



June 25, 2025 10:00am

TOHATCHI CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

- I. MEETING CALL TO ORDER: 9:24am
- II. ROLL CALL: President Elvis Bitsilly, Vice President Lee Rodgers, Secretary/Treasurer Jean Crawford, and Grazing Officer Gerald Moore
- III. INVOCATION: Shirley Francisco
- IV. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:
Motion: 1st Priscilla Duncan 2nd Pernell Halona Vote: 18-0-2
- V. APPROVAL OF MAY 21, 2025 MEETING MINUTES:
Motion to read on your own:
Motion: 1st Pernell Halona 2nd Kevin Mitchell Vote: 17-0-3
PRESENTERS:
- VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
1. None
- VII. NEW BUSINESS:
May 2025 Financial Report –

MAY BALANCE FUND		
1	Chapter Activities Gen Fund	\$21,638.49
3	Land Claims Trust	\$21,160.91
8	Supplement Youth Fund	\$18,847.03
9	Housing Discretionary Fund	\$1,504.89
10	LGA Grant Fund	\$59,356.91
12	Chapter Stipends	\$11,819.94
13	Scholarship General Fund	\$7,092.00
14	Scholarship Claims Fund	\$3,453.48
15	PEP Fund	-\$11,548.75
16	Veterans Fund	\$6,067.92
17	Emergency Fund	\$26,144.91
23	NN Sales Tax	\$72,052.81
25	NN CIP - \$180,000	\$14,200.71
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	\$361,080.08

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – The Chapter's second half of our budget was received from the Navajo Nation. The financial reports were reviewed by Maria, CSC and Secretary /Treasurer. For the month of May 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.

President Bitsilly – Just to mention, all 110 Chapters have received their 2nd half of their budget for 2025. So, we were able to bring back our PEP employees here at the Tohatchi Chapter. They will be employed up to fiscal year end of September 2025. We also have 12 summer youth students working in our community. The Chapter can setup an individual for community service work, if they are mandated to do so. The Division of Community Development is our oversight.

Motion to accept the May 2025 Financial Report

Motion: 1st Virginia Harvey 2nd Pernell Halona Vote: 20-0-2

VIII. RESOLUTIONS:

1. **050-06-2025:** Resolution recommending and approving the Housing Discretionary assistance fund 09 for the following community members: Marie Allison and Herman Yazzie respectively.

President Bitsilly – Resolutions should be presented at the Planning Meetings and then voted on during the Chapter meeting.

Motion: 1st Fern Spencer 2nd Pernell Halona Vote: 18-0-3

2. **051-06-2025:** Resolution approving the Navajo Nation Department of Fish & Wildlife to initiate field observations and restoration projects to implement low impact watershed restoration practices within Tohatchi community.

Grazing Officer Moore – This particular project will take some time to see some results. This project will start up in the mountains. This is where they will be planting trees and plants which will slow down the flow of large amount of water coming down off the mountain. I'm assuming this is where their work will start at the top of the mountain and not down here in the community.

Fern Spencer – I like to know when the work to remove all the shrubs, tamarack and Russian olive trees will began because once you get the canal working and cleared of debris, these trees and shrubs will just soak up the water again. This may require a resolution as well.

President Bitsilly – We, Red Willow Farm have an eradication project in place with the BIA to remove these trees and shrubs. This project has been on-going for the past 2 years and funds are allocated yearly. Navajo Nation Fish & Wildlife is also involved and coordinating with this project.

Motion: 1st Priscilla Duncan 2nd Geneva Begay Vote: 22-2-2

3. **052-06-2025:** Resolution to amend and approve the plan of operation for the Tohatchi Community Land Used planning committee (CLUPC).

Pernell Halona – The plan of operation was created by the Department of Community Development and reviewed by and approved by the Department of Justice. What this legislation is for is the renewal of the Tohatchi CLUPC plan of operation. The plan of operation is updated every 5 years and we will be providing the plan of operations to our community to review.

Vice President Rodgers – Just to be clear, this is the overall coverage of the plan of operations and the CLUPC is still working on finalizing the Land Use Plan, correct?

Pernell Halona - Yes

Motion: 1st Delphine Bitsilly 2nd Kevin Mitchell **Vote:** 21-0-5

4. **053-06-2025:** Resolution requesting and approving the Tohatchi Chapter for heavy equipment in-kind with road grader, backhoe, farm tractor delivery with PEP workers and the maintenance work of the diversion dam, canal, Chooshgai Lake, Red Willow Farm and other related Red Willow Farm projects. **Geneva Begay** – We have this resolution updated yearly because of the diversion dam and the issues with the canals. We have to ask for assistance from the Chapter to use their heavy equipment. We do need to work harder on this canal system with NRCS and other resources on the Navajo Nation.

