs to amend their Energy policy because the very 1<sup>st</sup> energy policy which was drafted was back in 1980 and was amended in 2013. In 2013, we were getting prepared for renewable energy, we knew it was coming. Here we are 10-11 years later, it's different than what we thought it would be because it's changing and evolving quickly. We need to amend the energy policy again to answer some of the questions and to clarify the policy itself. If you read the 2013 policy, there's one area that addresses communities where it states 5% will be available for community but in that it does not state 5% of what? This needs to be clarified. From the Chapter's standpoint, we would have to develop what the 5% would be used for. This is something to think about. At the conclusion of the Energy Summit, the Executive Branch and the Legislative leadership moved into a room to start this process. What needs to be changed based on what we learned and what we heard. Navajo Nation has never established an energy office, but this year we put together an energy budget and we put it in the Division of Natural Resource and we hired a consultant who has been assisting the Nation. So, within the last year we have had 44 companies submit proposals to work with Navajo on some energy projects, but we have selected 15 who we think have the best interest for Navajo as far as renewable energy. One of the criteria is, what will give us the most in revenue. An example is; if you do this pipeline across Navajo, if you calculate it the old way which was done by rods and in 20 years, they would pay Navajo \$80 million for the right-of-way. But now, we ask for equity. We want \$25 million a year for the next 20 years. This is how the energy summit went and what will Navajo do with this information? To start, the energy policy has to be amended and secondly, Navajo Nation has to establish an energy office in W/R to start working with these companies to get the best deals and interest of our Navajo people.

**President Moore** - There must have been some thinking behind purchasing Navajo Mine and did the Navajo Nation buy another mine in Wyoming? I believe some of the coal mines will remain open until we transition from fossil fuel to renewable energy, but will take time.

**Vice President Halona** – Navajo Nation is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest coal mining company in the US. And yes, NTEC did purchase some mines in Wyoming and Montana which are transitioning. They still have customers for coal some of which is being dump near Gamerco before being transport out to California and exporting it out. Japan is also paying big money, so those type of customers will still be there. Europe has looked at going green, but they realize there are limitation to it. For one, how do you store this energy? Now, you see all these battery storages that will be developed. I personally think, it's going to take technology to change coal and there is still a market for it. What will it cost to change the power plant to meet the environmental standards. So, the Navajo Nation is looking at ways to transition to renewable energy and it will take technology to accomplish this.

**Laris Manuelito** – The 3-phase power near the location of the new store will not have enough power to power the store. I’ve already talked with NTUA about that, so solar power will be the only way to go. I’m looking into where I can store my energy.

Question, how did Tosidoh under NTEC become and “LLC?” How they are looking at Tosidoh, was supposed to be primarily geothermal and some type of agriculture aspect. We have never been updated on how, when, why it became and LLC. When you incorporate any type of entity, it becomes a business and why is it a business and why is NTEC interested in Tosidoh? If they are looking at Tosidoh as some type of revenue from hydrogen or helium or whatever they found under there. I’m going to leave that open for you to explain. They have not been to the table updating us and information us. They were really big, and Sam Woods was here at the Chapter several times. So, why did it become an LLC, a business? Is it a for profit or non-profit? Why isn’t the community at table, at the local level to discuss the 5% return in the energy policy? Do we do a resolution to increase the 5% for our community? How do we start this conversation?

**Vice President Halona** – Let me give you some thoughts: For Tosidoh, I know they are looking at Micro-gid now and I know they are not a part of NTEC. When we look at this, here are the challenges: when you get the community involved, it takes forever. Aneth, UT has communities that can smell the oil being drilled which we, here in Tohatchi have been receiving funds from for the last 50 years. Is that fair? So, how can we help the Navajo Nation? to start with, we should all have equal interest in the land and we all should be benefiting equally across Navajo. So, if the Chapter receives the 5% revenue before it goes to W/R. Will it be double dipping when W/R has funds to distribute among the Chapters? These are some of the things we need to look at.

**Larson Manuelito** – I would like to recommend when Navajo Nation is dealing with these large companies, or any company who want to deal with Navajo, they insist on them hiring Navajos as priority. This will ensure money will go directly into the pockets of the Navajos. I call that reassurance.

**VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. May 2024 Financial Report -**

<b>MAY BALANCE FUND</b>		
1	Chapter Activities Gen Fund	\$20,672.78
2	NN General Fund	\$7.49
3	Land Claims Trust	\$20,995.94
8	Supplemental Youth Fund	\$16,458.59
9	Housing Discretionary Fund	\$12,117.41
10	LGA Grant Fund	\$68,720.27
12	Chapter Stipends	\$27,684.06
13	Scholarship General Fund	\$9,795.00
14	Scholarship Claims Fund	\$2,528.98
15	PEP Fund	\$29,913.52
16	Veterans Fund	\$4,788.78
17	Emergency Fund	\$38,728.02
23	NN Sales Tax	\$70,109.65
25	NN CIP - \$180,000	\$26,818.85

26	Red Willow	\$1,040.37
27	NN CIP - \$200,000	\$3,877.78
34	Agriculture & Infrastructure	\$3.68
40	Unhealthy Food Tax	\$88,120.99
51	NAPI	\$2,299.66
61	Senior Center	\$2,162.99
	<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$446,844.81</b>

**Secretary/Treasurer Crawford** – The financial reports are reviewed monthly by Chapter President and Secretary /Treasurer. For the month of May 2024, our books are in balance and everything has been reconciled back to the bank. We reviewed all the checks that were written for the month and all have been accounted for. We found no discrepancies.

**President Moore** – Our books are in order for the month of May 2024.

**Motion to Accept the May 31, 2024 Financial Report:**

**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Laris Manuelito 2<sup>nd</sup> Priscilla Duncan Vote: 16-0-1**

**IX. RESOLUTIONS:**

1. **045-06-2024:** Resolution to approve Ronald Etsitty for \$2000 and Isabell Allison for \$889.00 for Housing Discretionary Assistance.

**Larson Manuelito** – It used to be a practice to have the individual come in-person to request for assistance. Can we continue with this practice?

**Vice President Halona** – We passed an updated Housing Discretionary Assistance policy and we should be following that. If the policy states the individual does not have to appear at the meetings, then we are leaving it up to the CSC to do the assessment and evaluation and using her judgement. He has a doctor's statement indicating there is a need there and our job is to fill the need for our community members if they are a registered voter here at Tohatchi.

**Larson Manuelito** – Our policy use to state, the individual requesting for assistance should be of low income, with an income guideline attached to the policy. Is this still practice or stated in our policy?

**President Moore** – No, we took that out of the policy and left it open for all our registered voters in our community to get assistance when they need help.

**Laris Manuelito** – Per Maria, the individual has to be here at the Planning Meeting to make their request and they do not have to be at the Chapter Meeting.

**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Laris Manuelito 2<sup>nd</sup> Shirley Chato Vote: 16-0-1**

2. **046-06-2024:** Resolution to approve the 5 poll judges: Virginia Begay, Jamie Silver, Gloria James, Shirley Dennison, and Kyle Dennison.

**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Priscilla Duncan 2<sup>nd</sup> Frankie Allison Vote: 16-0-1**

3. **047-06-2024:** Resolution to approve a budget transfer within the Housing Discretionary Fund for major repairs. We will be taking \$2000 from minor repair into major repair for \$2000.

**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Shirley Chato 2<sup>nd</sup> Larson Manuelito Vote: 16-0-1**

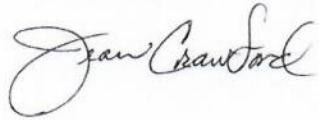
- X. ANNOUNCEMENTS:** District Grazing Committee Meeting July 3<sup>rd</sup>, Mexican Springs Chapter @ 9am.  
**Laris** – Meet & Greet: I will be giving out breakfast, pantries, coffee, and maybe fry bread on July 10<sup>th</sup> next to the store from 8am-11am. Primary Election will be held July 30<sup>th</sup>.

**XI. NEXT MEETING DATE: July 01, 2024 Planning Meeting @ 10am.**

**XII. ADJOURNMENT: 1:10pm**

**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Larson Manuelito 2<sup>nd</sup> Laris Manuelito**

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jean-Claude Sord". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Secretary/Treasurer, Tohatchi Chapter **June 30, 2024**

cc: Mr. Sonny Moore, President

Mr. Mike Halona, Vice-President

Mr. Gerald Moore, Grazing Officer

Ms. Maria Allison, CSC