



Tohatchi Veterans Organization
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Commander: Manuel Shirleson

Vice-Commander: Laris Manuelito

Secretary: Rosie Deschiney

Sergeant of Arms: Franklin Sandoval

MINUTES

Friday: April 11, 2025, at 10:00 am
Tohatchi Chapter House

1. Meeting Called to Order by: Vice-Commander, Laris Manuelito at 10:11 AM
 - A. Roll Call: Commander
Commander – Manuel Shirleson _____ Vice-Commander – Laris Manuelito X
Secretary/Treasurer: Rosie Deschiney X Non-Commission Officer, Paul Begay
(NCO) X
Sergeant of Arms: Franklin Sandoval X Chaplin: Milton Shirleson X
Manuel Shirleson attending the Fort Defiance Agency Veteran Organization meeting at Tse Bonito to select a new FDAVO Commander.
 - B. Invocation By: Vice President, Lee Rodgers
 - C. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence for 'MIA-POW-KIA" done by all in attendance.
2. Review/Approval of the Agenda: The Vice-Commander read the agenda to include several visitors: Arthur Harry and Gilbertina Jackson, and several young attendees.

Motion to accept the Agenda with amendments by: Charles Arviso, Second: Cecil Pinto,
Vote: 17 in favor, 0 opposing, 2 abstentions
3. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes. Minutes distributed to all attendees. Motion to read the minutes on your own by Ernest Leslie, seconded by Gerald Bia, vote 13 in favor, 0 opposing 4.
4. Introduction of Guest(s): Arthur Hardy, Jr., Legislative Staff Assistant from the Window Rock Office of the Speaker, Gilbertina Jackson, AMS with the Ft. Defiance Agency Office, proud of new veterans in attendance, Roy Yazzie, Morris Keams and Cody Francis all introduced themselves. Cody Francis served with the US Marines from 2012 to 2017, first veterans meeting.

Arthur Hardy, Jr, working with the Legislative Branch as Legislative Staff Assistant who also served in the Army, reporting that veterans can get a free fishing license, Housing Policies Program changes under Legislation HEHSCP-03-25, that was recently revised. There is a Project Manager named William Nez should you have any questions.

The recent legislation they are working on is "SUPPORTING AND APROVING THE RECOMMENDATION TO INCREASE THE ANNUALS TRUST FUND SET-ALONE FROM FOUR PERCENT TO TWELVE PERCENT" sponsored by Andy Nez. Lester Yazzie who serves on the B&F Committee is working on this resolution and how this might have an impact on the overall investment in the long run, so if you take away from the principal, your money might to fall short.

The administration are asking for 12% that is not approved yet. If you want to support the Legislation, send in your supporting resolution to Lester Yazzie.

The Supplemental budget is supported by Vince James in the amount of \$5,000.00. There is money at the chapter of which 2,500.00 was already sent through the first quarter. One other is Legislation is under the Codification the Navajo Nation Veterans under the Executive Branch. The extra 50% of the budget you will be getting soon.

Charles questions what happened with the Veteran's Act?

Another problem we have is that once these resolutions are signed at the chapters, copies of the documents are not shared with the Legislative Branch, we don't know where they go.

Presently Lester Yazzie is working on the legislation to incorporate utilities for the veterans.

Arthur also handed out information on what will be happening this month, one example is working with Bobbie Baldwin on Sexual Harassment policies. You are welcome to come to his office to share your frustration you are dealing with.

Ryan Sandoval, one of our visitors, has a complaint on their commander who always denies our request. Twin Lakes veterans are not working with one another. Maybe you can provide guidance on how we can fix our situation at our chapter. We don't have a standard chain of command.

Morris Keams appreciates Arthur present, I am in need of help with the roof, ceiling, and electrical, this was approve all of sudden they were out of funding. After that I met with Bobbie Baldwin, she never called me back. I'm going to come to your office and ask you the same thing, I hope you will be able to help me. Arthur provided his phone number 505/422-7601 to the veterans should they have any question(s).

Does our Chapter Council Delegate have this information, not all delegates do not know.

5. Old Business: No discussion

6. New Business: Franklin Sandoval stated that under the old business whom is replacing Patrick Sandoval and other changes i.e. housing for the veterans, we would like to get on

that list, questioning the 6% increase, where is it coming from, and when; increase on chapter funds, is in the present budget or until next year?

Lymen Kinsel, needs help with his house repairs, where do I go to get assistance?

Nancy Allison questioned if this includes surviving spouses, reported the condition of her house that was built by the Chapter. Arthur noted that after the initial warranty is up it is the homeowners are responsible for their repairs. Check with the chapter's discretionary funds,

Laris mentioned that only the fees are covered. If you get your homesite lease and if you have a non-veteran spouse, then you don't qualify for the fees or labor even though you are a veteran. We can changed these policies.

