



APRIL 06, 2026 10:00 AM  
**TOHATCHI PLANNING MEETING AGENDA**

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

Video call link: [meet.google.com/ahs-epsf-aep](https://meet.google.com/ahs-epsf-aep)

- I. MEETING CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL: President Elvis Bitsilly, Vice President Lee Rodgers, Secretary/Treasurer Jean Crawford, Grazing Officer Gerald Moore, CLUPC members, Fern Spencer and Priscilla Duncan
- III. INVOCATION: President Elvis Bitsilly
- IV. REVIEW OF THE AGENDA
- V. COMMUNITY REQUESTS:
  1. **Sherry Bitsie** – Made request on behalf of her son Tyrell Bitsie for assistance with cost of land survey.
  2. **Margorie Francisco** – Requesting to have new home built for her using Chapter discretionary funds. She was referred to CHID housing program.
  3. **Virginia Barney** – Requesting for bathroom addition or renovation of the old bathroom.
  4. **Carrie Etsitty** – Requesting for assistance with give aways for her daughter who will be **relinquishing** her title as Miss Tohatchi Elementary.
  5. **Caroline Barney** – following up on request made for a resolution for the N9653 culverts to repair flooding area of road.
  6. **Veronica Smiley** – Requesting for a support resolution from chapter to address issues and discrepancies at Chooshgai Community School.
- VI. PRESENTERS:
  1. NN Office of Special Education & Rehabilitation Services
  2. Phyllis Dawson – Mckinley County Bureau of Election
  3. Laris Manuelito – Ii'ni MarketPlaceRequests to be added to agenda:
  4. Vincent Muskett
  5. Veronica Destsoi-Smiley
- VII. REPORTS:
  - \*Council Delegate Report/LDA:**
    1. Navajo Nation Chapter Emergency Fund update:
    2. Navajo Nation \$84 million Road Improvement Projects update:
  - \*Community Service Coordinator/Officials' Reports:**
    1. Auditor review update
    2. Senior Center update
    3. CHID Homes
    4. TAOS, Inc- Tohatchi Building Status
    5. N108 Bridge status update
    6. N9653 Culvert Assessment-NNDOT
    7. First Responders (Safety Complex) Capital Outlay \$1,050,000M
    8. Rural Addressing
  - \*Red Willow Farm Report:**
    1. Red Willow Farm projects



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April 06, 2026 10:00 A.M.

## PLANNING MEETING MINUTES

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

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

- I. **MEETING CALL TO ORDER: 10:18am**
- II. **ROLL CALL:** President Elvis Bitsilly, Vice President Lee Rodgers, Secretary/Treasurer Jean Crawford, Grazing Officer Moore and Geneva Begay with Red Willow Farm.
- III. **INVOCATION:** President Elvis Bitsilly
- IV. **REVIEW OF THE AGENDA**
- V. **COMMUNITY REQUESTS:**
  1. **Sherrie Bitsie** – made request on behalf of her son Tyrell Bitsie for assistance with the archaeological clearance. He applied last month but was unable to attend meeting due to his work schedule. He will be here for the Chapter meeting on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. He is a registered voter of Tohatchi Chapter.
  2. **Margorie Francisco** – requesting to have a new home built for her using Housing Discretionary funds.  
**Maria, CSC** - Housing Discretionary fund is not used for building new homes because of the lack of funding. She was referred to the CHID program to apply for a new home with them. The deadline to apply is on September 2026. There is also the Southwest Indian Foundation who can assist as well. Our policy for Housing Discretionary states the chapter will not do renovation of a mobile home because there is a possibility the home can be moved or repossessed.
  3. **Virginia Barney** – requesting for bathroom addition or renovation of their bathroom.
  4. **Carrie Etsitty** – requesting for assistance with “give aways” for her daughter, Kayden Etsitty who will be relinquishing her title as Miss Tohatchi Elementary during the week of May 11<sup>th</sup>.  
**President Bitsilly** – we will need a letter from you stating this request and sent to Maria, CSC.
  5. **Julie Thompson** – reported that there are vendors who are not from our community who sell along highway 491 as well. They are the ones who are leaving their trash and grease behind and should be notified to clean up their area before leaving.  
**Secretary/Treasurer Crawford** – we talked about this issue at our last meeting and it was decided that we should draft a resolution to the Department of Health and Protection with the Navajo Nation. But the resolution was tabled and it will be brought back up next month. Also, the other thing that was brought up was during that meeting was finding a designated area for our vendors to sell. I hope this is being looked into to find a suitable location. Remember, we are not discouraging people to sell, we just want to know they have the proper permits to be selling.  
**President Bitsilly** – the resolution was drafted to go to OEH and they should be the oversight on vendors here on Navajo.  
**Fern Spencer** – I believe these vendors are required to have a county selling permit as well.
  6. **Caroline Barney** – is following up on her request for a resolution for the N9653 road culverts to repair the damage from flooding. She asked if the meeting still on for Friday with NNDOT? She states she spoke with Senator Pinto and she is requesting a resolution so she can assist.  
**Vice President Rodgers** – unfortunately, the meeting date was changed to April 13, 2026 at 9am and we’ll be meeting here at chapter first and we’ll all be going out to the site to do assessment of the area.  
**President Bitsilly** – I don’t think there will be a resolution needed for the assessment and the work which NNDOT will be doing on N9653 road. If a resolution is required, we can always add it to next month’s agenda.

