



# THE NAVAJO NATION

## TOHATCHI COMMUNITY LAND USE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Post Office Box 287 Tohatchi, New Mexico 87325 Tel: (505) 733-2845/2846

**Elvis Bitsilly**  
President

**Pernell Halona**  
Vice-President

**Delphine Bitsilly**  
Recorder

**Fern Spencer**  
Member

**Priscilla Duncan**  
Member

### AGENDA

**Tuesday August 19, 2025 @ 9am-12n**  
**Tohatchi Chapter**

- I. Call to Order: Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Roll Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Invocation: \_\_\_\_\_
- II. Approval of Agenda:
- III. Approval of Minutes: Monday July 15, 2025
- IV. Old Business:
  - A. Tohatchi Community Land Use Plan 2025- Review & Update
- V. New Business:
  - A.
- VI. Resolutions: none
- VII. Announcements:
- VIII. Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 @9am-12n
- IX. Adjournment



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## TOHATCHI COMMUNITY LAND USE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES August 19, 2025

I. Call to Order: Time: 9:15 am Roll Call: 5 Invocation: Fern Spencer

II. Approval of Agenda:

Motion: Pernell Halona 2<sup>nd</sup>: Priscilla Duncan Vote: 4-0-1

III. Approval of Minutes: Monday July 15, 2025

Motion to accept and read on your own:

Motion: Pernell Halona 2<sup>nd</sup>: Priscilla Duncan Vote: 4-0-1

IV. Old Business:

### A. Tohatchi Community Land Use Plan 2025- Review & Update

**Elvis Bitsilly** – update on what CLUPC has been working on the Land Use Plan overall plan, covering the manual using a jump drive, who has a book, do we have a master copy; **Pernell Halona** – I have it; **Elvis Bitsilly** – we were given copies by Economic Development and some pages were mixed in regards to the original format, need to get the pages in line, the jump drive shows everything and we have been working on our sections, thank you Delegate Mr. Notah for being here and appreciate your attendance as well as LDA Sonny Moore and Lee Rodgers, Madame Vice President, we've been discussing the Land Use Plan within the last year, what we need to edit and amend the Land Use Plan, we're in the 5 year renewal process and that's what we're working on, before anyone of us became a member, this was the overall plan to do this, it was outstanding and being tackled by the previous CLUPC members, we are doing our best with what was already in place, we gone into the sections in detail and covered a lot of the information, we assigned ourselves sections in the manual, we covered as much as possible and what we feel is best for the plan, a lot of work done by previous CLUPC membership from years past, a lot of the information we covered does not apply to what we are doing today or what we have plan for the future, it's not a lot of changes, we need to make updates and change information in the manual, many things happening in our community, make sure this is what we want as a chapter what is best for the future, this plan will cover another five years, we are a little behind on it, it's been at least a year which it should have been done and we are picking up where it was left off, and do our best, deadline by August and about 80% done, formatting it together as part as our responsibilities, when we finalized this plan then we have to do two public hearings according to the plan of operation with the Navajo Nation Community Development, do public comments and presentation, next our Council Delegate will assist to get a legislation to RDC, then approve and finalize the plan for our chapter, done by this year, thank you for bringing your information to the committee and advise us, thank you committee members and the work sessions we've had; **Fern Spencer** – Sonny and Mr. Notah are here, do they have anything to say; **Elvis Bitsilly** – it's okay; **Geneva Begay** – we have the run off, last good rain in 2022, June 5<sup>th</sup> it rained one inch, there was a flood at Tohatchi High School, the