Gilbertina Jackson did her presentation, I have copies of the housing policies that you can have which is available on the website. We have the trust fund too, to apply for hardship, surviving spouse is eligible for renovation only. I do have the quarterly report that covers the detail information on NNBA for the pass quarter. Shiprock closed their doors, giving Ft. Defiance more work to cover their area. Every veteran can apply for two hardships annually, two energy and one for self-help under the home improvement. With the daily request, the balances constantly changes. The increase budget will show an increase once the resolution is approved. Be patient on these changes. All funds are available every October 1, at which time they can apply. The max available is \$400.00 when can we apply for this? The posting of the transfer is done once the resolution is approved and submitted. The past request were submitted by our secretary at the time, but now we have to apply at your office. She explained that the hardship funding is given to the first applicant, and if you're late you will receive what is available balance. For housing is very strict under a new constructure or if you already have a house, you are eligible for renovation. You need to follow through with your application and ask questions. If you don't get help, go see William Nez. She shared information flyers on what other chapters are planning. Explained the process of all request depending there is enough funding available. The out of town veterans apply on line and we assist them with their request. All request have to be submitted before the 20th of each month. General claim forms are also completed by Gilbertina when Fallyn is not available. The Honor Guard payments are done separately.

Laris express her appreciation to the presenters after the meeting.

Randy Pinto, this is his first meeting who lives in Gallup, served in the Army for 19 years and served overseas.

Questions on why the Council Delegate is never in attendance.

Lee Rodgers explained how busy the Council Delegate is, but he does helps and supports

our organization, not directly but he did talk with Legislative to send a representative to answer needed questions. Sonny Moore, LDA wasn't here to meet with us today representing Nathan Notah. Although people are frustrated we need to be patient.

7. Resolution(s); "APPROVING THE TOHATCHI CHAPTERS' ORGANIZATION BUDGET TRANSFER OF REMAINING VETERANS TRUST FUND DOLLARS FROM PROGRAMS AND STIPENDS TO HARDSHIP TO ASSIST VETERANS WITH ADDITIONAL FUNDING" is hereby tabled by a motion made by Gerald Bia, seconded by Ernest Leslie. Vote 17-0-3.

Lee Rodgers questioned: How is the Hardship funding is used? Charles explained that this funding can be used to purchase food. This funding should also be used for per diem. Some members have not received this assistance.

The Twin Lakes evenly gives each member the same amount.

One other suggestion is to have a special meeting on April 18, 2025 to visit the resolution.

8. Honor/Color Guards Reports: Charles Arviso express his appreciation that our Vice-Commander is available to run the meeting today. We were scheduled to do one at Gallup, but the deceased did not complete all necessary documentation. He also express the need to have younger member to serve and attend the veterans meeting.
9. Officers Reports: Laris announced that she was invited to join the Women Air Born paratroopers

Roy Yazzie would like some direction or advice on how to get Twin Lakes get back on their feet. We did have Honor Guards at one time.

On Memorial Day we will clean the cemetery as usual and bring old flags to be properly retire them. We would also serve breakfast and the donation list was distributed.

The Ft. Defiance Agency Meeting is scheduled for July 11, 2025. Laris would like to do resolution in: "SUPPORTING AND APPROVING THE RECOMMENDATION TO INCREASE THE ANNUAL VETERANS TRUST FUND SET-ASIDE FROM FOUR PERCENT TO TWELVE PERCENT"

Second resolution: RESCINDING FDAVO-01-25-04 APPROVING AND RECOMMENDING TOTAL INCREASE OF ANNUAL VETERANS TRUST FUND SET-ASIDE FROM FOUR PERCENT TO SIX PERCENT.

We should also do a resolution to reflect what FD Veterans completed.

Laris is recommending that we should consider other Resolutions at the special meeting. And requesting the establishment and supporting the comprehensive guidelines of future housing construction and more.

TVO Meeting: 4/11/25


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Announcement(s); Ernest Leslie would like to do "Adopt a Highway" for James Nakai. He was instructed to check with the transportation department at Buffalo Springs. He was a great veterans and a member the Navajo Code Talkers.

During the last meeting the organization requested for a bulletin board to post all veteran announcements.

10. Next TVO Meeting is scheduled for May 2, 2025
11. Ft. Defiance Agency Meeting: July 11, at 10:00 at Lupton.
12. Announcement(s): Special meeting scheduled for April 25, 2025, at 10:00 AM
Recommendation to clean up the Veterans Park, cut down the old trees or maybe fence the park. Possibility to use the Unhealthy Food Tax.
13. Adjournment at 2:00 PM motion by: Phillip James, Seconded by: Cecil Pinto, Vote: Unanimous

Submitted by:



Rosie Deschiney

Attachments: