



October 06, 2025 9:00 AM

TOHATCHI PLANNING MEETING AGENDA

TELECONFERENCE: 1-219-803-8769 PIN# 160 108 500#

Video call link: meet.google.com/ahs-epsf-aep

- I. MEETING CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. INVOCATION
- IV. REVIEW OF THE AGENDA
- V. COMMUNITY REQUESTS AND PRESENTERS:
 - 1. Navajo Nation Broadband- Sonia Nez
 - 2. Chooshgai Community School – Mr. Toledo, Principal
 - 3. Krystal Yazzie – Representing Sam Bregman for Governor
- VI. REPORTS:

***Council Delegate Report/LDA:**

- 1. Navajo Nation 2026 Comprehensive Budget
- 2. US Federal Government shutdown
- 3. Navajo Nation ARPA Projects Status

***Community Service Coordinator/Officials' Reports:**

- 1. Chapter Budget Carryover 2025/2026
- 2. Senior Center Grand Opening
- 3. Post Office Business operation issues
- 4. Bike Trail Project update
- 5. Cemetery Expansion update
- 6. Homecoming parade
- 7. New Mexico ICIP – New Program System

***Red Willow Farm Report:**

- 1. Diversion Dam Project Update

***Grazing Officer Moore's Report:**

- 1. Grazing Permits

***CLUPC Report:**

- 1. Community Land Use Plan Status

***Tohatchi Veteran's Report:**

- 1. 2026 Veteran's Budget Fund Update

VII. RESOLUTIONS:

- 1. Tohatchi Chapter 2026 Comprehensive Budget
- 2. Tohatchi Chapter 4th Quarter Revenue
- 3. Tohatchi Chapter General Fund 2025 Carryover- \$2,524.00

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Special Chapter Meeting October 7, 2025 @ 9am

IX. NEXT CHAPTER MEETING DATE: October 22, 2025 (Regular Chapter Meeting)

X. ADJOURNMENT:



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BY: _____

October 06, 2025 9:00 A.M.

PLANNING MEETING MINUTES

TELECONFERENCE: 219-803-8769 PIN: 160 108 500#

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- I. **MEETING CALL TO ORDER:** am
- II. **ROLL CALL:** President Elvis Bitsilly, Vice President Lee Rodgers, Secretary/Treasurer Jean Crawford, Grazing Officer Gerald Moore, and CLUPC member: Priscilla Duncan and Fern Spencer.
- III. **INVOCATION:** Jean Crawford
- IV. **REVIEW OF THE AGENDA**
- V. **COMMUNITY REQUESTS AND PRESENTERS:**
 1. **Navajo Nation Broadband: Sonia Nez** – A lot of times I get asked what is the broadband office and where do you fit in in the chart? We get confused with the Navajo Nation Utility Program and the Department of Information Technology. We are at the division level at the Navajo Nation Broadband office and we answer directly to President Nygren and Vice President Montoya. The Navajo Nation Communication Regulatory Commission, they regulate the telecommunication industry on the Navajo Nation. For us we developed a data driven strategy broadband plan and formed partnerships and we go after funding and that we are different from the Telecommunication Regulatory Commission. Then under the division of the General Services, you have Navajo Nation Telecommunication Utilities Program, they provide access to essential telecommunication and utility services, Navajo Nation government offices and then the Department of Information Technology they provide technical services for the Navajo Nation government offices. So the folks with the Division of General Services they are inward facing to the government and take care of government offices, government phones, and so forth. For us, the Navajo Nation Broadband office, we are facing to the people and the communities on the Navajo Nation. What does Navajo Broadband office do? We are not a service provider like Sacred Winds, NTUA wireless, or choice. What we do is we plan and then we fund and hire the team to deploy broadband. We did an assessment nationwide to locate all the towers, fibers, and what service providers are providing services. Based on the assessment we asked; how can we get our people connected out there and then funded. We apply for grants and also request the Navajo Nation Council for funding as well. Let me give an example of what we do, so let's say you want water to your house, we basically hire the people who will install the pipes that will go to your house, but once the pipes reach the house, it is still up to the customary to decide which water company to go with. So, in our case we would get the fiber to your house or towers setup but again it would be up to the customary to decide which internet service provider to work with. Our vision with the broadband office is "empowering Navajo communities with high-speed connections." I believe the internet is a tool to attend school from home or start a business from home to be success. Our mission is "Broadband for every chapter, every home, every phone." We need to take care of internet at the homes, businesses, schools, chapter, and store, etc. Right now, we are using 3 technologies, low earth orbit satellite called Leo. That's like the star links out there like amazon. There are also wireless towers and fiber. Fiber is best but the most expensive. So, you would look at the layout of your home to see what would be best for you. Most people who live within the community could get fiber, but as you go out farther into the community, you might see wireless towers. Anything beyond that, would require a satellite because towers are way too expensive, you are looking at a cost of millions of dollars. Now, let's look at our goals which are the 4 areas we are focused on, one is the connectivity to all 110-chapter houses across Navajo. Currently there are 52-chapter houses which have been connected. Tohatchi Chapter received their connectivity through the E-Rate program which is a Federal Program. This program pays for 90% of the construction and we would pay the 10%. If the State of New gets involved, E-Rate would pay 95%, then the State would pay 5% and we would not pay nothing. I am currently working on a

