



THE NAVAJO NATION

TOHATCHI COMMUNITY LAND USE PLANNING COMMITTEE

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Elvis Bitsilly
President

Larry Rodgers
Vice-President

Delphine Bitsilly
Recorder

Fern Spencer
Member

Byron Bitsoie, Sr.
Member

TOHATCHI COMMUNITY LAND USE PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Tuesday September 17, 2024

- I. Call to Order: Time: 9:16 am Roll Call: 4 Invocation: Rachelle Morris
- II. Introduction of Guests: Rachelle Morris, Magen Berry, Manuel Shirleson
- III. Approval of Agenda:
 - Move in Old Business B. NN Economic Development meeting w/Flora Nez (Sept 17th, 1:30pm) Tohatchi Chapter and add C. IHS Community Upcoming Events to Announcements and add in Old Business B. CLUPC Membership.
 - Motion to accept: Larry Rodgers 2nd: Fern Spencer Vote: 3-0-1
- IV. Approval of Minutes: August 20, 2024
 - Motion to accept with changes in red: Delphine Bitsilly 2nd: Fern Spencer Vote: 3-0-1
- V. Old Business:
 - A. Tohatchi Community Land Use Plan- review, updates.

Elvis Bitsilly – any updates or any input from our overall plans from the committee, we’re working on our indicated sections that we assigned as we continue on as a committee, we’re either adding new information or deleting information or keeping as is, we talked a lot about it during our work sessions - what we need to do and not to do, does the committee have anything new to add?, we haven’t schedule another work session yet, we may have to do one here soon, next meeting we’ll recommend another work session for our overall plan; *Fern Spencer – did you go over the survey we handed out, any feedback?, *Elvis Bitsilly – I did get feedback, six pages I got, six surveys I have them right here, you can all look at them, the public meeting was a small turnout, it was the day after the chapter meeting and it might have been the scheduling, we had a good turnout with input and recommendations, you can look at survey which was formatted by Vice Chair and thank you for that.
 - B. CLUPC Membership

*Larry Rodgers – thank you for putting it on the agenda, Chair, from the previous way the chapter was doing and following its plan of operation, members were appointed to this committee by fiscal year, tribal fiscal year is October to September, September is the very last month of the fiscal year, that is the way the plan of operation was setup, the appointments for one year, simultaneous last year we revised the plan of operation, where we extended membership on the committee at two year intervals, so you can serve on the committee for two years, the main reason for that was to assure some type of continuity, committee members that were suggesting that it should be that way, plan of operation was revised to reflect that and pass by the chapter with a resolution, at the same time the chapter passed another resolution that listed who would be on the committee beginning in October, we’ve been functioning with only 4 committee members most of the year, at least half a year, Mr. Bitsoie resigned at some point in time, I don’t know on the agenda for the

chapter meeting tomorrow, I believe there's a new appointment being made to the committee, the reason why I wanted this on the agenda has to do with my role – I served on this committee for over a year because I wasn't appointed on a regular basis, it was like sometime during the year, I served on that cycle more than a year, technically the way the resolution approved the new plan of operation, technically I can serve on the committee one more year, I'm going to relate to Old Business A which has to do with the community land use plan – you know my position on that, you know what we experience, my personal role in that, the main purpose to serve on this committee is to have that happen, is to make that happen, is to do the CLUP and to update the CLUP, that is a primary responsibility of the committee, knowing that and my personal feeling about my continue role helping with that document, I will not continue to serve on this committee, this will be last meeting, technically I can serve one more year according to the new plan of operation, and I will forego that, you have two recruits open; ***Elvis Bitsilly** – thank you for that announcement; ***Fern Spencer** – I'm sorry to say that I hate for you to do that, it's up to you personally, have you done a formal letter of resignation to Elvis and to Mr. Moore; ***Larry Rodgers** – no I haven't done that, I can do that this afternoon; ***Fern Spencer** – so they can announce this tomorrow, it's on the agenda, tomorrow Pernell Halona is going to be recognized at that time to be on CLUPC, my understanding is we can still function as long as we have three or four people on the committee, looking at these documents we have, what I have told all of you, Mexican Springs – I don't know why their operating that way, I don't think it's correct, their four chapter officials are CLUPC members and the reason for that, they told us at that meeting, nobody wanted to be part of it, so they are functioning as that, other sources have said it isn't correct and that's what I know is going on, I'm sure all of you knew that is happening which is sad to say to have that happen, Larry from my personal thing, you are valuable member to history and knowledge you have in reference to what is here in Tohatchi, you lived here and this is your home place, I've learned stuff from you, if you feel that strong about leaving, you have to do what you have to do, I do appreciate all the work you have done; ***Elvis Bitsilly** – thank you Larry for serving the time, appreciate what you done for the committee, appreciate your input always, thank you, like Fern said submit your letter to Sonny and CC to me for the committee record and other information we may need it for.