Motion: 1st Pernell Halona 2nd Virginia Harvey **Vote:** 23-0-3

5. **054-06-2025:** Resolution to amend resolution #025-01-2025 in the amount of \$5 million to increase to \$20 million for plan and design and the construction of the Iini Marketplace.

Motion: Kevin Mitchell 2nd Pernell Halona **Vote:**

Delphine Bitsilly – I'm a resident who lives down Bitsilly Road. Back when this project became public, the party stated that she did not want to request any money from the Navajo Nation because she did not want to pay back the loan. Those were her words at either a CLUPC or Chapter meeting. So, now the resolution states she is requesting to increase the amount to \$15 million. Also, there is a lot more involved in this project that is being planned.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – I believe Ms. Manuelito decided to amend her resolution to increase the amount of funding requested to \$20 million after she heard LDA Moore's report at the Planning Meeting. Mr. Moore stated there were over \$700 million being put back into the UUFB fund in W/R. I'm not sure if that's the correct amount that was stated but it was a huge amount going back into UUFB. If Ms. Manuelito were to receive UUFB funds, I don't believe she would be required to pay back the money.

Kevin Mitchell – The amount being requested may sound like a lot of money but that is the cost of building a store. Working on school board, I am well aware of the cost of constructing a building.

Resolution was tabled: Request made by Fern Spencer to have Laris Manuelito here at the chapter meeting to justify this request for an increase in the amount original stated in her resolution of January 2025. Laris also presented at the CLUPC meeting stating she would not request funds from the Navajo Nation because she did not want to have to repay the loan. Community would like to know why the increase in the funding amount because \$20 million is a lot of money.

Motion: 1st Fern Spencer 2nd Pernell Halona **Vote:** 21-2-6

6. **055-06-2025:** Resolution approving the Navajo Nation Sales Tax allocation of \$75,262.00 for fiscal year 2025 accompanied by a budget in the same amount.

Motion: 1st Delphine Bitsilly 2nd Kevin Mitchell **Vote:** 22-0-5

7. **056-06-2025:** Resolution approving the Summer Youth Employment Budget in the total amount of \$22,020.55. Tohatchi Chapter will be hiring 14 students to work this summer.

Wilfred Yazzie – How are the students placed at the jobsites? Is it done the last minutes or has the jobsites been approved prior to assigning the students?

President Bitsilly – Yes, jobsites are established for the students that are hired every summer. They are placed in our community of Tohatchi; for example: at the schools, the speedway store and one in W/R working with the Veterans office and other student in Gallup. These arrangements are made prior to the

hiring of the summer students. We also have some students working here at the Chapter.

Delphine Bitsilly – I've asked other chapters about their pay scale for the summer students. They are employed for 2 weeks and the chapter offers workshops to the students to learn life skills and job requirements. They bring in presenters and experts in different fields to talk with the students. The 2nd half of the day the students spend working. I also learned one chapter pays their students \$16 an hour for the 2 weeks.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – That is a great idea. I think we can bring someone in to teach the student how to put together a resume or even having the students' complete applications which will help them to understand the abbreviations found on applications.

President Bitsilly – The Chapter staff put together a one-day orientation for the students. They usually do a 2-day orientation. They brought in someone from the diabetes program from W/R and they covered 4 topics in regards to health and wellness. They also had someone come in to talk about agriculture and farming.

Vice President Rodgers – These presentations have to be coordinated which is vested with the Chapter coordinator, but it is a great idea.

Motion: 1st Virginia Harvey 2nd Pernell Halona Vote: 28-0-4

8. **057-06-2025:** Resolution to approve the capital improvement projects (ICIP) plan for the year 2027-2031.

President Bitsilly – Just to mention, we have up to 12 projects we can list as priority. We have 4 listed on our resolution which have been on the Chapter's ICIP priority list for several years now. As we move forward expending the dollars to complete these projects, the project listing will move up the priority list.

Secretary/Treasurer Crawford – Just to be clear, Tohatchi Chapter will be losing money which came from the State of NM to complete our projects. There are a couple of funds which will be diverted back to State because we were unable to secure a project manager from W/R to assist us with our projects. The deadline to expend all of the funds is June 30, 2025. We were unable to have the funding reauthorized.

