



February 20, 2025 10:00am

**TOHATCHI CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES**

- I. MEETING CALL TO ORDER: 10:10am
- II. ROLL CALL: Vice President Rodgers, Secretary/Treasurer Jean Crawford, and Grazing Officer Gerald Moore, Elvis Bitsilly CLUPC President
- III. INVOCATION: Vice President Lee Rodgers
- IV. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:  
 Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Elvis Bitsilly 2<sup>nd</sup> Pernell Halona Vote: 22-0-2  
Motion to do a consensus agenda by combining resolutions: 027-02-2025, 028-02-2025, 029-02-2025, 030-02-2025, and 032-02-2025.
- V. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 22, 2025 MEETING MINUTES:  
 Motion to have the minutes read out loud:  
 Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Laris Manuelito 2<sup>nd</sup> Doris Benallie Vote: 2-21-3  
 Motion to read out loud failed  
 Motion to read on your own:  
 Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Laris Manuelito 2<sup>nd</sup> Doris Benallie Vote: 23-1-3
- VI. PRESENTERS:  
 1.
- VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
- VIII. NEW BUSINESS:  
January 2025 Financial Report –

JANUARY BALANCE FUND		
1	Chapter Activities Gen Fund	\$14,147.20
3	Land Claims Trust	\$26,138.91
8	Supplement Youth Fund	\$18,847.03
9	Housing Discretionary Fund	\$4,738.55
10	LGA Grant Fund	\$65,888.48
12	Chapter Stipends	\$21,406.39
13	Scholarship General Fund	\$7,092.00
14	Scholarship Claims Fund	\$3,453.48
15	PEP Fund	\$23,595.32
16	Veterans Fund	\$6,244.19
17	Emergency Fund	\$26,445.27
23	NN Sales Tax	\$86,664.34
25	NN CIP - \$180,000	\$15,085.76

26	Red Willow Farm	\$1,040.37
27	NN CIP - \$200,000	\$3,877.78
40	Unhealthy Food Tax	\$100,251.60
61	Senior Citizen Fund	\$2,162.99
51	NAPI	\$2,299.66
80	General Fixed Assets	
34	Agriculture & Infrastructure	\$3.68
	<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$429,394.00</b>

**Secretary/Treasurer Crawford** – The financial reports were reviewed by Maria, CSC and Secretary /Treasurer. For the month of January 2025, our books are in balance and everything has been reconciled back to Wells Fargo’s books. We also added in the Chapters’ assets in the total amount of **\$880,726.90** which is added to the financial statements. The Chapter will also provide a Budget to Actual report on request.

**Motion to accept the January 2025 Financial Report**

**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Doris Benallie 2<sup>nd</sup> Pernell Halona Vote: 23-0-3**

**VP Rodgers** – There are 2 questions on the floor, one regarding check numbers 12016 which is listed twice.

**Maria, CSC** – If you look at the check register, we used 2 accounts, 03, and 23. We had to breakdown the amounts in the MIP system since that is the only way it will accept these amounts. So, our monthly bill for the Chapter house is \$720.11. So, \$334.00 was taken out of account 23, Sales Tax. \$386.11 was taken out of our Claims Fund and total is the \$720.11 when combined for Chapter Utility.

**Doris Benallie** – How many PEP workers are getting paid out of the PEP Fund?

**Maria, CSC** – We do have a receptionist, an Office Specialist, a Heavy Equipment Operator, a Solid Waste Attendant, and 3 Laborers which makes a total of 7 PEP workers. I also have 2 employees from Workforce who will be with us for the next 6 months.

**Motion to Accept the January 31, 2025 Financial Report:**

**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Doris Benallie 2<sup>nd</sup> Pernell Halona Vote: 23-0-3**

**IX. RESOLUTIONS:**

- 027-02-2025:** Resolution to approve a Budget Transfer within Fund 09, the Navajo Nation Housing Discretionary Funds in the amount of \$900.00 to replenish Archeological Fund Account.  
**Motion:**
- 028-02-2025:** Resolution to approve a Budget Transfer within Fund 15, the Navajo Nation Project Employment Program (PEP) Fund in the amount of \$2,850.00 to replenish the PEP Receptionist Salary and PEP taxes for payroll.  
**Motion:**
- 029-02-2025:** Resolution to approve a Budget Transfer within Fund 23, the Navajo Nation Sales Tax Funds in the amount of \$1,500.00 to replenish office supplies.  
**Motion:**
- 030-02-2025:** Resolution to approve a Budget Transfer within Fund 25, the Navajo Nation CIP Fund in the amount of \$1,500.00 to replenish Repair and Maintenance Construction Equipment.  
**Motion:**
- 031-02-2025:** Resolution to recommend and approve the Housing Discretionary assistance Fund 09 for



the following community members: Chelsea Dennison, Pamela Dennison, and Eva Ann Begay.

**Maria, CSC** – Chelsea and Pamela are requesting for Arch Survey Clearances with Julia Chavez at \$380.00. Chapter will be doing a cost share by paying \$300 and the recipient will be paying the balance of \$80.00. Eva Begay is requesting for minor repairs and a quote from Home Depot in the amount of \$937.31.

**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Doris Benallie 2<sup>nd</sup> Priscilla Duncan Vote: 24-0-6**

6. **032-02-2025:** Resolution to approve a Budget Transfer within Fund 17, the Navajo Nation Emergency Funds in the amount of \$1,500.00 to cover the balance for Repair and Maintenance Construction Equipment (Backhoe & Grader).

**Motion to approve the consent resolutions: 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6**

**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Doris Benallie 2<sup>nd</sup> Pernell Halona Vote: 27-0-3**

**Treva Roanhorse** – Are you saying you will be moving the PEP Funds in the amount of \$23,000 plus and move these funds around to meet the needs of the \$2,850.00?

**Maria, CSC** – No, we are only moving the \$2,850.00 to replenish the funds that are short.

**With the amendment (change) to the resolution which will have a number 5 added to the resolution to say payment will go to NTUA.**

7. **033-02-2025:** Resolution to approve the change of check signers with Wells Fargo Bank, deleting Harry “Sonny” Moore, Jr. and W. Mike Halona from signature form who are no longer elected Chapter Officials of the Navajo Nation.

**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Pernell Halona 2<sup>nd</sup> Priscilla Duncan Vote: 27-0-3**

8. **034-02-2025:** Resolution to support the right-of-way application to the Navajo Nation for the installation of fiber cable and all associated infrastructure to DEZZA Bluff Tower so NTUA can extend broadband services in the community of Tohatchi, NM.

**Donna Begay (NTUA Right of Way Agent)** – NTUA is requesting a supporting resolution to install fiber cable to DEZZA Bluff Tower in Tohatchi. NTUA is proposing to attach fiber optic cable from west of Chapter to the Catholic Church and across to the cemetery and going up into Halona Canyon following the road to the top of DEZZA BLUFF where all the towers are located. The fiber is for networking, data processing and internet services. NTUA is asking the Chapter for a supporting resolution which will be presented to the Navajo Nation when we submit our documents. This right-of-way requires a TAA that has to be filed with the NN because the fiber will go over a mile, the actual miles of this fiber will be 6.67 miles. We will not be withdrawing land, but we will be replacing all the rotten our poles up to DEZZA BLUFF.

**Larson Manuelito** – Our former President Moore brought fiber optics into the Chapter for our community. Fiber optics runs along highway 491 and I asked NTUA if I could get fiber optic to my house and I was told for \$1500 per mile if you want fiber optic. I’m wondering if this fiber optic cable will increase the strength of our internet?

**Donna Begay** – In the communication world, the divisions are made according to tariffs and boundaries assigned to each which prevents companies from stealing customers or to takeover equipment. Now, companies have to buy tower leases and it can be quite expenses. The NN is the oversight for these leases. NTUA partnered with a communication company and that is where “Choice Wireless” came from. NTUA was getting a percentage of what the NN was getting from “roaming services.” But NTUA is getting away from this partnership but instead partnering with Verizon who wants to provide broadband services. It will be a 5G network and will go to the schools, but it will still be under the NN. These communication companies receive large amount of funding from the Federal Government which included the program called “Lifeline.” But since then has pulled back the funding for this program.



