



THE NAVAJO NATION

TOHATCHI COMMUNITY LAND USE PLANNING COMMITTEE

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Elvis Bitsilly
President

Pernell Halona
Vice-President

Delphine Bitsilly
Recorder

Fern Spencer
Member

Priscilla Duncan
Member

TOHATCHI COMMUNITY LAND USE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Tuesday March 18, 2025

- I. Call to Order: Time: 9:25 am Roll Call: 5 Invocation: Fern Spencer
- II. Introduction of Guests: Rachelle Morris, Eulanda Thompson, Doris Benallie, Howard Leonard, Jr., Flora Nez, Lee Rodgers
- III. Approval of Agenda: Next meeting change to April 15, 2025 from March 18, 2025
Motion to approve: Fern Spencer 2nd: Priscilla Duncan Vote: 4-0-1
- IV. Approval of Minutes: Tuesday, February 18, 2025
Motion to read on your own: Priscilla Duncan 2nd: Fern Spencer Vote: 4-0-1
- V. Old Business:
 - A. Tohatchi Bike Trail Update/Review, Maria Allison-CSC
Maria Allison – there's a lot to pay off the \$7000, Patricia Begay – ASC, DCD to OMB to OOC to Risk Management, attorney general reviewed it, they need an updated resolution, we are using the wrong contract forms, we were told what documents are missing from packet, we added everything, we will meet with Cynthia Freeman and go over the packet, Cynthia said explain to me how this whole thing started, IMBA, how did GMCS get involved, need a MOU, all the documents given to Cynthia, our last meeting March 5, what's the project and how it will benefit the chapter, chapter will pay this and IMBA will pay this amount, since the chapter is doing this, chapter must do the 164 process, what's the difference, 164 process is the bidding and approval, sole source and micro, she will get back with us, contract with IMBA and is a sole source, letter written by Larry Rodgers, talk to Roderick Begay, in the meantime requesting through the 164 process, a 12 page document to fill out; Fern Spencer – how did Thoreau get it; Maria Allison – Thoreau is checkered board, other people donated the money; Fern Spencer – does IMBA have any input; Maria Allison – they request for updates, their consultant works with the chapter; Doris Benallie – Kevin Mitchell brought to the meeting, questioned him about this project, did you get permission from the grazing owners; Fern Spencer – use the cross country trails, we would use and clean up the area.
 - B. NN Economic Development/Updates on Tohatchi Projects- Flora Nez
Flora Nez – all businesses can be put online, business of storage across the high school, the individual hasn't bring in the business plan, we send them the information, Rental Flick, TAOS has the 25 year lease and you have to talk with them, a 5 year plan, a 1 year plan to clean up areas, Laris store on the 5 year plan, the Red Willow project, 14 chapters I work with and it's possible to build with the water along the highway, you can tap into it, I'm busy going to the sites, looking at CLUPC book and it is good, I applied for a grant, infrastructure, training for store workers, building, 90-120 days before we will hear from them, another report from DED, enter into the portal, OOC to put initial on it, once accepted the delegate will write support letters from council and community, did you submit a letter with the resolution to have the gas station instead of Fleet; Elvis Bitsilly – I

haven't write a letter, new chapter president will submit a letter, I will resign Red Willow Farm; **Flora Nez** – Waste management area (Old Orchard Site) – are there any plans; **Elvis Bitsilly** – open right now, what the community would want, get Sinclair here and laundromat; **Flora Nez** – buyer is in training, once training is completed they can get a loan to startup the business then can apply for a loan from Navajo Nation, how the vetoes from the Council will affect us, my boss is attending a chapter orientation; **Elvis Bitsilly** – the site we are talking about, the land has been withdrawn, Veterans site and land across the high school are withdrawn, chapter has a list and we're going to follow through, the professional housing and haven't hear from Land Department, what's going on with this project; **Flora Nez** – Elvis you must be in Window Rock all the time, needed RDC signature, the 164 process; **Elvis Bitsilly** – yes you have to hand carry your documents; **Pernell Halona** – people get upset when you ask questions, review and agree, why does it take so long; **Elvis Bitsilly** – funding is the main source; **Flora Nez** – what do you need help with, you need a new survey, we found homesites within the business site; **Doris Benallie** – the Tohatchi Trading Post, it's a historical site, will you tear it down; **Flora Nez** – we need to check with the Historical Preservation, I would like to see the 5 year plan, I've heard the 20 year plan, when I worked for BIA, I leave work at work; **Rachelle Morris** – the professional building, what is that; **Elvis Bitsilly** – professional housing; **Fern Spencer** – cut down trees at the Veterans park; **Doris Benallie** – make it a Veterans Park so they can keep up the park, can the PEP upkeep the park, it's a safety issue now, professional building, \$100,000 given to Chuska for the housing, money given to NHA, BIA gave chapter \$100,000, Elvis is productive and I can see his work; **Fern Spencer** – bridge replacement, hold up is the tribe; **Pernell Halona** – they came and surveyed, **Fern Spencer** – Veterans given money and didn't use the money; **Doris Benallie** – Delegate Notah stated comments from Governor via February minutes; **Pernell Halona** – money gets stuck in Window Rock, I need these projects done, they don't work on more than one project at a time, Andy Thomas; **Flora Nez** – who works with you; **Elvis Bitsilly** – Erma Julian, Rachelle, what trees; **Fern Spencer** – trees are dead; **Rachelle Morris** – trees need to be prune; **Pernell Halona** – cut down trees; **Fern Spencer** – get a group together to cut down trees; **Doris Benallie** – summer students, **Fern Spencer** – student council to work, parents say no; **Doris Benallie** – CLUPC can do a policy for the summer students, there's a lot of work to do, Elvis was the LDA for Larson, he spent all the money for the projects; **Flora Nez** – I'll be here every month; **Elvis Bitsilly** – we are working on our 5 year plan.

