



March 03, 2025 10:00 A.M.

PLANNING MEETING MINUTES

TELECONFERENCE: 219-803-8769 PIN: 160 108 500#

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/ahs-epsf-aep>

- I. **MEETING CALL TO ORDER: 10:57am**
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Vice President Lee Rodgers, Secretary/Treasurer Jean Crawford, Grazing Officer Gerald Moore, and CLUPC & RWFB Chair Elvis Bitsilly
- III. **INVOCATION: Jean Crawford**
- IV. **REVIEW OF THE AGENDA/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- V. **APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 19, 2025 CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES**
Motion: 1st 2nd Voters:
- VI. **COMMUNITY REQUESTS AND PRESENTERS:**
 1. **Derek Livingston with Parsons** – The floor plan that will be used will resemble the safety complex building in Twin Arrows. The contract is currently at DOJ pending approval and it's been sitting there because of a date in their financial system. According to the financial system, it states the grant expired in 2023. So there were some communication or coordination issues between DOC, DCD, and OMB. They would not update the date. They wanted a letter or a phone call from the State to confirm the date.
Dr. Greyeyes - This grant was 1st issued in 2021 and what happen was the State's internal system put the incorrect expiration date on the IGA. So, when it was processed by the Nation, that's the date that went into the FMIS system and that is the reason they were telling us the IGA had expired. But we were in contact the with NM State Indian Affairs department and Jeffery said the IGA doesn't expire until June 2025. So, our Financial Management System wanted something in writing so it took some maneuvering and OMB finally issued the paperwork after our Delegate and his LDA made a visit last week. We've been working with DCD to correct the date since June 2024. So the date was changed and this is what DOJ was waiting on. Once DOJ has reviewed the IGA again with the correct date it will then go to the President's office for his approval signature.
Derek Livingston – We are asking LAM to give us a pay application for the design they will be starting. Our thoughts were to have LAM start with the design and they can start charging us for the funding that is going to expire in June 2025 so we would not have an issue with left over funds. What would be a reasonable number for the 1st pay application and what would you be able to include so we can get some of the money spent.
LAM – I guess find out what you want to try and do and how you want to do and I can setup the payout to reflect that
Council Delegate Notah – What's the amount that is due by the deadline?
Dr. Greyeyes – There are 2 amounts which are \$50,000 and the other which we had problems with is \$190,000. These IGA was to be resubmitted and go through the whole process again before June.
LDA, Sonny Moore – Question to Tohatchi, there was a request for reauthorizing and I'm wondering if were able to submit for reauthorization for the 2 funds.
Dr. Greyeyes – I submitted the reauthorization because the deadline was February 19th. It was actually resubmitted in January and I worked with Denise Copeland. There is actually 3 AIGs in the amount of \$50,000, \$190,140, and \$297,000 all expiring in June 2025. I talked to Duane Waseta last year in October and he just needed to call the State and work with their finance office and get the IGA fixed. So, the delays were the incorrect fund amount and the advertising, Tohatchi Chapter decided to re-advertise because they only received one proposal. We can fix by getting an invoice so we can spend the funds down. That is why we want to meet with Loren Miller (LAM) after this meeting to see how that can be down using the scope

of work. The invoice would be within the contract period so there shouldn't be any problems with that.

Council Delegate Notah – We met with Candace Yazzie and Mr. Waseta and he walked all the documents over to OOC and DOJ.

Dr. Greyeyes – Rachel Arviso needed to re-do what they call attachment “K” and that K would recommend amending the date internally. DOJ would not accept the contract packet because the IGA had an end date of this month expiring.

Council Delegate Notah – So is that going to help in terms of you getting in there with NM IAD working with you?

Dr. Greyeyes – They will work directly with us, but they will not make any changes on the IGA or the dollar amounts because the contract is with Navajo Nation DCD. Even when the invoices come in, it will come over here and we'll process it and I'll sign off on it and then my boss will sign as well. But it will still need to go over to Candace for final approval. I'm doing a proposal right now for Tohatchi, if we get funded it will be a new IGA and it will go to DCD. DCD has only one person working these IGA which is Regina L Tsosie. Once I hear its coming, I'll do the budget and the scope of work, fine lines and get it to Regina.

Derek Livingston – What happen to that memo that delegated you as the budget coordinator?

Dr. Greyeyes – Because the Navajo Nation has an agreement and in prior years the Chapters were working directly with the State and it got to be too much. So, they wanted a central clearing house and so an agreement was made with the Department of Community Development.

LDA, Sonny Moore – Is there some funds left that is expiring on a different date? I believe we had \$million.

Dr. Greyeyes - 10% of the \$1million has to go to the Arts and the other \$1million I would have to look at the folder to get that information. We have to decide what kind or type of art we want place inside the building. This is only done with Capital Outlay, but with TIF funds, there is not 10% withheld. So, we have to figure out what we want to do, a painting, or a structure in front of the building. All the 10% can be diverted there but they would all have to be invoiced separately based on the account numbers which will make it easier to account for all the 10% withheld.

Council Delegate Notah – The 3 pots of funds, the \$50,000, \$190,140, and the \$297,000 which will be expiring in June 30, 2025. We put in a request for an extension for each of these funds, so the possibilities are: we get the extension which I don't really want to rely on and the other is aspect is trying to make a payment and getting the funds out by June 30, 2025. What would your recommendations be?

Derek Livingston – Essentially, we would be paying a reasonable payment ahead of time.

Council Delegate – With paying up front with these funds for services which has not been delivered is legal, right? Because I don't want to get into trouble with this, as a Council Delegate I don't want my name tag to something which may be illegal.

Derek Livingston – The option to pay up front is actually a recommendation from DCD to frontload the project and we've done this before with the State where we outline the scope of work and explain with a short narrative how these funds will be expended. I can ask Duane Waseta for this statement.

Council Delegate – Can we get a statement from DCD to cover us?

Dr. Greyeyes – So what will happen if we wait on the reauthorization, it will not be signed until February. By the time the Navajo Nation gets the signed IGA it will probably be until June of next year, then it will go through the 164 process which usually takes another 2 months, then it will go to the President for his signature and back to the State for their signature. By the time we get the IGAs back to spend it will be around September of next year. So, it's a very lengthy process.

Loren Miller (LAM) – Who will be maintaining this new building?

Dr. Greyeyes – With all our new building we are having some problems maintaining them because we don't have the skill and knowledge level of our maintenance. This is true for not just our department but all across the Navajo Nation. So the Navajo Nation Facility Maintenance have decided they don't want to deal with the new buildings which means we either have to train our existing maintenance personnel or do the 105L program leases. What we want to do using these funds is to contract outside consultants to maintenance these buildings. What we are finding out is these facilities are high tech and the Navajo Nation Facility Maintenance personnel do not have certified plumbers, electricians, etc. that would know who to

maintain these buildings.

Derek Livingston – We are actually going through procurement with O&M Contractor and that's who will be taking care of the facility and we'll be using that 105L program lease funds.

Council Delegate Notah – In terms of the 105L leases, some of the newer building that were build. Is there anyone who you can rely on heavily for these buildings and is it working?

Derek Livingston – As far as the 105L leases, I believe only 2 other tribes have used this program and I think the nearest one is down in Phoenix, but for Navajo this will be their 1st time taking advantage of this program. The packet is currently going through the 164 process, once approved it'll go to the council for approval. Once the 105L lease is approved, Dr. Greyeyes will start negotiation with BIA as far as the compensation that they will get. This funding is only available to 638 programs.

Vice President Rodgers – In your floor plan discussions, you said you will be inviting the users. At what point and time will you be inviting the Office of Environmental Health? They were here at our Chapter to provide information and they did say every time a new construction is being planned, they forget to include OEH. Once the building is completed, they would come in to do an inspection of the building to make sure everything is in compliance. It would be cost efficient to have OEH at the table as well.

Parsons – We always approach OEH in our program phase, we reach out to the Ft. Defiance, Gallup, and Crownpoint Offices. I'm not sure if Tohatchi has their own OEH office, but we will get early feedback on kitchen layout plans on projects. When the final inspection occurs, we share the floor plans with OEH and we'll ask for their feedback. We also have IHS on our responsibility matrix and they will be reviewing some of the drawings. So, we are well aware of the importance of keeping OEH in the loop.

2. **Louis Sheperd and Duston Sagg with NTUA**

Louis Sheperd – I'm the right-of-way manager and we oversee the electric and communication department with NTUA. We were asked to come in to explain all the materials being hauled into the substation south of Tohatchi. Back in the early 2000 was when discussion for the Gallup/San Juan Lateral started and there were water rights being pursued with some settlements and agreements made. Based on those agreements water would be delivered from San Juan to Gallup and across to Coalmine toward Window Rock. Back in 2017, there were staff from NTUA who came here and provide information on the San Juan Lateral and that's when they requested a right-of-way which was approved. NTUA had to go to all the Chapters along the San Juan Lateral to request for support. A formal agreement was attached to the supporting resolution called Tribal Access & Authorization Agreement (TAA). This TAA had to go through the Navajo Nation for approval. This process started in 2019 and it was a lengthy process with reviews, corrections, and more meetings. In 2021 the final packet was received by the Navajo Nation and Land Department along with grazing permittees' consents. The rights-of-way allowed for access and clearance for this San Juan Lateral project. This project is currently in effect and they are 2 substations which were approved along this route. One is just south of here and the other is in Newcomb. Two tracks that were also withdrawn and they have their own lease agreement.