**Mike Begay** – It sounds like you want to capture signals from the satellites and distribute down here in our community.

**Grazing Officer Moore** – Called Point of Order. I believe we are getting into personal issues and specifics on this subject.

**Pernell Halona** – I just want to make sure everyone understands we still have to pay for these programs even though we are getting better service. We still have to pay for this service.

**Doris Benallie** – Being that the fiber optic cable is going on our mountain (DEZZA BLUFF), are you going to pay a percentage of the revenue to the Tohatchi community, when Choice came to ask to put in the internet system, they wanted to put a dish on Chooshgai School's Tower. At one time they did say they would bring internet here to the Chapter several times and people can have access to the wireless internet here at the Chapter House. It never happened for 15 years, the only way we can get wireless is to park outside the Chapter and I hope you'll give us some money.

My 2<sup>nd</sup> question, NTUA partnered with Choice Wireless, but Choice is shutting down and now you are going with Verizon. I like to know why NTUA dropped Choice Wireless?

**Donna Begay** – That's a question for management; I don't make those decisions. I just learned of this yesterday. As far as revenue to the Chapter, NTUA pays close to \$9 million in revenue taxes for all the services that we provide. NTUA gives the Navajo Nation around \$7 million in Scholarship money and its distributed out across Navajo. My intentions are to give information on NTUA's request to the Chapter for a support resolution for a right-of-way to DEZZA BLUFF.

**Treva Roanhorse** – Some people access their internet through Frontier, is the NTUA coordinating with them?

**Donna Begay** – Frontier is a private company, and yes sometimes we do run our distribution lines to their new equipment towers that's about it. Frontier's main office is located in New York City.

Larson Manuelito – The cell company near JB Tanner, Sacred Winds came here in 2007-2008 wanted to do the same thing. They wanted to put a tower up on Mt. Taylor, here and somewhere else making a triangle to give internet services to everyone living within the triangle, but it never happened. When you put your fiber optics up on DEZZA BLUFF will you be sharing services or will you have them buy your services?

**Donna Begay** – A company would have to go through the same process to get a license through the Navajo Nation and it is very expensive. The price tag can go as high as \$250,000 to for a small lease.

**Council Delegate Notah** – My entire family had services with Verizon and we had a lot of problems and issues with them. We have since transferred our services to AT&T and have much better services with them. I want to know how is this telephone service related to the broadband? And do you anticipate any issues with this service?

**Donna Begay** – I have AT&T as well and I've never had an issue with my services. Whatever license they buy for airspace, frequency level. The stronger the frequency, the more money it will cost.

According to my executive leaders, Verizon will be just as good or better than AT&T.

**Grazing Officer Moore** – I believe you broke your code of ethics by promoting AT&T.

**Doris Benallie** – Just for your information, Consumer Cellular, \$35 a month, you buy your own phone, and no roaming fees.

**Point of Order called by Larson Manuelito**

**Larson Manuelito** – I don't agree with what NTUA is asking us for to put a fiber cable up on our mountain. The mountain is sacred to us and just like what a "white person" would say "what is in it for us?" I have not heard what NTUA is offering the community in exchange for a support letter. So, I want to table this resolution until we get an answer from NTUA. I motion to table....



**Secretary/Treasurer Crawford** – We have a motion on the floor by Mr. Manuelito. But I want to say that we have dealt with NTUA before regarding another matter. We went back and forth with NTUA and they will not budge. We tried to negotiate with them but they will not negotiate with Chapters.

**Doris Benallie 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion to table the resolution.**

**Point of Order Called by Sonny Moore.**

**Sonny Moore** - When someone motions to table a resolution and you have a second, you will vote on the tabling of the resolution. After that there will be no discussion on the topic.

**VP Rodgers** – lets go back to the 1<sup>st</sup> motion by Treva Roanhorse, and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Larson Manuelito.

**Larson Manuelito** - I want to rescind my motion.

**VP Rodgers** – Rescinded Larson’s motion, let’s vote to table this resolution.

**Motion:** 1<sup>st</sup> Larson Manuelito 2<sup>nd</sup> Doris Benallie Vote: 8-16-5

**VP Rodgers** – Motion to table the resolution has failed.

**Voting on the supporting resolution for NTUA.**

**Motion:** 1<sup>st</sup> Treva Roanhorse 2<sup>nd</sup> Priscilla Duncan Vote: 18-5-5

9. **035-02-2025:** Resolution to urge the 25<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council to permanently halt the executive orders regarding the Navajo people from President of United States.

**Motion:** 1<sup>st</sup> Yolanda Thompson 2<sup>nd</sup> Pernell Halona Vote: 26-0-3

**Laris Manuelito** – We all know what our Federal Government is continuing to do. As we speak, new executive orders are coming down and we can barely keep up. President Trump just made an executive order to make himself the most powerful president. These are real facts; I double checked my information before I can say anything that might be considered fake news. So at the Planning Meeting, I presented a draft resolution urging, at that point the President sent about 2000 executive orders halting Federal Funding and including several different orders like clean energy. These are programs that President Biden and President Obama initiated. Things that were suppose to get America more along the lines of world economy, clean energy all of those concepts and Trump is systematically taking them apart and dismantling them. He is not giving a resolution or anything saying what the result of what he is doing, he just going it and taking what he calls waste. Now, what does he mean by waste? As he is taking our social security, our veterans benefits and disability. He is taking our clean energy and taking our monuments, and our natural resources. He even wants Ukraine’s natural resources; he is trying to get Gaza. He is not only looking at United States, but looking at other countries and indigenous people and we are indigenous. There is a concept going around out there that pro Trump supporters like to say, I had the opportunity to pick the mind of a Trump supporter and she was very blatant in what she believes; that he is cleaning house and her concept of cleaning house was that he was finding all this waste. He overstepped Congress to go straight forward and do what he is doing and none of us voted to say yes, he can do that. So, the 1<sup>st</sup> resolution is very broad and yesterday we had a meeting, but I’m hoping it will be one of many community meetings where we can come together to have forums. Where we can exercise our 1<sup>st</sup> amendment which is freedom of speech and we can also do a petition to governmental entities and we have that power to do that. Martial Law is even being brought up, martial law is one step from invading Navajo Nation or any entity that’s not of the United States. He keeps telling us we are not citizens of the United States. When we ask these questions, we look toward our Government and Executive Branch, Department of Justice and our legislators; the lawmakers. What is your stance on this? How are you going to represent us? He is attacking our citizenship, indirectly attacking our treaties. So, the resolution I revised based on yesterday’s community meeting. There were enough people here and they were transparent in what they were saying and in what they wanted. I hope this gets across to everyone of the importance of this resolution. So, you can put your voice forward and



we are trying to do something on your behalf as a community. I take this very, very seriously because we come from a wonderful, powerful, and brave leader who fought and sacrifice for our people when we went on the long walk. To hear this pro Trump supporter say, "I'm American first, and Native American second" was really hard to swallow because she was a woman and elder. I couldn't understand how she could give up being a Navajo just to be an American. But it was good to see the insight because it gave me a broader view how to go about this. So, the community members who were here yesterday had given some wonderful recommendations. If you want more discussion, but be very clear we are running against time, I think we ran out of time because he is moving fast. Our President Nygren who was at SpaceX and at Starlink the other day was talking with Elon Musk about what he can do.

**Grazing Officer Moore called Point of Order**

**Grazing Office Moore** – stated "is there a resolution that we can read?"

**Treva Roanhorse** – Yes, I would like to see the resolution as well. We can read the resolution and have a discussion.

**Laris Manuelito** – Yes, there is a resolution and I'll be reading it here soon. I was giving a background of where this is coming from.

**Secretary/Treasurer Crawford** – I'm wondering why we are doing this resolution at the chapter level? I understand the 25<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council is addressing these issues as we speak. Speaker Curley and Justine Ahasteen, the Washinton Office Director were on KGAK radio station recently to talk about these issues that you just brought up. Maybe we can ask our Council Delegate Notah to give us some updates on what the Council is doing to address these issues.

**Laris Manuelito** - How many community members know that already? We don't know that and that is why we are doing it at this level. Because a community member is the most powerful person and their votes and voices are the most powerful voice. So, if it comes from the grassroots all the way up to the Navajo Nation Council and to answer your question on a more government-to-government level. I feel its important at the community level that we have the ability and the time to be able to discuss it and talk about it and ask questions and make recommendations. So, when they do ask these questions, yes, the community was addressed, or at least our District 14 was.

**Council Delegate Notah** – I have attended several of the Red Willow Farms and CLUPC meetings and I did go over this topic with them. First off, the Speaker does know what is going on and they are address this issue. Let me say this first, I don't think there is anything wrong with approving this resolution from the Chapter to send it over to the powers that be. There is nothing wrong with that. But let me tell you what's going on, the Speaker does know what's taking place and she is making every effort to follow all the executive orders and all the things that are taking place. President Nygren is also doing the same thing. It is a huge concern what President Trump is doing, it is not good for the Navajo Nation. Our Washington Office where we have around 7 Navajo Nation lawyers who are also monitoring this situation, the issues, and all the executive orders that are coming out from the White House. These lawyers are monitor how these executive orders will affect the Navajo Nation and they are providing this information back to the Speaker and the President of the Navajo Nation. In addition to that, we are associated with several national organizations like the National Council of American Indians, COLT which is the Coalition of Large Tribes, and TIBC which is Tribal Infrastructure Budget Council and which I am a member of. These organizations are monitoring what is going on and what's taken place. The Council asked 3 major Federal Agencies, BIA, BIE, and IHS to give us a report on how these executive orders will affect our Nation. What they said was "We can't give you any information now, because we don't know how this is going to unfold." Which means we have to give these Federal Agencies time to fully understand all of these executive orders, all the issues that are taking place. The



President of the United States has not received confirmation of all his cabinets. He did issue the cabinet member for the Interior Department and Congress did approve that individual. So what he did is have the Cabinet of the Department of Interior which take care of the BIA fire a lot of top officials in that department. So, they are having to re-hire all those individuals and to take a look at all these executive orders and figure out how these things are going to unfold. They have to decide on how they are going to act on them directly. But you have to understand, there are all these lawsuits as well. With all these executive orders from President Trump, these orders do not happen overnight. Within the United States Government, there are several groups that are filing lawsuits, trying to put a stop to these executive orders. There are also outside organizations like the National Park Services and the Employee Associations. All these lawsuits have to be addressed by the judges which takes time. So, for that reason these Federal Agencies can't really give us a good update on the situations and how it's going to affect us. This resolution is fine, it's good and I do think we need to do it, but this situation will take time to see how things unfold. I'm guessing another 45 days to really understand how these executive orders will affect the Navajo Nation. All 3 branches of government within the Navajo Nation are working and keeping abreast of this situation. Just remember, we can't really issue statements or any information without knowing the facts. So, that's the situation with the Navajo Nation Government.

**Eddie Crank** – the question is not how it's going to affect us; it is already in the process. A lot of people within Indian Health Service like the nurses have been let go. There is a furlough going on and they are even thinking about closing the Tohatchi clinic. So, its already in the process while we are just sitting around thinking about how its going to affect us.

**Council Delegate Notah** – Let me just clarify something. Through COLT (Coalition of Large Tribes) and the National Congress of American Indians they did put a halt to that with the Indian Health Service. From what I've heard from a couple of days ago, there are exempt from any of those layoffs. The only people who are going to be affected by these layoffs are people in the top administration within each of the areas.

**Larson Manuelito** – The only part of the resolution that alludes to us as Native Americans, indigenous Indian is to call myself "Dine," I'm not an Indian. President Trump is already doing something, there are arresting our people thinking they are Mexican. The answer we are getting from our leadership is we are on top of it. I would like them to be more realistic. We are asking Window Rock, are you looking out for us and are you going to help us. This is all we are asking for from our leadership in W/R with this resolution. We will be giving this resolution to our Council Delegate and he will voice it in W/R. My community is concern and want to know what we are doing? Maybe the other chapters are doing the same but we want to make sure we are ready.