contract for the Tohatchi Chapter where in fiscal year 2025 Tohatchi was awarded to Choice Wireless, I believe the fiber is already here and we just need to do some finish out and so we are still working on that contract and hopefully have it completed by December 2025.

The thing we are working on is 5G and more infrastructure. To explain; 1G was a turtle, very slow, 2G you were able to do a bit more like text messages. With 5G you can say it's so much faster like a cheetah compared to the 1G turtle. With 5G you can now watch videos, movies, and have meetings. Our goal is to get the nation on 5G and in this area, you already have 5G along the I-40 corridor and going north. In Tohatchi you'll be getting 2 towers, one is already installed and another site that is being planned.

The 3rd area we are working on is called "BEAD" broadband, equity, access, and deployment. This is to connect internet to all serviced and underserved households. The funding came from the Federal government who then gave the funding to the States (Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah). The Federal government said they would assist with 8000 homes getting connected but we challenged them and got 30,000 homes across Navajo who would be eligible for the high-speed internet funding. We are preliminary awarded right now, the State give us the thumbs up and now it's going to the Federal level for review and we should have an answer sometime in December. Right here in Tohatchi, it's states 95 homes are eligible in New Mexico. According to the map it's more toward the north area of Tohatchi community boundary. The 4th area we are working on is pushing E-Rate, ARPA, and NTIA which are the funding sources we are working with.

President Bitsilly – Isn't our chapter already connected to E-Rate?

Sonia Nez – There is 2 parts, category 1 and category 2. Category 1 E-Rate is the actual fiber that comes into the Chapter, category 2 is the black box with the switch is what shoots out to the public. So, whomever is your internet provider is using that black box but it is not E-Rate fiber yet, until I switch it over or until I get this contract completed with NTUA Choice Wireless, then you'll have your E-Rate fiber. I suspect it's already here and Choice will switch it over to E-Rate and that way the Federal government will be the 90% and the Nation will pay the 10%. Right now, the Chapter is paying the full 100%.

Vice President Rodgers – We have no wireless connection zone area after passing the welcome sign into Tohatchi and the 5G will pop back up by the transfer station.

Sonia Nez – Yes, there are definitely dead zone pockets and we hope once we complete our plan to connect the Navajo Nation to 5G we won't have these pockets. The 5G needs fiber to be effective.

President Bitsilly – in your BEAD category you have 95 homes which are eligible for the Tohatchi boundary. How will we know who these individuals are who are eligible?

Sonia Nez – If you go to BEAD New Mexico, I believe they have maps and you can zoom in on the areas. I have to give this request to our technical guy Bernardo to see if he can help get this information. Here's a quick recap of the Navajo Nation E-Rate Program across the nation. I mentioned 52 Chapters are connected, 27 are working on their right-of-way and permitting, 30 have been awarded and waiting for matching funds.

Treva Roanhorse – You mention getting the Nation up to a 5G, when will this happen and what will be the cost?

Sonia Nez – The plan is 2028 when this will be completed and as far as cost, it will be just the service that the customer would be responsible for. Currently, we are waiting funding from the Council, the broadband office was given \$120 million of the ARPA money and we incumbered \$42 million, so the \$77.8 million that was left was swept up into the RRR account.