7. **Julie Thompson** – requesting donation for her 5<sup>th</sup> grade grandchild who attends Chooshgai Community school and will be traveling to Washington D.C with her class. She is requesting for monetary donations from the community and chapter.

**President Bitsilly** – Again, you will have to submit a letter requesting monetary donation to the chapter as soon as possible.

## VI. PRESENTERS:

### 1. NN Office of Special Education & Rehabilitation Services:

**Albert Calamity Sr.** – I work in the Crownpoint office of Special Education & Rehabilitation Services. Our program is funded by a grant from the US Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to work with people with disabilities. I work with the individuals with disabilities who want to work or go back to work. The goal of Vocational Rehabilitation is to assist individuals with disabilities to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment. I have Arlinda Frank here who works with children with disabilities, called early intervention.

**Arlinda Frank** – My office is in Farmington and I work with the home visiting program and we utilize the parent's teachers; curriculum. We have open enrollment for children from 0-5 years old and prepare them to go into a classroom setting. We also work with prenatal mothers which goes into early intervention program. This program is for children who are on the spectrum or have some type of delayed learning or disability. We have offices in Crownpoint, Shiprock, Window Rock and into Arizona as well. With our program we are doing some developmental screening for example, hearing and visual screenings. Our next event called a resource fair will be in Rock Springs on April 22<sup>nd</sup> where we will have other resource programs at this event.

**Albert Calamity Sr.** – I'll describe our program and who is eligible for the program. Often times we are unaware of an individual's disability; it could be hearing, vision, or a learning disability. We have programs setup across Navajo in New Mexico and Arizona. Individuals who are eligible for the Vocational Rehabilitation services are enrolled member of an Indian Tribe, resides on or within a 20-mile radius of the Navajo reservation, have a physical, mental or emotional impairment which constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment and; requires vocational rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome. An example would be if an individual who made a living as a carpenter hurt their back and could no longer work. They can sign up for the program to get back to doing some type of work as a carpentry because he has the knowledge and skills but need assistance to work without putting pressure on his back.

The following are the types of vocational rehabilitation services for which an individual with a disability may qualify: Information and Referral, an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational need. Counseling, guidance and work-related placement services. Mental/physical restoration. Maintenance for additional costs incurred while participating in rehabilitation, tuition, books/supplies, room and/or board, transportation. Interpreter services for individuals who are deaf and services for those who are blind or visually impaired. Occupational licenses, tools, equipment and startup supplies. Training Services. Rehabilitation technology services, and Native healing services. The initial intake interview will be conducted with the applicant to determine eligibility and appropriate services consistent with individual's unique strengths and capabilities. The Navajo Nation believes that individuals with disabilities, when provided the necessary vocational rehabilitation services can return to work and become productive members of our society.

Contact the nearest office which would be the Gallup office. They can be reached at (505) 722-9239/9241, Crownpoint office at (505) 786-2260/2259, and Window Rock office at (928) 871-6957/6956.

**Arlinda Frank** – Programs under the 'Home Visiting' provide services like direct home visits, provides families lessons and activities, routine developmental screenings, family group connections, and provides referrals and resources to local community resources. The Early Childhood Program includes additional early childhood services that support prenatal mothers, families of young children up to age 5 by providing early childhood education, family education, referrals to resources, and routine developmental screenings to families that reside on and near the Navajo Reservation. The 'Independent Living Services' program provides services to Navajo people with significant

disabilities to promote independency within their home and community environment. To be eligible for this program you have to be an enrolled member and reside on the Navajo Nation, are 80 years or younger, have significant intellectual and physical impairment that limits the capability of doing daily tasks and functions, and requires assistance to achieve a greater independence and self-sufficiency to enhance the quality of life. To inquiry about these programs you can call the Gallup office at (505) 722-5975, the Crownpoint office at (505) 786-2259, and the Window Rock office at (928) 871-6338.

**2. Phyllis Dawson – Mckinley County Bureau of Election:**

The 2026 Primary Election will be held on Tuesday June 2, 2026. Early voting begins Tuesday May 5, 2026, Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm and on Saturday May 30, 2026 10:00am – 6:00pm at the Mckinley County Rotunda. Alternate early voting starts May 16, 2026 and ends May 30, 2026. Alternate Sites are: Twin Lakes Chapter, Manuelito Chapter, and Crownpoint Chapter on Monday-Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm, May 18<sup>th</sup> to May 29<sup>th</sup>. Zuni Tribal Building and Thoreau Fire Station on Tuesday – Saturday from 9:00am – 5:00pm on May 16<sup>th</sup> to May 30<sup>th</sup>. Also Rio West Mall on Tuesday – Saturday from 10:00am – 6:00pm on May 16<sup>th</sup> to May 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Same Day Registration** starts on May 5, 2026 in the County Rotunda only. Starting May 18<sup>th</sup> all Early Voting sites will have “same day registration.” Any person eligible to vote may register to Vote at the County Rotunda. Registration will end on May 30, 2026. **On election day, all locations will have Same Day Registration.**

**Absentee Voting** begins at 8:00am – 5:00pm, Tuesday May 5, 2026 through Tuesday May 19, 2026. Address: Mckinley County Bureau of Election Office, 207 West Hill Ave., Gallup, NM 87301. Phone: (505) 722-4469. To request an absentee ballot or check your voter registration status go on-line to nmvote.org sos.nm.gov/absentee.