Vice President Rodgers – Let's go back over the priority list, highway lighting is number 1 as far as our projects, but this is also true for all the chapters in District 14 except for Naschitti who already have highway lighting. Second on our priority list is the Safety Complex and we are working with "LAM" corporation to assist with the planning and design of the construction of the building. Loren Miller is the architect. We've reached out to Navajo Nation EMS, Police Department, and Fire Department to help us with the design of the building. They have provided much needed input, but I feel there is a lot of "white space" in the design. White space meaning empty spaces in the building which can be used for more storage. Number 3 is the San Juan Lateral, and we are being told there is a shortfall of funding. There is a meeting coming up with NTUA on Friday. Number 4 is the warehouse and I've been actively requesting for a project manager by meeting with people in W/R.

Kevin Mitchell – I just want to say, sometimes emails and phone calls don't work, you have to go in person to talk with these individuals.

Pernell Halona – I had to go to Community Development to meet with all of them when I was a Council Delegate. This is the only way to get these projects moving. This is what our council delegate needs to do is get DCD together and sit with them to go over our projects. I would suggest we do another resolution to get our money out of W/R to get moving on our projects. Our community really needs this Safety Complex.

Carol Bowman Muskett - I'm the Vice President from Mexican Springs and I'm glad to see you have updated your priority listing and just to let you know Mexican Springs is facing the same issue with lack of project manager. We have gone to W/R and sat there and waiting and waiting to speak with someone who could assist us. It gets very tiring to sit and waiting on someone to talk to regarding our projects. Mexican Springs also has highway lighting as their number 1 priority just like Tohatchi. We did have meetings last year. This lighting project is all tied together with the chapters in District 14, but they all need funding for the project. We need to talk with our State Representatives and legislators to ask them to assist us with funding for this lighting project. Maybe we can work as a group to get these contracts signed and project off the ground.

Motion: 1st Pernell Halona 2nd Virginia Harvey **Vote:** 31-0-4

- IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Grazing Office Moore: July 2nd, District 14 Grazing Committee Meeting at Naschitti Chapter @ 9am. The "wild thing" will be held on July 4th & 5th at Red Rock Park. Also, on August 26th is the date for the next farm and ranch workshop.

Fern Spencer – a comment to continue with starting our meetings at 9am instead of 10am. Twenty-one community members voted which is the majority. Meetings will start at 9am from now on.

Also want to mention is the rural addressing project which will be here soon. They have already done Coyote Canyon; Twin Lakes and we will be next for rural addressing. This rural addressing will be a benefit to all of us, especially for our elders. I hope our District 14 will embrace this rural addressing. So, residence on the left side of the road will have odd numbers and residence on the right side will have even numbers. Kevin Mitchell – The lunch program is still going on, breakfast is from 7:30am-8:30am and lunch is from 11:00am to 12:30pm and this is at the high school currently, but next month in July it will be at all 3 schools, high school, mid school, and the elementary. Parents can also go over to pickup a box of food which should last them a week.

President Bitsilly – The Chapter will be sponsoring a 5K mile fun walk/run on July 19th here at the Chapter. Navajo Nation Diabetes Program will be co-sponsoring this event which will start at 7am. We will be giving away t-shirt for the participates. On July 8th, we have a hiking project scheduled. On July 22nd there will be a Zumba class here at the chapter.

Carol Muskett – Mexican Springs Chapter will be hosting JMI event on July 23rd which will start at 4pm and the walk will be at 6pm.

Shirley Francisco – We have a Vocational Bible Class starting on June 30th for children ages 6-11 and will start at 10am with lunches being provided. This class is open to everyone and we will also have a bus for kids who need a ride over and back. You can also contact Pastor Martin Eastridge at (505) 879-2985 and we have application forms which I can drop off with the Chapter.

Vice President Rodgers – Just for your information, we will be finalizing our cemetery policy and we will be sharing with community as well.

Delphine Bitsilly – next CLUPC meeting is on July 15 at 9am here at Tohatchi Chapter.

Red Willow Farm – Meeting on July 8th.

- X. NEXT MEETING DATE:** July 7, 2025 (Planning Meeting) at 9am

- XI. AJOURNMENT:** 11:42am

Motion: 1st Pernell Halona 2nd Fern Spencer

Submitted by



Secretary/Treasurer, Tohatchi Chapter July 3, 2025

cc: Mr. Elvis Bitsilly, President
Ms. Lee Rodgers, Vice-President
Mr. Gerald Moore, Grazing Officer
Ms. Maria Allison, CSC