canal is up here on top and the high school sits lower down here, if the water fills up on this side it will go down to the new high school, community not aware of the that and nobody is bringing it to their attention or they're not listening, teachers had flooding in 2022, we need to take care of the canal, conversion dam is closed, weatherman saying we're going to have a good snow season, every 5 years we have a good rain so we're looking at 2027 to get three inches of rain, the diversion dam has money of \$467,000 at Water Resource, Water Resource is thinking about rebuilding the diversion dam and only the diversion dam, not the canal, the resolution stated the canal and diversion dam, the Chuska Lake – tamarack trees and Russian olive, \$200,000 every year annually and putting in a proposal to continue the project to remove, if you look over there it looks like a jungle with all those trees that weren't there a few years back, the Chuska dike hasn't been assessed, this year we are on the list for Safety of Dams and looking at September to work on the dam to assess it, the channel way to Red Willow is eroded, the canal is probably filled up with dirt, no one has touched it, the road is eroded and cannot get the tractor down there, we wanted to make the community fruit basket – Red Willow fruit basket, our new generation are not thinking about farming, we have two daisy buds out here, you see the corn and squash growing but where are the pollinators, no pollinator out there, numerous complaints, there's a diversity talk about garden, when are we going to take an interest in gardening and getting food back into the soil, what about food sovereignty, we want to education the children about food, NRCS – water shed and programming planning assistance that is available for the community, we've been working with Treva Henio who came out, she was interested in Tohatchi and I was looking for a project, she wants to take this project, where is the community and those who got flooded I asked for letters, where's the support, it's not here, we need to ask the community members whose homes are getting flooded and who wants the assistance, we asked Tohatchi High School to come forth, the district has to approve of a letter to be written to the chapter, they have policies to go by and that's what we're told, the post office gets flooding there, Treva Henio is willing to look at the diversion dam, the canal, the lake and all the way down to Red Willow to get the farming back into production, we can assist everyone and all the entities that are involved, have teamwork, if we can have everybody on board, they have a \$25 million water shed project Black Creek in Arizona, no one showed up at the meeting and show no interest, a project like this we need people at the table to hear their voice, need resolutions and voters, Sonny Moore always says Red Willow is an asset, Farmers Market is happening across state of New Mexico, Navajo Nation has their own WIC program, the state has its own WIC program, the state offers \$50.00 to Farmers Market for elders and mothers, Farmers Market have squash, corn, can food and honey, diverse vendors at Farmers Markets, talk to the grower and learn about the new methods and preparation of growing their fruits and vegetables, find out what produce is available, freezing food up to 8 – 12 months, dehydrating food, drying includes heating food quickly but not enough to cook it and food can be dried in the sun, oven or electric dehydrator, canning – use glass jars, dry goods – beans and oats, easier to preserve, simply store dry food in air tight containers in cool dry places to minimal exposure to light, we need people to come to our Red Willow Farm Board meetings; **Fern Spencer** – when is your Red Willow meeting; **Geneva Begay** - August 26 and September 5; **Fern Spencer** – we have no FFA, no vocational classes that used to be here, the people need to know and say this is what we need, students like to work with their hands, we don't have that anymore, yes granted they do that college thing in Gallup, what about here, keep our kids here and let them work here, let them know what's going on, like you yourself could go to one of those classes – biology and talk about this and get the kids interested, get volunteers to come and do something, the kids who worked on the project out there ask them to help you, Arizona schools has their vocational programs in place and they are awesome in what they do, the FFA in Chinle was productive and