VI. New Business:

A. Navajo Nation Fish & Wildlife- Climate Change Presentation/ Howard Leonard, Jr

Howard Leonard, Jr. – talk about the earth, what's going on, problem with overgrazing – feral horses, Jessie Jim works at Agriculture, feral horses are being addressed, 6-7 of us on the Navajo Nation, climate change – look back at history, combustion – electricity, carbon dioxide, gas, NASA and NOAA – those gases are not going away, blamed it on the power plants on the Navajo Nation, Page is no longer there, history from the medicine man regarding the land, Bill of Rights – people can practice their own religion, industrial plants expanded – 10 fold, fast forward to 1880 – shared his knowledge from how climate change became about and how the Navajo language became the language to use in World War II, 1998 – we need to start something with climate change, the rich people are the ones who run the power companies, the threshold - 1.5 Celsius or lower, countries like China, India who have all smoke, it's more towards adaptation – it doesn't go away, University of Arizona – Dr. Carletta Chee – Navajo, how are we going to reduce Carbon Dioxide, methanoyl or gas, NASA, we are already in a drought, North Carolina – never seen Tornados in the area, how do we talk to our children – turn off the electricity and water, what did you learn today, education and prayer come from home, how we got a hold of Mr. Bitsilly through Red Willow, sometimes it takes a lifetime to come back, co-worker graduated from NMSU, EPA – trash, waste management to get

in their mind to clean up trash, Restoration – look at goals and objectives according to funding, this burn happened in 2014, how the fire got started, 14,000 acres burned, put rock dams here and there, pink is ash where things won't grow back (map), children of a certain age cannot use machinery, working on the boundaries in what I can do, Shundiin Livingston – drip irrigation farming, has lot of ideas, how it works, getting to as many chapters as we can; **Fern Spencer** – do you do presentations in schools; **Howard Leonard, Jr.** – yes; **Fern Spencer** – they took out our agriculture, shop, home economics from the school, GMCS changed their curriculum, Business and Technology, students who like to work with their hands, yes they are building a new high school, we don't have auto mechanics, shop, agriculture, they call it the CT program, they take students to Gallup, they must have all credits, students can get their AA, to get rid of the horses in the area you need to get the brand, some families don't have the money for hay, no Boys and Girls club, students don't know how to do things, Eastern Navajo to stop grazing in this area and go to this area, go to the schools for presentations; **Howard Leonard, Jr.** – different PowerPoint for different age groups, teacher and principal are okay with it, teachers know what the students need, we went to Chinle and two went to Dine College; **Doris Benallie** – Red Willow Farm, before you go into the area, walk and go to the old cement, trash in the arroyo, my home is down there, EPA – Window Rock said leave it alone it's belongs to Tohatchi, a railroad through Tohatchi, we complained three times, herbal healing plants along the railroad; **Howard Leonard, Jr.** – Mexican Springs to talk about the burn area, I can't explained in 5 minutes and need longer time; **Lee Rodgers** – I'll give you whatever time you; **Howard Leonard, Jr.** – 30 minutes, 10 minutes to talk, I talked to RDC and talked to Brenda Jesus, Window Rock doesn't talk climate change, we are overgrazing and maybe our animals are dying, it's Spring Break – will we see our students at a chapter meeting, our college graduates don't speak Navajo and the elders get upset, people I work with they make a difference if they can, other ethnic groups can speak and write Navajo, learn something every day; **Howard Leonard, Jr.** – the Climate Adaptation Plan for the Navajo Nation is online, it entails all the processes, it's a generalized plan, all the 12 departments brainstormed to develop this 2018 book, it's a living document and it keeps moving forward, 6 items that were high percent of concern – 1. water, 2. feral horses, 3. Communication, 4. Enforcement compliance, 5. Pollution - air quality, 6. Grazing management, a lot cut at the Washington level; **Elvis Bitsilly** – The FY2025 budget funded several key service areas including - \$2 million for solid waste.

Rachelle Morris - referral for diabetes, Health Enrollment Fair, update on measles outbreak, Texas and New Mexico, last week 32 cases, Lea county, one case in Eddy county, 220 cases, 18 people hospitalized, 1 death in Texas and 1 death in New Mexico are people who are not vaccinated, looking at vaccination in children 93% immunize, children reaching the age of 12-15 months, MMR, second group are Preschool and Kindergarten, MMR immune for life, 50 years and older, Titer – blood draw, Shingles – 2 shots, at age 50 your immune system goes down.

- VII. **Resolutions: none**
- VIII. **Announcements: Chapter Meeting, March 21, 2025, 10:00 am**
- IX. **Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 15, 2025 @9am-12n Tohatchi Chapter**
- X. **Adjournment: 11:55 am**

Delphine Bitsilly
Recorder