Duston Sagg – I'm one of the electrical engineers for NTUA and like Louis was saying, NTUA will be building a transmission line going from Cudei all the way down to Coalmine in Tse Benito. NTUA has been procuring materials for the construction of the transmission line. So of these materials have been on order for over year and these materials are starting to come in now. We have these in sections and they are split up by areas, 1st section is from Cudei to Newcomb, 2nd section is Newcomb to Tohatchi, 3rd section is Tohatchi to just between Twin Lakes and Coalmine Canyon and from there to Coalmine substation. The materials which have been delivered are the wire and steel poles. A lot of the miscellaneous materials are being delivered to the main office in Ft. Defiance, but some of the bigger items you see alongside of the road are materials we can't transport from Ft. Defiance. So, we are having them deliver to the closest site where the project will be starting from. There will be on-going deliveries, the majority of the wires are in and what you have seen being delivered over the past month have been the steel poles. Just for one section you're estimating 200-300 poles at minimum. These poles are tall and have to be brought in, in sections because they can't be transported as a whole. They are being section into 2 pieces for deliver and we anticipate poles being delivered all the way into May and the bigger poles will be delivered all the way to the end of the year because they take more time to manufacture. Just like Louis mention, all the documents as far as rights-of-way and all pertaining documents were approved by Land Administration. We are trying to

stay within those boundaries for the deliveries. The reason for the temporary fencing was for the expansion of the Tohatchi Substation. So, we try to keep all the materials within that site just so there is no vandalism of the materials being stored there. We are planning to start construction this summer but that depends on how quick the poles are manufacture and delivered. Also, there is still some biological stipulations which need to be address and of course this could hold up construction as well. We recently hired some contractors who will be coming out from Denver and their company name is "Altitude Energy." Once they start to mobilize to the site, they will be requesting to have their trailers stationed on site for convenience. We did have a meeting with the contractors and they will be developing a work schedule which we can share with the Chapter so you will know what is happening each day.

Doris Benallie – Our former Chapter President issued to the community a report back in January 2025. On there is has the San Juan Lateral Project going through, he states the lateral from Mexican Springs to Tohatchi is on-going and that letters have been sent to all permittees and residents to make sure everyone is aware of this project. He states all permittees who will be affected have signed off on this project. Going back to June 1, 2021, my mother was visited by one of your engineers, Ty Tsinnijinnie who did the survey. I happen to be there when Mr. Tsinnijinnie explain the San Juan Lateral. My mother told him "No" I don't want that water coming through my backyard. She said it's coming in from the spillage they had in Colorado and I do not want it coming to our sacred mountain in Tohatchi. Our former President called meetings with us grazing permittees, here in a meeting all of us were present that live along the pathway of the San Juan Lateral, we said no. NTUA was here at the meeting and they heard us said "no." They were asked once this comes through, are you going to increase our water bill? The gentleman said "yes, we are by 5%." I asked former President Moore if anyone is taking minutes of this meeting? Meeting was not being recorded or minutes taken. As of today, I saw this report and I visited people along this route and Melvin Muskett is a permit holder at the Mexican Springs turnoff. She said I never gave my consent and my uncle Willie Sandoval who lives east has a grazing permit and he never gave his consent. I asked my siblings if the Chapter ever send letters to your PO Box? They said "no," but according to our Grazing Official said letters were sent out.

Grazing Officer Moore – Called Point of Order. He stated that all the permittees along the route of the San Juan Lateral were signed by each individual. They were all in agreement of the lateral. I gave the names of the permittees to Land Department and they have their own field agent who visited the permittees and completes the required forms for Land Department.

Doris Benallie – Do you have copies of these letters for your records in case we ask for it?

Grazing Officer Moore – I can get that from the Land Department. Normally, big project like this, Land Department will take over the rights-of-way and grazing permittee signatures.

Laris Manuelito – My father had a grazing permit for the RMU at the time, but as it was being transferred to me and we were notified by Mr. Tsinnijinnie. Our RMU runs almost to the Muskett and Willie Sandoval sits on our RMU and he was allowed his 1 acre. So, it was ultimately it's up to us whether it's going to go through our area. We met with Land Department to make sure certain stipulations were met. Of course, I'm establishing a business in that area and they did real extensive archeological surveys and my own surveys that were done for my business is very detailed as well. Mr. Tsinnijinnie did mention they came across Anasazi sites and just to be clear we were notified and we did give consent. So, we have water twice, the Tohatchi water and the water system which we offered to Willie Sandoval. But because it's not treated, he didn't want a part of it. The Muskett's, they get our water system which is called the Ramona Water System. My grandmother went to Congress and got the water system and it was put in her name. According to EPA, I own the water system, my name is on it. The water system serves the Muskett and the Bitsilly families. Tohatchi is expanding with the new Public Safety Building and we'll need more water to accommodate the building and should be looking to get its own water tank. So, the demand is there for more water. This water lateral will also go out to people who would never have access to water if this wasn't possible. That is why I supported the water going through my RMU, once the water pipes are buried you won't see it's there.

Grazing Officer Moore – I saw that NTUA is expanding the chain link fence farther out around the substation and I'm wondering if the land has been withdrawn for the area? Was expanding the substation already in the plans back in 2017?

Louis Sheperd – Yes, the 2022 lease which was approved states 4.17 acres would be withdrawn.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – So, what is the purpose of all the materials being delivered to the substation. Is it to help with the transmission line coming through?

Duston Sagg - the waterline has booster stations along the way and the pipes for the waterline are huge. So, these booster stations will require a lot of power, which means we have to bring in a higher voltage in from Cudei to accommodate the additional load that these booster pumps are going to take. As far as the substation, the fenced area is less than the 4.17 acres, so in order for us to stay within we had to put in a temporary fence for the 4.17 acres which was already for the substation.

Doris Benallie – What you are installing the diameter of the pipes coming through, is it going to be compatible to link off to a home with the pressure and the weight to be coming into the home? I'm referring to the electrical system.

Duston Sagg – The electrical system is connected to the substation and from the substation, yes it will be distributed to the homes. So like Cudei, they have their substation and they branch off from there. The substation makes the power low enough to utilize in a building like this Chapter.

3. **Eleanor Smith** – I'm with Sacred Water Speaks and we are a non-profit 505C3 environmental organization addressing issues on Navajo. I would like to talk about TEP, (Tucson Electric Power) they are an electric company based out of Tucson, AZ. They have the electric line (transmission) coming out of the Four Corners Power Plant comes through here down to Gallup and on to Tucson. This power line has been in place for over 50 years now. Back in 1973, Navajo Nation granted TEP 102 miles of right-of-way for this power line and it's a transmission line and TEP paid the Navajo Nation a one-time payment of \$34,948.00 for the entire 50-year period. Normally, transmission line is paid per acre, per year and when we broke the numbers down per acres per year it came out to .17 cents per acre per year. During that time, we found the closest comparison of the market rate data from the 1980's. The Bureau of Land Management required transmission line developers to pay \$4.49 per acre per year for transmission line renewals in Coconino Counties so you can see there is a huge discrepancy there. Seventeen cents' verses \$4.49 back based on 1980 data. We did more research and found out how much TEP was making off the electricity and the latest information we could find was from 2023 data which showed TEP earned \$1.875 billion in revenue. These are one sided deal and now that they are back requesting for a support resolution for the renewal of their contract with the Navajo Nation. The fifty-year right-of-way has expired and now they are back on Navajo requesting for a renewal. We want to ensure not only Navajo Nation receives market rates but also the local communities who will be impacted. On the other side of the fly it lists the 14 Chapters where the transmission line comes down from the Four Corners Power Plant and this includes your Chapter here in Tohatchi. We want to make sure you get reasonable equitable benefits and of these 14 Chapters only about half of them requested for community benefits. So, TEP came through here with their representatives Sonoran Land Resources, their consultant. They met with Chapter and they asked for a resolution. I believe this Chapter passed a supporting resolution and we want to make sure every Chapter that will be affected will ask for some community benefits. We want to ensure that the community benefits that the Chapters are requesting is more consistent, that's more in line with the market rate. So, the current rates that BLM has is between \$200-300 per acre per year. This would be a significant increase over a 50-year period. But that's the current market rate BLM is requiring transmission line developers to pay per acre per year. Right now, TEP is in negotiations with the Navajo Nation, I believe it's the Minerals Department and DOJ. There is a letter we helped draft and at the Bread Springs District 6 meeting they passed this resolution requesting for these rates and community benefits for their Chapter. The Eastern Agency Navajo Council also passed resolutions which speaks to the new rates with BLM. I will be presenting again at Naschitti Chapter for the District 14 Agency meeting. I've been working with Council Delegate Notah and Lester Yazzie and they are in support of this effort.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – TEP were here at our Chapter several times and we were requesting for scholarship money for our students. We were hoping the funds can come straight to the Chapter but we were told it would have to go to W/R for them to allocation the funds.

Eleanor Smith – According to Rowena Cheromiah with the Minerals Department, she said all they are negotiation for is rate and I believe it's \$5000 to the Navajo Nation Scholarship Office which is available to our students across Navajo and that's all they are negotiation for right now. So, this letter would be asking

TEP to negotiation directly with the Chapters. This is something we asked Rowena, can Chapters negotiation with TEP and she said yes. Because precedence has been set by Navajo Nation Oil and Gas where some Chapters do receive benefits from them.

Pernell Halona – My dad was working with this company when it was agreed to run a transmission line through Navajo. Before the lease was done, he was trying to get the residents who lived alongside this line free electricity. The residents wanted to be compensated and the free electricity as well. If TEP is bringing in \$1.875 billion in revenue, we could have had free electricity for life. We need to get something out of this negotiation.

Laris Manuelito – They are doing something similar with the solar farms up north. They are asking for scholarship funds and I think we need to control the negotiations as to how much and not only for scholarships for other things. Federal spending, they usually ask for a big amount and they usually get half of their requested amount.

Doris Benallie – We found out the owner of TEP, the president is getting 12 numbers dollars into his account. He is making a lot of money off of us. I know \$5000 that was approved with a resolution because we specified in that resolution that scholarship funding will come directly to the Chapter not to W/R. If W/R is saying what you are telling us our Council Delegate is not doing his work for us as we requested which is a problem.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – So, even though we submitted a resolution saying we support TEP to renew their contract with the Navajo Nation, we can still submit another resolution?

Eleanor Smith – What we would like you to do is to amend the 1st resolution you submitted and add what the community would like to see as benefits. The letter should be sent out right away to TEP.

4. **Laris Manuelito** – What I have drafted is a resolution to make improvements to the NM State Highway 491 from Twin Lakes to Naschitti. This is a District 14 initiative; I spoke with Mexican Springs community members and they are pretty much on board. Their main concern they have is the highway lightening along 491. I am requesting approval and support for the improvements to enhance the safety, sustainability, and accessibility of NM State Highway 491. The project overview is the sustainability for heavy traffic management, to increase lighting, and install turnouts for the families who did not receive one when the new highway was put in. These proposed improvements to NM Highway 491 from Twin Lakes to Naschitti are vital for the well-being and safety of our community.

Doris Benallie – Called Point of Order: TEP has been trying to get this passed for the last 2 years. I want to thank Laris for her resolution. I would like to ask her to add the tort claim that we sent to Santa Fe. When you hit one of the “pots holes.” you can submit an incident report within 90 days to Santa Fe. Also, the asphalt they install to replace needs to be compatible to hold the weight of these 18 wheels. Not the band aid job they do. As far as the 90 days to submit, ask if they can change that to a year because the majority of our seniors get a onetime payment monthly.

Geneva Begay – I want to bring up the highway lighting, when you pass the high school turnoff there is the flashing light which should be moved farther south before the turnoff to the school. This way the truckers can see that there is a turn off to the school. These truckers have been speeding through there and not seeing the flashing light until they are upon the turnoff to the school.

VP Rodgers – I do see that as a problem. It’s just too compact right there and they should put this flashing light next to the sign that says “reduce speed to 40 mph” because people are just rushing through here. Maybe we need speed bumps.

Doris Benallie- I did mention to the State Governor in gal that we have 18 wheelers speeding through our community and our lighting needs to be installed and taken care of. I asked the Governor, we have 2 state police and a sheriff living in Tohatchi and how come they don’t help us to keep us safe? When you ask them for assistance, they will tell you it’s out of their jurisdiction.

***Council Delegate’s Report:** Not in attendance.

***Community Service Coordinator/Officials’ Report:**

1. **Update on status of Senior Center discrepancies** –

Maria, CSC – We are waiting for the Naschitti Senior Center Supervisor to setup a meeting with OEH to do another walk through. We are hoping to open up the Senior Center this month. She did do some interviews with applicants for the Senior Center, but we have not heard who she has selected as the new

employees for the center.

2. Report on Safety Complex –

Maria, CSC – As you heard, we had a teleconference meeting with Parsons who is overseeing our Safety Complex project. Dr. Greyeyes handled the reauthorizations of the IGA's with the State of NM back in January. These IGA's were set to expire in June of 2025. So, we will wait to hear from the State if they approve our request for reauthorization. Parsons also mention the design of the Safety Complex that is why they schedule a meeting in Twin Arrows so we can tour the Safety building there on March 19th at 9am.

3. Bike Trail documents update -

Maria, CSC – Cynthia Freeman and Mr. Rodgerick Begay are going over the MOU that was submitted to them by the Bike Trail Organization. I received a call back from Ms. Freeman stating there has been a huge turn around in their department and is waiting to share the MOU with Mr. Begay.

4. Update on Eastflats Water Drilling -

Maria, CSC – We had a meeting on February 18th with Colin Daly and he gave updates on the drilling projects. Right now, Pamela Dennison is working on her homesite lease and the Chapter did cut her a check for the archeological survey. I have not heard from Charlene Manuelito so I don't know where she is at with her homesite lease request. According to Land Department, she did turn in her application for homesite, but they are waiting on the surveys to be completed. I tried reaching out to her by email and cell phone but she did not return my calls. As far as Vince Natonabah is concern, I'm not sure how far along his probate is at. I believe it is still pending with Crownpoint court. I have not heard from him.

Priscilla Duncan – I called Vince and he said his application for probate is still pending with the courts in Crownpoint.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – Just to follow up on the eastflats drilling projects. There are 6 families who have had their well drilled and they did the testing on the water. The first 4 families had good water pressure and they will be able to drink the water. The last two wells that were drilled which includes Theresa Bryant, their water wasn't potable because of the high level of fluoride but they can install filters to help reduce the fluoride. The 1st 4 families are getting 5 gallons per minutes which is more than a house would need according to Colin and the last 2 families are getting 2 gallons per minute which should be fine. The installation of the pipes which will be going from the wells into the homes will start this month with Stewart Brothers. So, all in all the eastflat water drilling project is a huge success. These families are very happy to have water readily available to them after years of having to haul water. Thank you, Tohatchi Chapter.

Maria, CSC – Colin Daly is planning to setup another meeting with the families here at the Chapter and once I get a date and time, I'll notify the families.

5. Update on Chapter Audit –

Maria, CSC – The policies we submitted to DOJ is pending because the auditor we were working with, Dory Goldberg left the department on February 14th. The policies were handed over to another attorney name Rodriquez Morris. I emailed Rodgerick Begay to ask if we will be going with the changes that Mr. Morris is making on our policies. He stated, let him review the policies and setup a meeting with him to get him up to speed on where you are at with the policies. I also contacted Helen Brown, the auditor who stated she will be back with her team to do another audit on the Chapter which was suppose to happen in the 1st quarter of the new year. Now, we are in 2nd quarter and I still have not heard from her. We just want to make sure we are in compliance and doing business correctly.

6. Update on Chapter 2025 Budget –

Maria, CSC – The 2nd half of the budget has been approved but it was not hit the Wind system. I have not received any other information other than the budget has been approved. In the meantime, I've been checking the Wind system so I can start working on our budget for the Chapter. If we receive our budget this week, I'll have to draft up a resolution to get it approved by the community. If I don't get anything this week, the resolution will have to wait until next month in April.

7. Status on the re-authorization of State Funds –

Maria, CSC – I have Elvis and Jean assist me with the documents to have State Representative Wonda Johnson sign our re-authorization. The re-authorizations are for the septic tank cleaning and the funds for Nakai Park to be moved over to the Safety Complex project. They carried the documents to Santa Fe to get signatures. She did sign our documents but we are waiting on the State to stamp our documents for approval.

Usually, we will get a letter with the signatures and stamp from the State, but we haven't received our letter as of yet.

8. Status on the executive orders being issued by President Trump –

Laris Manuelito – I spoke with Casey Begay, LDA and I will be meeting him at the District 14 meeting this evening. I am hoping our Council Delegate Notah will drop a legislation regarding our resolution. I also talked with Council Delegate Amber Crotty.

Priscilla Duncan – On the resolution, make sure you attach a transmittal letter to the resolution. On one of the resolutions which was approved by the Chapter did not have a transmittal letter so there it was not taken as priority.

Gerald Moore – Ivan Joe is not there but they have Treva Henio and I believe they worked together.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – I did reach out to Council Delegate Notah to let him know it's important that we are updating and informing our community as to what is going in Washington DC. He did say he was going to forward some updates to me, but I never received an email from him. Maybe he'll make our meeting before we adjourn today.

Doris Benallie – I have some concerns with the report that Sonny Moore gave to us on January 14th. Under education, the McKinley County Schools and Chooshgai Schools states they have low proficiency rates. According to the report from the School Board that comes out from McKinley County Schools, Tohatchi is rated number 3. Rural Addressing, this project has been going on for many years. Warehouse, when people say it's shovel ready, have the shovels already been purchased? The warehouse is requesting for \$990,000 again. This was discussed with State Representative Johnson and I'm wondering if she has a resolution regarding this amount before this 60-day session is over which will be March 21st. I gave her a copy of this and I let her know what all goes on here. She wasn't too happy about seeing her name on this document. Highway Lighting, 2015 we lost so many funding for this project year after year. It also states resolutions has been shared with NM State Legislators, specifically who? All these resolutions are suppose to be in Wonda Johnson's hands. She doesn't have them for the highway lighting. Before, Sonny would put her name as being present for the agenda and she's seen the agenda, but she said I never confirmed to be there. Let him know do not put my name on anything unless I concur. I mention this to Sonny so many times.

Eastflat drilling, there are 9 participates, is Charles Arviso's name on this list? Do they all have homesite leases? I ask because a lot of these people do not live down there. Some live in rental units in Twin Lakes housing. The Smith family is an example, Calvin Smith lives in Gallup and does not live in the home which their mother had a homesite lease. I don't understand why they said let's do water drill down that way. Their house is a storage area. They haven't probate that homesite lease. I say this complaint because my mother when ARPA funds first came out and this is for the record. My mother requested for an electrical upgrade for her home which is about 40-50 years old. Specifically, our previous Vice President said she needs a homesite lease and she did the paperwork to request for a homesite lease. Two years went by and my mother didn't have hot water. I researched by mother's homesite by census number and she did have a homesite lease which was dated back in 1990 something. I asked Mike Halona why they could not find it in their system. The Chapter couldn't reach out to help her. This APRA funding is suppose to rescue families.

A couple of individuals don't live in the eastflats, they live in Gallup in a rental unit. That's their 2nd home, why is the Chapter drilling water for their 2nd home? Why are you holding double standards when my mother lives right here and you couldn't reach out to help her.

San Juan Lateral, for the record: letters have been sent to permittees, we never got a letter, ever. It says to stay in contact with Grazing Officer, but he doesn't have these letters to prove this is the document you signed. ARPA funds, how many people have we rescued with these federal funds? Waterline extensions, it states these requests were made through the NM Portal to be effective in 2025, work with State Representative Johnson. You put her name here, but in time you will come back to say "she doesn't help us, don't vote for her,"

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – Called Point of Order

Doris Benallie – one more statement, some people were suppose to be here on the topic of To'sidoh Project. Edwin Begay says to speak on his behalf, we didn't approve this project.

Helen Brown, auditor who I know personally, I asked her as an auditor why she didn't go to white collar crime investigation to have these dollars investigated. She replied, she didn't know it was her responsibility.

I told her it is her responsibility.

Laris Manuelito – I would like to make a recommendation when we amend our resolution that we put in amounts requesting not only for scholarships, we can identify like elders, veterans, housing, and public safety. I would request \$250,000 for each and that comes up to \$1,250,000. I believe the sky is the limit for \$8.1 billion. We'll give them an amount and they will negotiate from there so I think we should give them amounts for as much as we can because they'll try and lower it anyway. We'll need maintenance budget for the Safety Complex.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – This a reply to Doris Benallie, we have meetings with Representative Johnson all the time. I don't know why she would say she doesn't want her name on documents. She is the one who comes here to make recommendations and we've worked very closely with her for the past 4 years. She's been very active and participates in our meetings and she will ask us to reach out to her when we need assistance. I just wanted to clarify this.

Priscilla Duncan – I would like to know what happen with the housing project under the CHID program? I remember 10 families were selected but we have not heard any updates.

Maria, CSC – We submitted 10 applications and all the assessments were completed but only 8 families were selected because the other families did not have a homesite lease. These families had the opportunity to submit for a homesite lease, but they never attempted to try. Last I heard, CHID was still deciding on what type of home would be best, a mobile home, modular home, or just building the house up from the ground. I believe it all goes back to the cost of each home and what would be cost efficient. With the 8 selected, 3 would need a 1 bedroom, the others will need 4 or more bedrooms.

***CLUPC Report and Red Willow Report**

***Red Willow Farm** – Report given by Geneva Begay: We have our portable building setup at Red Willow Farm now and we did some cleaning of the building. We also attended a reservation wide meeting and USDA was in attendance. They said their office is located in Chinle so if you want to see USDA and NRCS you'll be speaking to Treva Henio. They also stated they only have 3 staff to oversee the Navajo Nation. On conservation planning, there was a work session with 1st Nation last year and they gave us an incentive. Some of us did do a conservation plan but we did have a good turn out for the work session. We are hoping to bring 1st Nation back in again to do more conservation planning. I don't believe any of the permittee holders in our community has a conservation plan, but it is a big issue. BIA was assisting with the Chooshgai Lake project but funds have been frozen. We do have funding for the diversion dam which is in the works with Water Resource. We can also request for matching funds from USDA.

The Farm & Garden Incentives were also depleted for 2025, but there are incentives for ranchers. We only hope there will be funding next year. Also, our pollinators are becoming extinct; for example: bees, butterflies, bats and these little animals who are pollinators so if you are going to do some gardening, we recommend you plant flowers and surround with dead wood for these pollinators to make their nest. As far as the RWF, if you have not planted for the past 2 years, your plot has been cancelled. You can come to our RWF meeting to request for a 2-acre plot. We do plan to run the irrigation water this year which will be tested in April. We've been working with Nathaniel Sam using a map system with the water well now being upgraded. We hope to see more farmers requesting for plots to farm.

Laris Manuelito – I put in a permit 5 years ago with my son and I'm still waiting on the permit. I can't work my land if I don't have the permit.

Geneva Begay – Jerome Willie with BIA has retired, Calvin Curley has since filled his position as Acting Director.

Laris Manuelito – This area I'm speaking of was grandfathered in because my great grandmother had their names on the old maps. Now, you are going to 2-acre plots which I don't care for because I plan to use my agricultural for commercial agricultural but I can't do anything if I don't have a permit. So, where is my permit so I can work the land? My intention was to work with local farms to bring farm to table incentives at my store and at the other stores I'm establishing. I'm working with Shiprock and Haystack and they will be the 1st to ask why I'm not working with RWF, but Red Willow is not working with me. I can't do commercial farming with just 2 acres.

Geneva Begay – We have been advertising in District 14 and working with Council Delegate Notah. We also have an elder week program, which will supply food boxes to elders who are over 55 years old. You can

fill out an application and you'll be given a food box or a WIC card to go to the Farmers Market in Shiprock, Farmington, Ramah, and in Gallup which opens in July and ends in November.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – Will it be income based?

Geneva Begay – Yes, it will be based of the Federal Income

Lucinda Barney – I would like to support Laris in her request for more than 2 acres at RWF. I believe your policy can be amended. For example; my grandmother had an 8-acre plot which they worked for years and I know that will never be given back to my family. I believe RWF should work with Laris because she will need produce for her new store.