won awards, Notah was part of that back in the day when they went to Kansas and won awards for FFA, approach Kevin Mitchell, our school board head man is resigning, Hyatt is resigning, are other chapters part of Red Willow, get a list of students who are interested and have them come to your meetings, I'm for it and we need it, I asked the architect do you know this is a flood zone when they started building that school and they didn't say anything; **Pernell Halona** – we haven't had any one from the community or chapter to talk to the kids, we used to have assembly hall and bring the kids in, talk to them about how to do these projects or what is available for them, we haven't done that, I don't know if you have to write a letter to the school system and say we want to do a presentation at the school, instead of telling a few kids, get the whole assembly together and you might get ten of those kids who want to do something with you, tell the students this is what you need to know and learn these trades, talk about trade classes, we need welding and vocational classes again, across the reservation right now you see all these Indians, Navajos are welders which they learn from school and now they are working as welders, same for agricultural, present it at the elementary and junior high school as well, vocational classes have been cut off and now they are wanting vocational classes, they have it in Gallup to have a welder, students are the one who want to do this; **Council Delegate Notah** – there's no vocational educational programs anymore, Sonny Moore and I have met with Mr. Hyatt on several occasions about bringing these programs back in the schools, we did resolutions from this chapter to request that, it was never looked at, Mr. Hyatt is leaving, we need to have a nationwide search on a new superintendent and we can't bring someone in within, we need to talk to Kevin, we need those programs back, our kids are doing vocational stuff – welding, mechanics and they are good, getting the kids involved Geneva it is a big problem and covers the entire Navajo Nation, in Shiprock the elders want to continue to farm, the elders say my children don't come home, I don't know where they work, I need someone to harvest and to plow my field, the children of the elders come home on the weekends to do those things for their elder parents, the water shed – I'm glad NRCS is getting involved, I know Keisha Tatem, I don't know this Treva Henio and would like to attend your meeting when she is there, we need to look at the whole ecosystem, we need to do a proper rehabilitation for that whole area, starting from Whiskey Lake and all the way down, along the way is just band aids, we need to let Treva know, let the Arizona conservationist from Phoenix, first is to get funding for these assessments, next would be planning and design for what needs to take place, the final construction, involved the Reclamation, BIA and Navajo Nation, all work together to handle these problems on the canal system, they did have a breach in the canal not too long ago, talked to Safety of Dams from BIA, they are not willing to come out here to work with us, talked to Jason John and Tarick at Water Resources, they are saying there's no money, nothing was moved forward, NRCS is getting involved and it's good, \$467,000 that is available is with Water Resource, the lake cleanup and the \$200,000 a year you are talking about, where is the money from; **Geneva Begay** – from BIA; **Council Delegate Notah** – we can talk about these at the Red Willow meeting, put it on the agenda, we need the kids back involved, devise a plan and not just talk about it, review of the Land Use Plan is a 5 year renewal, Coyote Canyon and Twin Lakes are working on their Land Use Plan, Naschitti just got their CLUPC committee started, work with those chapters to see how they are working on their plans, I'll talk more things tomorrow; **Geneva Begay** – Tarick didn't want to sponsor Red Willow, a zero balanced with the powerline project, the other project we're trying to push the dollars for the \$467,000, he said working with NRCS is a lot of red tape, so we went to Natural Resource, President Nygren already sign a letter to Natural Resource to help the communities, Natural Resource will sponsor the Red Willow project, the water shed we are looking at Chuska Lake, we need people involved Fish and Wildlife, they probably can sponsor that area, the beavers are not there anymore, bluebirds are gone, there's overgrazing, there's no trees – what kind of trees, native

plants and maybe extinct, regrowing the native plants, Aztec saying there's only 45 days left, seeds need to stay in the same area, soil testing, bike trail – have trees for shade for the bikers; **Council Delegate Notah** – Elvis it would be nice to put on paper if not already on paper, make improvements as a guideline, add to the Land Use Plan students learning and involvement with agricultural, water shed plan, include for funding; **Geneva Begay** – emergency funding with NRCS, it already passed in 2022, ask for those funds, there's a deadline which is 30 days after the flood, those proposal have to go in right away and be ready; **Council Delegate Notah** – I met with Jesse Jim – 13 farms across the Navajo Nation, I didn't get a good response from him and farms not a priority at all today, waterpipes is an issue everywhere – all farms; **Geneva Begay** – good water well by the airport and pass Hot Springs, they are not accumulating a NTUA bill, at Red Willow is, the two water wells I'm talking about the ranchers and farmers that line up, they say it's not even sufficient, there's a leak and it's broken, trash around, Michael at Natural Resource said they are willing to fix it, the grazing official to write a letter with the GPS readings from these areas, let's fix them, I don't know if it was drafted up and sent to Natural Resources, these can be support for the community; **Elvis Bitsilly** – letter from Keisha Tatem – letter put on Navajo Nation letterhead and it went to Mike for signature and approval, Geneva and Treva are following up on this, letter is to request assistance for the water shed program; **Pernell Halona** – the water wells over the hill, what are they called; **Sonny Moore** – Willeto well; **Pernell Halona** – who made that well; **Sonny Moore** – Water Resources; **Pernell Halona** – I was getting water there for my garden, I was getting water from the trough, it comes out clean, my tank is full of oil, water is dirty, two years ago it wasn't like that, anyone test the water, I know people are getting water and using it; **Elvis Bitsilly** – it shouldn't be use for domestic use; **Pernell Halona** – need someone to check the water; **Fern Spencer** – other well; **Pernell Halona** – other side of the tank; **Geneva Begay** – passed Hot Springs, the manhole flooded with water, Sam Natonbah complained to Water Resources and they are not doing anything about it; **Fern Spencer** – does IHS have anything to do with it, my dad used to check the water wells; **Lee Rodgers** – Geneva when you had the BIA do the assessment of the eradication of vegetation down there, you said they were coming up the canal, do you have data as the exact length of the canal and what's the average width of the canal; **Geneva Begay** – 2.5 miles to the lake; **Lee Rodgers** – canal itself – how long and how wide; **Geneva Begay** – the width 20 feet; **Lee Rodgers** – I'm the only farmer in the community, use a water filter called Boogie Blue that hooks to your garden hose; **Sonny Moore** – we met with Mike Halona and gave us instructions for each chapter - the grazing officers, they have emergency drought declaration, I shared this information with the officials, in the Navajo Times there's this AIF, make plans to meet with these people, only two grazing committees responded, I had them draft a memorandum to Mike Halona, one is Narbonah John from Twin Lakes and Isaiah Tsosie, they gave me information and drafted a memorandum, told them to take it to Mike Halona and introduce yourselves, I haven't get anything from the grazing officer, invite him to the CLUPC, Red Willow, Naschitti planning meeting tomorrow, meeting here, the way I look at chapter meetings – Tohatchi - if you're on the agenda you get to speak, I traveling more to the planning meetings, tomorrow they will have a celebration for Sister Marlene, only one item on the agenda, same as the chapter, you guys need to plan for it, the Warehouse and we know how much the shortfall is, you should be drafting a resolution for that, gather them all up and give it to the Council Delegate, he can start looking at it and see how much money we need, Highway Lighting – I presented this at Mexican Springs yesterday, let's get started and Christine I'll come over and help you, Twin Lakes highway lighting needs to be brought up to date, gather all the resolutions with the cost estimates to the council delegate and this is what we're looking at, let's find some money; **Fern Spencer** – people from Kinder Morgan/El Paso Natural Gas, other chapters have requested – laptops and backpacks which they have received, we