VI. New Business:

A. Ch'ooshgai school housing meeting update-President Moore

***Elvis Bitsilly** – I indicate that not knowing that Sonny wasn't going to be here today, Sonny not available, I'll give a brief update on that meeting we had with Chuska School regarding the housing; ***Fern Spencer** – how come we're not told before had, I get this notice saying there's this meeting and Sonny says we need to be there, I had other things to do, I was shocked Mr. Chiapetti left, what's going on?; ***Larry Rodgers** – Chiapetti left?; ***Fern Spencer** – yeah, he is now the City Manager of Gallup, I saw his picture in a newspaper, if they want us to be somewhere we need to know ahead of time; ***Elvis Bitsilly** – Sonny made the schedule, communication with the school, we didn't know who to contact until 2-3 days before and he got a hold of Renee Tolino, they scheduled it and set it up, we talked to Chuska school staff, Renee, Aaron Jim with Facilities, Steve – Academic Coach Coordinator, Stacey - Facilities, myself and Sonny Moore, we didn't know about Chiapetti until we showed up at the meeting, we discussed the BIE housing that are vacant, what are they going to do with them, what are their plans, what the chapter would like to do if available, if possible we can coordinate with them and see if that could work out, we got some yays and nays, new information in regards to that possible development up there, demolish plans and so forth,