Geneva Begay – We like to see dirt moved then we'll see if it really is going to happen, until then we have to see it.

Laris Manuelito – If you can amend the policy so I can at least start working on the burn to get my soil ready. I thought we had to have a permit to start moving dirt.

Geneva Begay – We want to see the farmers come back to Red Willow because last year we only had 3 farmers who planted.

Doris Benallie – I'm a member of RWF and our family had 8 acres at Red Willow and the last time we farmed down there was in 1981. We farmed only 2 acres; farming is hard work. Are our children going to farm, hoe, and pull weeds.

Elvis Bitsilly – Back to the ALUP's, those of you who have recognized your plot, we encourage you to come back and apply again. We have a meeting tomorrow at 1pm and we can have this discussion then. If you haven't been doing anything with your plots, that's on you and not us. We've been advertising every month and we are trying to encourage farmers to come back. Myself, Vice chair, and secretary, we done a lot of work at Red Willow Farm in the past years and it is starting to look much better. We are just doing our part and the biggest problem was getting funding for our farm. I have 2 new farmers coming in tomorrow to farm 2 acres.

***Grazing Officer Moore's Report:**

Grazing Officer Moore – We had horse training and orientation last week in Tsaille. I made some contacts with Dine College and of course we will be starting some of the educational trainings again here at the Chapter on livestock, farming, a one-day class on agricultural. I do have a resolution coming from I believe Western Agency in reference to a 3% livestock reduction due to drought. We encourage you to sell some of your livestock and the cattle prices have been very good. There were also new grazing policies which will be forthcoming and get a resolution and legislation drafted to put before council. Also, the availability of homesite around Tohatchi is very limited. I want to stress again; range condition is very poor.

Lucinda Barney – Is the USDA office in Gallup still open?

Grazing Officer Moore – yes, you can call Kimberly Johnson with the Agricultural Department at 928-871-6605 will get you to the front office. You can also call 928-871-7046. As far as horse gathering, they have completed several here in our area. They gathered 99 feral horses from Mexican Springs to Naschitti.

RESOLUTIONS:

1. Resolution to request for 491 Highway to be improved from Twin Lakes to Naschitti.
2. Resolution to authorizing and supporting the Tohatchi Chapter and the Grazing Committee member to implement an indefinite Feral Horse, stray and unclaimed livestock removal program in efforts to improve the ecological health and productivity of the Navajo rangeland.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Maria CSC - We do have a special meeting on Tuesday March 11th from 7am-7pm. District 14 Agency Meeting today at Naschitti. CLUPC work session on March 17th and a regular on the 18th of March. We have Dine Youth coming in on March 20th. Also we still have 2 wire hay available for sale and it is \$10 a bale. We do have wood, but it's for emergency assistance only for community members who are in need. We still have "free" coal bags available as well. If you have coal voucher, you can still pickup your coal to the end of this month. Remember, please do not sell the coal vouchers or the coal. It was reported to me that someone tried to sell a coal voucher and was caught. This hurts the community because they will decrease the number of coal vouchers we will receive next year.

District 14 Grazing Meeting on March 5th at 9am.

Two candidates running for Tohatchi Chapter President: Elvis Bitsilly and Pernell Halona.

Elvis Bitsilly – I've been here as a committee member for the past 4 years. I've experienced plenty working with staff, CLUPC, RWF, Chapter, and the Navajo Nation Council. What I bring to the table is the awareness, experience, and knowledge. We have a list of 17 projects that are ongoing and we need to complete these projects. I want to work with the veterans, the youth, schools, county, state, and elders. I like the open communication we have with the staff which means our job easier. What I propose is having a staff and leadership meeting to discuss the next 4 years.

Pernell Halona – I moved back to our community 20 years ago. I graduate from Tohatchi and went to San Juan College for my business degree. I worked for NAPI for 20 years and when I started there, we had 3000 acres and eventually moved to 6000 acres of alfalfa. Then I started the pumpkin project and had 200 acres and during the 12 years that I ran the pumpkin operation and increased to 9000 acres total. So, I was in marketing and farming a long time ago. My dad encouraged me to go into politics and run for Council Delegate which I did. I did a lot of work for the Navajo Nation and save them a lot of money. I also chased away bad people working for the Nation. After COVID happen, I wanted to get the CLUPC program under control and to start working together with the other Chapters in District 14. What I learned is if you want things done, you have to get out there to get signatures and push your paperwork along. I started the audit for our Chapter because I wanted to get the Chapter certified. As a leader, I plan to work with the staff and officials to get things down for our community.

VIII. NEXT CHAPTER MEETING DATE: March 21, 2025 @ 10am

X. ADJOURNMENT: 1:50pm

Submitted by;



Jean Crawford, Secretary/Treasurer, Tohatchi Chapter – March 20, 2025

cc: Ms. Lee Rodgers, Vice President

Mr. Gerald Moore, Grazing Officer

Ms. Maria Allison, CSC

Mr. Nathan Notah, Council Delegate