need to move on with the requests, include the warehouse; **Elvis Bitsilly** - after chapter meeting tomorrow we will meet as chapter officials to discuss the needs of the chapter community, we're not sure how much we will ask for, sit down with Maria and see what is needed with the staff; **Lee Rodgers** – ask within reason; **Geneva Begay** – Head Start, go check it out; **Fern Spencer** – how many students, the teachers are certified; **Geneva Begay** – they are enrolling students, 10, yes, there are three teachers; **Council Delegate Notah** – Trump cut all Head Start funding; **Fern Spencer** – what about Work Force; **Geneva Begay** – Crownpoint is the main office, here - it's two weeks, there - it's two months; **Fern Spencer** – Senior Citizens; **Council Delegate Notah** – we are working on getting funds for here as well as Mexican Springs and Coyote Canyon; **Lee Rodgers** – I think the sanitation inspection has passed, no food budget now; **Elvis Bitsilly** – ARPA canceled, what's the update; **Council Delegate Notah** – it's been canceled for tomorrow, postponed to September 5, same schedule and agenda; **Sonny Moore** – Thursday is still happening, NNDOT, tomorrow postponed to September 5 at DCD; **Delphine Bitsilly** – Mr. Moore can you repeat all those meetings, I'm confused with meetings canceled, postponed; **Lee Rodgers** – Thursday, August 21 – 9 am DCD meeting at NNDOT, regarding ARPA funding - RRR/FRF – September 5, 9 am at Tohatchi Chapter; **Council Delegate Notah** – they are meeting by chapters, meeting at 9 and Tohatchi is at 2:30 pm – in the afternoon, meet with each chapter individually throughout the day, talk with the chapters on specific projects with that chapter; **Elvis Bitsilly** – Tohatchi will host it here, is Casey Begay is your LDA, where is he; **Council Delegate Notah** – yes; **Elvis Bitsilly** – what do they do; **Lee Rodgers** – he interfered with my meeting, all the questions I had for Wilson Stewart he didn't have no answers for me, my question was really simple, with all these funding that we're going to work on - what do we the chapter need to do, what kind of information do you want from us, I already seen the website, how do we as a chapter make this happen, he stated we'll give you all this information to you tomorrow; **Fern Spencer** – he has two LDAs; **Council Delegate Notah** – he does all the Window Rock, DALTAC – senior centers, ARPA and other things he is assign to, looks up legislation; **Fern Spencer** – does he know what he is doing; **Council Delegate Notah** – yes he does and is helpful, responsible for Window Rock and Federal; **Sonny Moore** – he has senior centers, Veterans, Budget and Finance, RDC; **Fern Spencer** – is President Nygren ever at the Council; **Council Delegate Notah** – first elected I could see him all the time and meet with him for 20-30 minutes, after a year and a half he started doing appointments, later appointments started to get canceled, he gives his presentation and doesn't stay, what's going on – a lot of things happening as jinni, information not true, \$24 million unaccounted for and being investigated, council wants to do that investigation themselves, as council we are not investigators, let's get outside people to do the work, B&F committee already decided they are going to do this investigation, I don't have faith in the council doing this, as council we don't have authority to remove him, remove President Nygren – people voted him in and people have the authority to remove him, start with the petition, they tried to remove him and it failed, a number of groups to start up to remove him, new Title II laws installed during President Hale administration; **Pernell Halona** – council can put in a legislation to have him removed, put him on leave; **Council Delegate Notah** – council can only give recommendations; **Pernell Halona** – all those in those positions, the council can't remove them, we can say we don't want that person to run that office and find somebody else, it's the President to say, I want him in there, it's his decision because he hired him, so we can't remove them, you can put the President on indefinite leave or suspension for however long; **Council Delegate Notah** – it really has to be the people, council does not have that authority; **Elvis Bitsilly** – this came out last week - showed legislation from Budget and Finance on the screen, special prosecutor hired to do the investigation; **Council Delegate Notah** – yes, resolution was passed, we need the evidence and will do an investigation; **Pernell Halona** – evidence is right there; **Fern Spencer** – special prosecutor