who is in charge of what, who does what at the school, we went into certain areas we were unfamiliar with, I didn't know a lot of what is going on with the school, what's happening there with management and whose the upper authority, BIA, apparently they are with Wingate jurisdiction and Fort Defiance BIA jurisdiction, they are split up there at Chuska, who does what and oversees certain areas of what they do up there, that was new information for me and Sonny, we were surprised how they work internally and who their oversight is, what's going on, I listened and learned, open to discussion on what's going on with possible housing up there, we covered how many buildings were opened, not buildings but houses, we already talked about a lot of that with Chiapetti when he was here, we covered most of the same information, just other areas, other aspects of what's possible and what we can do, covered the overall plans, what their options are and some things they are thinking about doing, one thing I got out of the meeting was they didn't want to do public housing, they didn't want to do that part, I didn't quite understand that, it was coming from the facilitates department and their recommendations on that, they didn't really feel too well about that to open up to that possibility, we continued our discussion on other areas and so forth, I didn't feel too happy about it but they were open to continuing our discussion with possibilities of demolishing the vacant houses that are there, who's gonna fund it, who's responsible for that, there's a lot of new information that Renee kinda filled us in little bit on, she was surprised about a lot of areas that she didn't know about, she's the acting Principal, it's more of an oversight situation that is going on up there at the school, I wasn't really aware of what's going on there, Sonny recommended to continue our talks with them and they agreed to that with what we can further discuss and move on with that, the potential plan for working out with the housing development, we did talk about the old BIA boarding school over here, we're also developing, have plans for it as well, they were open to that, they were well situated with looking for housing, they are having problems with housing in general, they have a lot of staff there that don't have housing, there's a need for it, that part of the discussion was carried forward to see what we can work on doing, making that happen, possibility in the next several years or so, whatever else we can do; ***Fern Spencer** – does their school board, I know they have new members, could that be a topic that CLUPC and chapter can get on to ask them about the situation, I know they have problems with other people renting up there, like non-employees, that was a big problem with drugs and alcohol situation, where a lot of those people brought their kids in, they ruined it for them, I definitely know about because they were asking about housing in our teacherage when I was working, was their housing person there, too, that lady?; ***Elvis Bitsilly** – the housing facilitator guy was there, Aaron Jim, Stacey; ***Fern Spencer** – I was looking for a house when I retired, you have to go through a background check, it was really something and I said wow, after that I asked why, people they had in there before, it's unfortunate we can't use those houses, are the EMT's up there?; ***Elvis Bitsilly** – the EMT's is positive, the house is ready, it's the background checks with the EMT's is continuing, they said it will be finalized soon, everyone has to go through those background checks, that was other thing that was talked about – about the housing area, housing situation, what their regulations are with the government, a restrictive area; ***Rachelle Morris** – at that meeting with Ch'ooshgai, was there any mention like regarding, what their thoughts are with, not only for their staff but to open it up for teachers, not teachers but health care staff; ***Elvis Bitsilly** – not too much was mentioned on that, we mentioned our plan for professional housing development over here, again it goes back to their policy with the school, took away the public aspect of it, bringing in tenants that may accommodate those homes up there if there will ever be new homes there, we were all open to general housing and see what the possibilities, whether they have regulations, policies, we talked about Navajo, we talked about development here for our community, they were open to all discussion, the new HS school will be getting new housing which was discussed by Gallup McKinley County Schools for teacherage and staff there, their main concern is lack of housing for their staff, all tenants they have there are all

staff for Chuska school, four not actual staff that are tenants; ***Larry Rodgers** – when Chiapetti reported to us, he mentioned there were 31 units that needed to be fixed up, 18 of them, they were working on at the time, renovating, those reported would be opening up soon, from what it sounded like, it really was pretty much just for their staff and faculty, they're not open to public rentals, it's probably because of their finance system, as well as how they bill, how payments are agreed by those people who do live in it, they have their checks deducted, I don't know how they do it, whatever their system is, it sounds like it might be a problem when you bring outside people into it, it didn't sound welcoming, he didn't seem to be that open about, even the recommendation of the tribe renovating those other units, and there wasn't a clear understanding about whether some of those units are still good, maybe have asbestos problem, that's about it, it needs remediation, is that all is needed, if they are structural sound, why tear them down, just renovate, they don't have the program to do it, it probably would be a five year planning process to implement something like that, that's the way it sounded like, it's a gated community, the last five years I probably tried getting up there just twice, even just to take a picture from the mesa, I couldn't do that, they asked me if I had a pass, maybe that was just during the pandemic they weren't letting people in, to me it's not a welcoming place like it used to be in the old days when you visit a relative in any of the houses, today it's not like that, TAOS has some kind of building down that way, there's room around it, there's places you can build things and why not there, if you're going to do that, would there still be a gate for you to clear, in the good old days driving up to the Vista point and overlook the lake from up there, I can't even do that anymore, so that point it would be neat to develop that into a park so the people will enjoy the view, coming back down on the north side, the recommendation for planning was to build a road down that way, the northern mesa you can build some new houses, too, I would rather do that then to go after the Chuska houses, it's all part of the land use plan, overall what you're going to need, if you're going to really do something with the Ch'oozhgai housing is to enter into some cooperative agreement between BIA and Navajo Nation to make it happen, that is where the key is in redeveloping up there, once you do that it will clear the way for access, clear the way for better planning for what needs to be done up there and also going after monies for redevelopment, if they give it, BIA and or the school can't say, they will open up the doors for others to use, that would be an recommendation; ***Delphine Bitsilly** – did you say cooperative agreement?; ***Rachelle Morris** – he said collaborative agreement; ***Larry Rodgers** – cooperative agreement can be a letter of agreement, memo agreement, compact, it depends on who the agreement is done with, when the tribe does an agreement with the county they call it a compacts, when the nation would enter an agreement with BIA it would be intergovernmental agreement; ***Rachelle Morris** – in the agreement it would include wording like who is in charge of funding, maintaining the homes, things like that; ***Larry Rodgers** – it would divide up the responsibilities between the two parties, you might even entertain a third party which is like an independent government that can overlook the operation of it, then you won't have the government ties pulling it down; ***Elvis Bitsilly** – they did mention those houses were 99.9% asbestos, that was my concerned, why you have people living in that; ***Larry Rodgers** – there might be certain units that do deserve tearing down, I think they're not that old, built in the 60's, 70's; ***Elvis Bitsilly** – built in 1964; ***Fern Spencer** – built in 1966; ***Rachelle Morris** – the paint they utilized during that timeframe, if it was before the 1980's it's going to have lead, lead and asbestos; ***Elvis Bitsilly** – rental fees they charge for the units is as high as \$1000.00 a month; ***Fern Spencer** – that's not including your utilities; ***Elvis Bitsilly** – they're not happy about that themselves, why it's that way, it was the jurisdiction separation that had something to do with that, what can they do about the housing, the meeting put them in a situation they have to do something about it and get it done, not only for themselves, but for the community, meeting was good with a lot of information.