2. **Chooshgai Community School: Mr. Kenneth Toledo** – Mr. Toledo requested to be added to the next Chapter meeting agenda so he can provide a PowerPoint to show Chooshgai Community School data on the operations of the school. The school is still requesting a supporting resolution from the Chapter. According to Mr. Toledo, Tohatchi Chapter is the only Chapter in District 14 who have not submitted a support resolution. He provided documents to the Chapter officials, one is the Chooshgai Community School Inc., Annual Report for School Year Ending 2024-2025 which provides a brief description of the programs offered under the current grant of the school. For example; academic services: special education, gifted & talented, native language program, curriculum, assessment & accountability data, and accreditation. The 2nd report provided is the Chooshgia Community School Financial Statements and Single Audit reporting package for year ended June 10, 2024.

Mr. Toledo states he will be available at the next meeting to explain the two reports to the Tohatchi Community so we understand the reports. He also provided another draft of the support resolution to the officials.

3. **Krystal Yazzie:** Representative for the Sam Bregman campaign – Mr. Bregman is bringing experience to the governor's office. He has held insurance companies accountable and advocated for workers, championed the SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) program to support survivors, and established a zero-tolerance policy for guns in our schools. I would like to request to add Mr. Bregman to the Chapter meeting agenda on October 22nd so he can answer your questions in person.

VI. **REPORTS:**

***Council Delegate's Report given by LDA Moore:** LDA Moore was not available to give report.

1. Navajo Nation 2026 Comprehensive Budget –
2. US Federal Government shutdown –
3. Navajo Nation ARPA Projects Statues –

***Community Service Coordinator/Officials' Report:**

1. Chapter Budget Carryover 2025/2026. – Chapter will be holding a special meeting tomorrow on October 7th to discuss the carryover budget.
2. Senior Center Grand Opening – will be held on October 10th and the Senior Center will be providing entertainment and lunch. Mutton stew with fry bread will be provided.
3. Post Office Business operation issues – This may be a personnel issue with the person who is currently positioned to work at the Tohatchi Post Office. President Bitsilly states he will reach out to TAOS regarding this situation and work with them to resolve this issue.
4. Bike Trail Project update – The bike trail project is still on going. Our paperwork is in Window Rock currently to be reviewed.
5. Cemetery Expansion update – The main cemetery is full and we will be starting plots in the new expansion side of the cemetery.
6. Homecoming parade – celebration the week of October 13-17th. Parade on Wednesday October 15th.
7. New Mexico ICIP– Maria attended a training in Farmington on the new State ICIP system. The system has been streamlined and is friendlier and easier to get your application into the system.

***Red Willow Farm Report:**

1. **Diversion Dam Project Update** – Nobody from Red Willow Farm available to give report.

***Grazing Officer Moore's Report:**

1. **Grazing Officer Moore** – Announced the repercussion of not getting an annual tally count. There is discussion with Ft. Defiance Agency and Branch of Resources of the possibility of cancellation of grazing permits due to no tally counts for 5 years or more.

***CLUPC Report:**

***Tohatchi Veterans Report:**

1. **2026 Veteran's Budget Fund Update**

Laris Manuelito - gave an update on the organization's events and activities. She states there are currently 29 males, 2 women, 8 surviving spouses within the Tohatchi organization. Funds were allocated from the Navajo Nation Veterans office to the Veterans program in the amount of over \$63,000. Next meeting on October 21st at 9am.

Laris also pointed out the dangerous of doing consent agenda items for example the in-house resolutions. She states all resolutions should be read aloud and have discussions on each of the topics.

VII. **RESOLUTIONS:**

1. Tohatchi Chapter 2026 Comprehensive Budget –
2. Tohatchi Chapter 4th Quarter Revenue –
3. Tohatchi Chapter General Fund 2025 Carryover \$ 2,524.00

VIII. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Zumba classes were provided with no community participation. Only 3 people came to participate in each of the Zumba classes. The money to pay for the classes comes from the unhealthy food tax account. District 14 Grazing meeting October 1st at Mexican Springs Chapter.

IX. **NEXT CHAPTER MEETING DATE: October 22, 2025 @ 9:00am**

X. **ADJOURNMENT: 1:10 am**

Submitted by;

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jean Crawford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jean" and last name "Crawford" clearly legible.

Jean Crawford, Secretary/Treasurer, Tohatchi Chapter – October 15, 2025

cc: Mr. Elvis Bitsilly, President

Ms. Lee Rodgers, Vice President

Mr. Gerald Moore, Grazing Officer

Ms. Maria Allison, CSC

Mr. Nathan Notah, Council Delegate