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July 30, 2025 10:00am

TOHATCHI CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

- I. **MEETING CALL TO ORDER: 9:22am**
- II. **ROLL CALL:** President Elvis Bitsilly, Vice President Lee Rodgers, Secretary/Treasurer Jean Crawford, and Grazing Officer Gerald Moore
- III. **INVOCATION:** Elvis Bitsilly
- IV. **REVIEW/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**
Motion: 1st Virginia Harvey 2nd Allen Burbank **Vote:** 19-0-2
Francis Leon Harvey – made a request to move up his resolution to number one under resolutions because he has an appointment at the VA hospital in Albuquerque at 1pm.
Grazing Officer Moore – requesting to make resolutions #2, #3, #6 as a consent item since they are all in house transfers (administrative) resolutions.
Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – I also would like to make a request to have Mr. Ty Tsinnijinne give his presentation on the Gallup Waterline Project.
- V. **APPROVAL OF JUNE 25, 2025 MEETING MINUTES:**
Motion to read on your own:
Motion: 1st Priscilla Duncan 2nd Virginia Harvey **Vote:** 19-0-2
Vice President Rodgers - Gave an update on the “Chapter Rules of Order” which states if you are not a registered voter with this Chapter, you are not required to vote abstain. As a non-registered voter, you can just listen to the conservation but are not required to vote.
President Bitsilly – I would like to quickly mention what the chapter has been experiencing lately. Out front of our chapter here, there has been an individual who has been tearing up the parking lot by making donuts and kicking up gravel on weekends. We have cameras setup and we do have a description of the vehicle and have an idea who this individual is. If anyone in our community has knowledge of this individual, we ask that they inform this person to stop tearing up our parking lot. We will pursue legal action if this continues to occur.
Maria, CSC – I do have a description of the vehicle in question and I do know this individual. The truck is a 4-door navy-blue dodge. He has a tool box in the bed of the truck and he does live in this community. I have video footage of this person and I have contacted the police. If you know who this individual is please let him know we will be working with the police department to put a stop to his wreck lessness. He has been showing up at the chapter parking lot on Friday and Saturday between 8pm-12pm.
PRESENTERS:
1. Elizabeth Schools: Tohatchi Elementary School Principal – I came here to build a relationship with the community. I’m the principal at Tohatchi Elementary School and we are here to simply introduce ourselves and talk about some of our goals this year. I am not from New Mexico, I am from Ohio and when I was 16 my father moved us to Pueblo Pintado on the Navajo reservation. Every since I’ve lived in Gallup, overall people have always been welcoming and I believe that because I am always kind and people are kind to me in return. I believe in treating others the way I want to be treated. I know I am not Navajo but that doesn’t mean I don’t understand or don’t want to understand so that’s why I’m here

today to show you I care. I do know that the community is important and if you need to know what is happening with our children because they are all of children together. I brought with me our mission and vision statement along with our core values and welcome letter. Our mission is to create a community and culture of focus learning, perseverance, kindness, and integrity promoting necessary change in an equity for all students. We don't want to change things just to change things. If they are working well, we want to keep them, but if there is necessary change that is what we are working on. The word "equity" is like the new education word; it's not treating everyone the same it's treating how everyone needs different things and we treat people as individuals. That is what equity is about. Our vision is to inspire innovation in all we do, creating positive and long-lasting impacts which starts here. We can't have long lasting impacts if I stayed at my school and never go to the community so I know the community matters. The values that we chose this year are safety, respect, responsibility, kindness, growth mindset, integrity, equity, and innovation. This year, we are focusing a lot on climate and culture in trying to make our school be a place people want to come to. That when they walk through the front door, they feel welcome. This is a quick introduction and I hope in our next session we can talk about how our school is performing.

Christine Sanchez – I am originally from the Twin Lakes community and I graduated from Tohatchi High School a long time ago and I am excited to be back in the community. I am currently the Tohatchi Elementary School Dean. I am not a principal, I am not an assistance principal, I am the school Dean. I have to go back to school to receive my administrator license and I have not made that decision as of yet because my children take up a lot of my time. I am starting my 4th year as the school Dean and what I do is shadow the principal, and help the teachers and students in learning, coaching them, and dealing with discipline and attendance and all the other things that come with principal duties. I was at Chee Dodge as a Dean for 3 years and then transferred to Tohatchi Elementary. I am a registered voter with Twin Lakes Chapter. I love being a role model for our kids and encouraging them to be whatever they want to be. I look forward to learning about the Tohatchi community and the schools here. I would like to ask the parents to encourage your children about the importance of daily attendance. That is one of my goals is to get the attendance up at the elementary school. I look forward to meeting everyone and seeing you at our school.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – I know with the previous administration; former President Moore was always very interested in how the schools were doing academically. It was very important to have the schools come in to give the community quarterly updates.

Elizabeth Schools – The district has released data, but they asked us to hold off because some type of NM rule. Our goal is to meet with you frequently and update you on how our school is performing, attendance and or any issues or help that we may need. We have provided our contact information on the welcome letter if you need to contact us. The 1st day of school is on Wednesday, August 6th.

2. Ty Tsinnijinne: Gallup Waterline Project – Pernell Jones gave the update on the waterline. So far, we have completed the field safety and the archeological clearance. Now, we are just waiting on the culture resource compliance form (CRCF) as well as the biological survey. We have the report pending the wildlife resource compliance form (CRCF). We have done topographic surveying which focuses on mapping the elevation and features of a piece of land. We have submitted the 30% back in the end of May and we have received comments back from the Bureau of Reclamation. So, we will be working on the 60% within the next 3 months as well as design data collection to do field work. Our crew will be doing data collection and subsurface utility investigations, continue with legal surveying plex. What we are trying to complete by December 31st 2025 is the geo technical investigations for structural foundations for tanks. What we are prioritize for June 30th of next year is to obtain the right-of-way permit and easement or Tribal Access Authorization (TAA) as well as continue with the design for the 90% and hopefully get

100% of the design. And just to let you know this project has some ARPA funds and we need to have the designs completed by June 30th 2026.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – So, is this project fully funded?

Ty Tsinnijinne – The last update I gave was back in March, I believe. At that time, I mentioned the design is fully funded that they were a big chunk of money available for construction. Given the recent projects we have gone through. For example; the Naschitti project which we thought was fully funded but given the recent price hikes which will probably continue. It's unfortunate this happens but we are working with the Navajo Nation as well as the chapter here to try to seek more dollars. The chapter can choose to go after TIF funds with the State of NM. Mexican Chapter is aware of this and they plan to go after TIF funding as well early next year. As Pernell stated we did submit the 30% and the 60% and I am hoping to have the 90% of the design so that we can get a solid construction cost. So for now, it's hard to say if the project is fully funded.

JoAnn Jyne – What is the total amount of cost and how much funding is available now and how much does Tohatchi need?

Ty Tsinnijinne – If I remember correctly, the total combined funding that is available approximately \$15 million between Tohatchi Chapter and Mexican Springs Chapter that will go toward the project. The 1st estimation we came up with was \$14 million. A few years ago we were well over it and it was basically going to be contingency dollars. At this moment, we probably would have enough for construction dollars to cover it at this point, but we still have over a year to go to get the construction bided out. At the next update meeting I can bring in the cost estimates and the exact dollar amounts that both chapters have received.

JoAnn Jyne – What happens if you are half way on the construction project and there is not funding for the project.

Ty Tsinnijinne – I would rather not get to that point, but we do set aside contingency funds in amount of 10% to cover unforeseen expenses.

Franklin Sandoval – Looking at your map you provided, you're running the main system to 2 existing water storage facilities. What is to say that later on, in order for your system to meet that capacity of those 2 tanks that you will not run into the issue of having to build new tanks at these sites? What is the possibility of just running this line directly into the closest point that serves the 2 communities. You talk about pumping stations I'm that if you eliminated the lengthy areas you need to build to get to these tanks, just built a pumping station nearby they can tie into the NTUA present water system. I would think that would be more cost efficient.

Ty Tsinnijinne – Let me explain how the system is going to work, for a water system that goes to a community that is suppose to be potable. Those tanks are design to meet a certain capacity. Once you start oversizing your storage tanks you run into what they call water age. Just like the bottle water you buy there is an expiration date on them, same goes for the water that is being treated. The longer the water sits inside those tanks, they start to development disinfection by products. So basically, you can't build to large of a tank that has been fully treated to just kind of sit there. The bigger your tank, and the number of people using it, you are not going to be use it all. Those tanks as of right now, they hold enough storage to serve both communities. The way this system is going to work is the pumping plant number 7 that's being build on the side of the road, its pumping water to the tanks above Tolakai. This system is being gravity fed from that Tolakai tanks down this way. So, we are using gravity to bring water back down this way. There really isn't that much pumping involved, it actually eliminates the need for addition pumps.