B. SWCD-Soil & Water Conservation District – not available

C. Red Willow Farm Board – not available

VII. Resolutions: none

VIII. Announcements:

A. NN Economic Development meeting w/Flora Nez (Sept 17th, 1:30pm) Tohatchi Chapter

*Elvis Bitsilly – Flora will be here today at 1:30, anyone here at 1:30 is more than welcome to join me, follow up on discussions we had on Navajo Nation Economic Development, she's the assistant to Leonard Francisco.

B. Tohatchi Chapter regular meeting- September 18, 2024, 10am

C. IHS Community Upcoming Events

*Rachelle Morris – this Saturday September 21, there's a Fall into Fitness Community Health Fair happening at the Rio West Mall begins at 11 am to 3 pm, open to the public, there will be a Kids Harvest Festival, facepainting activities, crafts, entertainment, health screening – blood glucose checks, blood pressure checks, rapid HIV, Syphilis screening, also offer the Flu and Covid vaccines that day, flu vaccine had arrived early this year, we did get our batch last week, they are working on reopening 3E Vaccination clinic, hopefully we'll get a public service announcement on that, they are planning to operate open business hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 1 – 7, they are running into some issues of staffing, there are days when they are short staff, if there are closures on Monday Wednesday and Thursday is related to staffing, it's hasn't been official yet, we're waiting on the official approval but that's tentative they will be open on those days, Tohatchi clinic here they are planning a vaccination clinic next Wednesday, there should be a flyer out hopefully by Monday, once that is approved, I'll send out to the District 14 chapters, it will be 8:30 to 11 next Wednesday, we do have covid Pfizer and Moderna that had arrived, we have more batches of Moderna vaccine that Pfizer, as far as public health nursing, we're going to start scheduling all our homebound patients, north communities – Tohatchi, Buffalo Springs, Naschitti, we're gonna give them their vaccines probably beginning next week, we have other chapters confirmed, we're in the process of getting those vaccine flyers approved, once it's approve I'll send it out to the chapters as well; *Fern Spencer - Rachelle, you talked about Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, that is at IHS?; *Rachelle Morris – 3E Vaccination Clinic, it's tentative right now until it's approved; *Elvis Bitsilly – I email, contact and had a conversation with Zondra, need a month notice and she will be here at October 15 meeting, Wynaever Jim will be here at October meeting, I did contact Housing, Valaire Wilson and she will be here at next meeting, I see there's no one there any more, I don't know what happened, they moved to Window Rock, Fort Defiance, I don't know, it's been gated and closed about a month and a half, not sure what's going on there, I did skip B.