is from where; **Council Delegate Notah** – they haven't selected one yet, they have the resolution to get it started; **Fern Spencer** - how much longer he is serving as President; **Council Delegate Notah** – a year and a half, there are quite a few people involved and not just him, several people have been named, jinni – Judicial system with people involved, his staff, chief of staff all the way down line and some Council Delegates; **Lee Rodgers** – if council delegates are involved that's definitely upright ethical conflict of interest and trying to do the investigation; **Council Delegate Notah** - legal counsel has authorized us not to share information, two delegates; **Elvis Bitsilly** – let's get started on the plan, I can update the census from year 2020, this is the new information I received from her brother, the Appendices are we going to keep them; **Lee Rodgers** – that has to stay; **Elvis Bitsilly** – keep the soil, land; **Delphine Bitsilly** – this has a very interesting timeline of the Navajo Nation government, if you read it, it's in here, it's not in our manual but it's on the flash drive along with the Treaty; **Elvis Bitsilly** – reviewing the History section; **Fern Spencer** – sharing history on the rodeo arena and a story from a community member who was in a concentration camp, another community member who was a Code Talker; **Elvis Bitsilly** – Chuska school built in 1964; **Lee Rodgers** – they separated Chuska from Tohatchi; **Fern Spencer** – yes for a while; **Elvis Bitsilly** – El Paso Natural Gas had an intention to build a wind – water turbine; **Fern Spencer** – a water turbine; **Elvis Bitsilly** – same interest as this Hydro power, copy of the Treaty; **Fern Spencer** – is there a copy of all chapter presidents when our chapter started; **Lee Rodgers** – there is a page in the History with council delegates, reading the history of the chapter officials year by year; **Elvis Bitsilly** – 1987 the Navajo Nation formally recognized the farm; **Delphine Bitsilly** – it's in section 4; **Fern Spencer** – what are the Veterans up to; **Lee Rodgers** – remove coker, don't know what they are talking about; **Fern Spencer** – I keep hearing the clinic is closing, has anyone heard anything; **Lee Rodgers** – it's not going to close because we need it; **Fern Spencer** – the CEO they hired to replace Detsoi, he is leaving; **Elvis Bitsilly** – do we want to add anything after 2017, another nine years; **Lee Rodgers** – we need to think about the previous people, do we add anything about Covid; **Fern Spencer** – 2020, add CLUPC members, when did CLUPC start; **Delphine Bitsilly** – I think it has it in the timeline; **Lee Rodgers** – no it's not in there, they started when I was leaving and was asked to represent the people from the mountain; **Delphine Bitsilly** – who has section 4; **Pernell Halona** – I do, no I don't have it; **Delphine Bitsilly** – whoever has Section 4 should update and then input the data; **Pernell Halona** – Section 5 has information on CLUPC, page 60; **Delphine Bitsilly** – we deleted Section 5, that's what he had and we decided to delete it, we did delete it; **Elvis Bitsilly** – it's in the Strategic Plan; **Fern Spencer** – who else has pictures of old Tohatchi, like 1901; **Elvis Bitsilly** – it doesn't say when it was established; **Lee Rodgers** – reading from Section 5, sometime before September 14, 2014 CLUPC started, doesn't have it in History, just use the September 12, 2014 as the startup of the Land Use Plan; **Elvis Bitsilly** – Sonny and Fern, who are the original CLUPC people, looking at the Land Use Plan from the flash drive; **Fern Spencer** – when I came in it was Ben who was the President, Larson Manuelito was part of it; **Delphine Bitsilly** – Section 1 is says CLUPC worked with UNM to design this plan in 2013; **Elvis Bitsilly** – here's the old CLUPC plan, the first plan ever, it doesn't have a year; **Delphine Bitsilly** – it makes sense 2013, did one in 2018, we're doing one for 2023, it makes sense it started in 2013; **Lee Rodgers** – CLUP committee meeting and orientation 2000; **Fern Spencer** – it's been in existence for 25 years; **Delphine Bitsilly** – it depends if it's Navajo Nation wide or here; **Lee Rodgers** – it was made for Tohatchi; **Priscilla Duncan** – records probably no longer here since you keep records for seven years; **Elvis Bitsilly** – reading from the first CLUPC plan by Chili Yazzie; **Lee Rodgers** – explained and updated us on the meetings for the First Responders Substation.

## V. New Business:

### A.

- VI. Resolutions: none
- VII. Announcements:
- VIII. Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 @9am-12n
- IX. Adjournment: 12:25 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Delphine Bitsilly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Delphine Bitsilly  
Recorder