Franklin Sandoval – how many pumping stations are there between Yahtahey and Window Rock?

Ty Tsinniginnie – None

Doris Benallie – the map you provided is dated 2020, do you have an updated map? You said you were here in March, the 60 day session in Santa Fe is over in March. They approve some money already for this project and you don't know how much was received. The next 30 session is next year in January 2026. The RMU that you are working off of, did all the permittees give their consents?

Ty Tsinnijinne – yes, Land Department took care of that and we got the field clearances. I will bring in information how much each chapter received in funding for this project on my next visit. I can also give a rough estimate on the total cost of the construction.

President Bitsilly – Andrew Robertson, he provided a cost estimate of the construction cost which is \$12 million. He is available to Mexican Springs Chapter and Tohatchi Chapter. Mr. Robertson gave an update on the funding and for Tohatchi, it is \$11.5 million and for Mexican Springs, it is \$2.5 million so it's about \$14 million.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – How soon can we get the plan and design for this project?

Ty Tsinnijinne - It's about 60 pages but I can bring it to the next meeting, hopefully during the regular Chapter meeting.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. None

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

June 2025 Financial Report –

JUNE BALANCE FUND		
1	Chapter Activities Gen Fund	\$22,050.34
3	Land Claims Trust	\$60,880.91
8	Supplement Youth Fund	\$22,445.03
9	Housing Discretionary Fund	\$3,422.16
10	LGA Grant Fund	\$63,651.71
12	Chapter Stipends	\$29,315.44
13	Scholarship General Fund	\$7,092.00
14	Scholarship Claims Fund	\$4,463.98
15	PEP Fund	\$43,122.68
16	Veterans Fund	\$10,882.55
17	Emergency Fund	\$26,144.91
23	NN Sales Tax	\$68,262.49
25	NN CIP - \$180,000	\$14,301.57
26	Red Willow Farm	\$1,040.37
27	NN CIP - \$200,000	\$3,877.78
40	Unhealthy Food Tax	\$99,966.45
61	Senior Citizen Fund	\$2,162.99
51	NAPI	\$2,237.56
80	General Fixed Assets	
34	Agriculture & Infrastructure	\$3.68
	Total Fund Balance	\$485,324.10

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford –For the month of June 2025, our books are in balance and everything has been reconciled back to Wells Fargo’s books. We also have the Chapters total assets amount which is **\$880,726.90**. The Chapter can provide a Budget to Actual report on request.

Doris Benallie – What is the LGA Grant Fund (#10)?

Maria, CSC – That is funding we received years ago in 2015 which was a one-time funding. So, number #25 and #27 were one time funding. These accounts will not be replenished. #27 is used for things like chapter renovations and chapter equipment. #25 is for land improvement for example; infrastructure like getting our parking lot upgraded. #10 is used to pay the officials, chapter staff, and CLUPC members and all of our travel expenses come from. Stipends and office supplies.

Geneva Begay – Any funding for septic tank cleaning?

Maria, CSC – For septic tank cleaning we are using fund 23, but as the beginning of this year, the ASC informed us that the chapters will no longer do septic tank cleanings. If we want to continue with septic tank cleaning, we have to use funds from the revenue we bring into the chapter. I believe NN is working on a legislation to add septic tank cleaning back to fund 23.

Motion to accept the June 2025 Financial Report

Motion: 1st Sonny Moore 2nd Wilfred Yazzie Vote: 20-0-2

VIII. RESOLUTIONS:

1. **058-07-2025:** Resolution to approve the FY’2025 Chapter Activities General Fund account revenue budget (Fund 01) in the amount of \$4,629.73 for the 3rd quarter, April, May, and June 2025.
Motion: 1st Virginia Harvey 2nd Priscilla Duncan Vote: 19-0-3
2. **059-07-2025:** Resolution to approve a budget transfer within Fund 40, the Navajo Nation Unhealthy Food Tax in the amount of \$5,000.00 to replenish Repairs & Maintenance Construction Equipment Repair fund account.
Motion: 1st Virginia Harvey 2nd Virginia Burbank Vote: 20-0-3
3. **060-07-2025:** Resolution approving a budget transfer within Fund 13, the Navajo Nation Scholarship General Fund in the amount of \$1,800.00 to cover the negative balance in Financial Assistance Fund.
Motion: 1st Virginia Harvey 2nd Virginia Burbank Vote: 20-0-3
4. **061-07-2025:** Resolution to recommend approving 9 registered college students to receive fall 2025 Financial Assistance from the Chapter Fund 13.
Motion: 1st Delphine Bitsilly 2nd Alta Watson Vote: 21-0-2
5. **062-07-2025:** Resolution to recommend and approve the Housing Discretionary Assistance Fund 09 for the following community member, Franklin Sandoval respectively.
Motion: Doris Benallie 2nd Sonny Moore Vote: 21-0-2
6. **063-07-2025:** Resolution to approve a budget transfer within Fund 09, the Navajo Nation Housing Discretionary Fund in the amount of \$800.00 to replenish Minor Repair Fund account.
Motion: 1st Virginia Harvey 2nd Virginia Burbank Vote: 20-0-3
7. **064-07-2025:** Resolution to support Francis and Virginia Harvey in obtaining a Veteran Home from the Department of Veteran Administration.
Motion: 1st Franklin Sandoval 2nd Wilfred Yazzie Vote: 19-0-1
8. **065-07-2025:** Resolution to approve Tohatchi Community Cemetery policy for FY’ 2025-2026.
Motion: 1st Franklin Sandoval 2nd Wilfred Yazzie Vote: 19-0-1

- IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Maria, CSC – We will be celebration Sister Marlene’s time and service to our community with a potluck luncheon on Wednesday, August 20th here at the chapter. Sister Marlene will be leaving us to return to Oldenberg, Indiana.

Zuma will be held on Tuesday, August 5th from 5pm to 7pm and on August 21st there will be people here who will be repairing bikes starting at 4pm. The chapter will be paying for this service so bring your bike in for repair on that day. Our students last day of employment was Friday and we put up a party to celebrate the work they did at chapter.

Just as a reminder, the grader is getting new tires and will not be operational until Monday. I am having the old backhoe repaired and hope to have it running soon.

CLUPC meeting on August 19th at 9am. Red Willow Farm meeting on August 5th at 1pm

Grazing Office Moore – Grazing Committee meeting on August 6th at Coyote Canyon Chapter at 9am.

August 26th District 14 Farm & Ranch workshop at Tohatchi Chapter at 9am. Those who have grazing permits from our meeting at Ft. Defiance Agency Committee meeting, we found out who was holding up all the grazing permits, Brett Powers with Fish & Wildlife. He has about 246 permits he is withholding because of the lack of grass and foliage on the ranchland. He is doing an adjustment to the numbers of livestock listed on each permit. He states District 14 is way over with their number of livestock on their permits which does not reflect the rangeland. He is looking to cut the number in half, but not less than 10.

Intertribal ceremony will be starting this weekend into next week. The mohair and wool sale in W/R starting yesterday, today, and tomorrow and they are only taking 120 permittees per day and being sold for 30 cent per pound.

Franklin Sandoval – Veterans meeting August 8th at 9am. We have a concern over the low participation of veteran. We have mostly spouses of the veterans attending the meetings. If you have a veteran in your household, please encourage them to attend our meetings. Also, we would like to see our code talkers identified from our community and showcase them in our chapter.

LDA Moore – The Yazzie/Martinez lawsuit public hearing will be held on August 5th in Farmington. I am also setting up meetings on the purposed railroad that's coming from Farmington to Gallup. I will setup meeting for District 14 and come back with time and place soon.

X. NEXT MEETING DATE: August 4, 2025 (Planning Meeting) at 9am

XI. AJOURNMENT: 11:15am

Submitted by



Secretary/Treasurer, Tohatchi Chapter **August 3, 2025**

cc: Mr. Elvis Bitsilly, President

Ms. Lee Rodgers, Vice-President

Mr. Gerald Moore, Grazing Officer

Ms. Maria Allison, CSC