D. Manuel Shirleson – I talked to the Vice President of the chapter, the land by the bridge, right now we call it the Veterans Park, it's fenced to the south and eastside, I asked the Vice President since he is at the Land office, if we could get copy, I went over there myself to Window Rock, they wouldn't give it to me because I'm not an official, I have to have an official or council delegate to get a copy, we're trying to find out how big that is, I talked to him myself the Vice President, I tried to tell the community, right now we have 81 Veterans recorded, when we have a meeting there's like 15 at meeting, we need young Veterans,

I know we have a lot of Veterans in the Tohatchi area, but they don't show, way back we used to have chapter president, JC Badonie, Harry Moore, Sr., we had a lot of veterans over 30, we tried to tell families who have a veteran, meeting here the second Friday each, every other month, usually nobody shows, I wanted to talk Sonny Moore for the map, I haven't seen our Council Delegate in a year, I talked to him and he runs away from us, he should represent our community for us; *Elvis Bitsilly – he wasn't in Special Session yesterday; *Manuel Shirleson – he goes to Washington DC, Alaska, Wisconsin, we meet every other month on Friday, next meeting October 11; *Rachelle

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Morris - we have a Veteran right here, Magen; ***Manuel Shirleson** - everyone is invited, I don't know why we don't get a lot of people to come and like I mentioned before we should get a lot of people to come; ***Fern Spencer** - when Julie and them had it way back, they invited the family of the Veterans and that's how I ended up coming; ***Manuel Shirleson** - I'm the Commander and I've been telling everybody to come in; ***Fern Spencer** - it's on the 11th; ***Manuel Shirleson** - yes, 10 am and we will have munchies; ***Fern Spencer** - who are the officers besides you being the Commander, President Shirleson, Vice - Laris Manuelito, Secretary/Treasury - Rosie Deschiney, no one wants to be Commander, same as the officials, I don't know what's wrong with the Veterans; ***Larry Rodgers** - Fern brought up the new members at Ch'ooshgai School Board, the people approve it, this election, after the election, the new board for Ch'ooshgai will replace what was in place before which was the whole Navajo Nation they had cut down to 12 entities, so you had members from elsewhere being on this board at Chuska, a lot of people didn't like that, in the last year HESS - Health Education Social Services committee changed and had public hearings that went on and wanted to hear from the public, on how they want the board to be setup, because of local control they changed it back to the way it used to be, instead of 15 Navajo Nation Committees, it's back to 64 committees, Chuska school will have it's own board with two representatives from Tohatchi, Naschitti has one, Twin Lakes or Mexican Springs at large has one, four or five community members, they will all be new, I notice on the ballot, Treva, nobody opposed her in the election, she will be on the board.

IX. Next Meeting Date & Time: Tuesday, October 15, 2024 @ 9am Tohatchi Chapter

***Elvis Bitsilly** - there was a request by Delphine; ***Fern Spencer** - when would you be available; ***Delphine Bitsilly** - either that Tuesday before which is October 8, or October 22, you guys can have your meeting its just I won't be here, on the 15th I won't be here; ***Fern Spencer** - there's nothing going on in the chapter on the 8th; ***Elvis Bitsilly** - Red Willow at 1; ***Fern Spencer** - I move we have it on the 8th at 9; ***Delphine Bitsilly** - let me go check to see if they have anything, October 8 and October 22 they are no meetings in the morning, Red Willow has their meetings in the afternoon both on October 8 and 22, we can have our meeting in the morning on October 8 or October 22; ***Fern Spencer** - October 8; ***Delphine Bitsilly** - I can do the 8th; ***Fern Spencer** - is that okay with you Elvis?; ***Elvis Bitsilly** - yeah it's fine, I have to be here; ***Rachelle Morris** - not sure if we might make it in October, November because we have our vaccination clinics being held Tuesdays and Thursdays.

X. Adjournment/Time: 10:43 am

Delphine Bitsilly - Recorder

Delphine Bitsilly