**Council Delegate Notah** – Just to let you know, I'm not against this resolution and I do think it's a good idea. I was just giving you information on what the tribe is doing at this point and time to address these issues. They are not just sitting back.

**Treva Roanhorse** – I want to mention the most powerful voice is from the people in the community, this does affect us. The thing is the uncertainty and NCAA, the National Congress of American Indians, other Tribal leaders are already talking about this. I think it's important for a resolution to come from the community, the grassroots which carries a lot more weight because it has a direct impact on us. Even the IRS, I did not give Elon Musk to look into my account; my social security. So, there is an invasion of privacy that we need to protect. The tribal leaders can say they are on top of it, but they need to come back and tells us. We want feedback from our leadership because people are afraid. Then I read in the paper, they will be getting rid of DEI (Diversity Equity & Inclusion) and that's who we are. Last week, 5 education department directors were fired because they didn't move fast enough on it. The information



being provided by the Council and President needs to filter down to us so we know what's going on. I'm glad Laris has drafted a resolution to address the Navajo Nation Council. So, maybe the other Chapters can provide a resolution as well. Then it will be the voice of the people who are talking not just the tribal leaders. The tribal leaders need to provide that assurance.

**Doris Benallie** – I just want to thank Laris for the resolution. In our policies, anyone can write a resolution.

**Laris Manuelito** – It always takes a person or community to be able to try to make a stand. Has we sit here Haskell is about to lose their accreditation because they have to layoff 25% of their staff because of DEI. This would affect our children, grandchildren, and our great grandchildren and that's just one school. There are others schools like Sipi (Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute). So, DEI includes everything native. The funding for yr 2024 is allocated but not for 2025. This resolution is asking all 3 branches to take a stand to halt what President Trump is doing. Let me be clear, not monitor, not wait and see but to take action.

**X. ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Doris Benallie**- Introduced Yolanda Thompson who is the daughter of Ethel Manuelito. Please cast your vote for her.

**Grazing Officer Moore** – District 14 grazing meeting, March 5<sup>th</sup> @ Coyote Canyon @ 9am.

**Yolanda Thompson** – I am running for School Board for Chooshgai Community School and I have children who attend the school. I really believe in our children's academic, social, and emotional wellbeing. So I just want to really advocate for them and all the Navajo children in our area. I am very passionate about that. I am also pursuing my Bachelor's degree in Social Work and Human Services. I live down by Hot Springs and I'm a long-term community member. I would really appreciate your votes.

**Elvis Bitsilly** – Red Willow Farm meeting on February 25<sup>th</sup> @ 9am and CLUPC will be on March 18<sup>th</sup> @ 9am.

**Council Delegate Notah** – Twin Lakes Chapter meeting today at 1pm.

**Laris Manuelito** – Veterans meeting March 7<sup>th</sup> @ 10am at Tohatchi Chapter.

**Secretary/Treasurer Crawford** – Just a reminder, Tohatchi community will be holding an election for the position of Chapter President on **March 11<sup>th</sup>**. The candidates are Mr. Pernell Halona and Mr. Elvis Bitsilly. I also want to mention, the chapter still has not received the other half of our 2025 budget. So, in the meantime the Chapter staff are having to moving funds around to meet the needs of our community.

**Council Delegate Notah** – Naabi is meeting next week on Monday and Tuesday to discuss the 2025 budget. We should have the continuing resolution passed on Thursday when the full council is there. I hope to have this all resolved by the end of the week.

**XI. NEXT MEETING DATE: March 03, Planning Meeting @ 10am.**

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

**Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> Treva Roanhorse 2<sup>nd</sup> Mike Begay**

Submitted by,



Secretary/Treasurer, Tohatchi Chapter **February 28, 2025**

cc: Vacant, President

Ms. Lee Rodgers, Vice-President

Mr. Gerald Moore, Grazing Officer



Ms. Maria Allison, CSC