**Voting Convenience Centers will be open 7am to 7pm on Election Day** and the nearest locations are: Mexican Springs Chapter, Tohatchi Elementary School, Twin Lakes Elementary School, and Coyote Canyon Chapter. **Voters from all precincts will have the opportunity to vote at any voting centers in the county.** Positions on the ballot will be for Federal Offices: US Senator, US Representative for District 1,2,3. State, District, & Metropolitan Offices: Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, State Auditor, State Treasurer, Commissioner of Public Lands, State Representative for district 5,6,9,69 Court of Appeals, Public Education Commission District 5, 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Division 2. Mckinley County: Magistrate Judge Divisions 1,2,3, County Sheriff, County Assessor, County Commissioner District 1,2, and Probate Judge.

**3. Laris Manuelito – I’ni MarketPlace**

4. **Evangeline Muskett** – spoke about why the Senior Center was temporarily closed again. She said it had to do with the HVAC. It needs to be serviced annually and it hasn’t been. She has been reaching out for assistance with the HVAC issue, but has had no response. President Bitsilly and Vice President Rodgers have been working with Lesita Desiderio, Director of the NN Aging Department to get this issue resolved.

**Request to be added to today’s agenda**

5. **Vicenti Muskett** – requested to be added to the Chapter meeting agenda on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

6. **Veronica Smiley** – Teacher from Chooshgai Community School talked about issues that are occurring currently at the school with the principal, staff, and teachers. She talked about the nepotism and the hiring process which are a problem. She encouraged the community to attend the school board meeting which is scheduled for tomorrow at Chooshgai.

**Julie Thompson** – talked about how she was treated and called a “trouble maker” by the school principal just because she was voicing her concern. She has grandchildren who attend the school at Chooshgai

**REPORTS:**

**\*Council Delegate’s Report given by LDA Moore: Nobody here to give updates.**

1. NN Council Legislative Updates –

2. NM Council Delegate Caucus NABI Sub Committee Meeting Update –

3. NTIP Navajo Transportation Improvement Projects, 84M Sihasin Fund -

**\*Community Service Coordinator/Officials’ Report:**

1. **Auditor's Review Updates** –

**Maria, CSC** – stated she sent an email to the auditors to temporarily put a halt on the audit because the auditor was taking files from the chapter and returning them with missing documents or documents are out of order. There were findings that were brought to the attention of the chapter and there is a meeting scheduled between the staff, auditors, and officials. The audit will be coming to a close within the next week and the close out should be completed at the end of the month.

2. **Senior Center updates** –

**President Bitsilly** – The Senior Center was re-opened in October 2025 after closure for the past 5 years. The hard work coordinated between the Senior Center staff and the Chapter has been productive and will continue. The issue with the HVAC is being addressed and we are working with Lesita Desiderio with the NN Department of Long Term and Aging.

3. **CHID Homes** –

**President Bitsilly** – Three CHID homes have been delivered for 3 families in the Tohatchi Community. There are 2 more expected for a total of 5 homes for 2026.

4. **TAOS, Inc.** – Tohatchi Building Status – This vacate building is located at Chooshgai and it originally belong to TAOS but now transferred to the Tohatchi Chapter. The chapter will be looking at plans how on best this building can be utilized and beneficial to the community.

5. **N108 Bridge status update** –

**President Bitsilly** – The Navajo Nation Land Department has yet to complete its portion of signing the TAA application package that will be submitted for federal construction funds by the Navajo Nation Transportation. Several contacts and correspondence have been on-going but very slow return contact from departments. The construction funds are at \$4.6 million for the project and has all clearances for the project completed.

6. **N9653 Culvert Assessment (NNDOT)** – A meeting with NNDOT was had on April

7. **First Responders (Safety Complex) Capital Outlay \$1,050,000 million** –

**President Bitsilly** - The cost is around \$16 million to construct. So far, \$4.5 million has been secured for this project. The final plan & design is in its completion stage with the construction phase to begin afterward. There is a shortfall of approximately 12 million with 4 million already allocated and approved for the project. Request for funding has been made to NM State; TIF, Capital Outlay, and Sihasin.

8. **Rural Addressing** –

**President Bitsilly** – This project is being finalized with SDR, the subcontractor. They will be providing the final road mapping and addressing. No date was mentioned as to when the contractor will be done but once it's done, the chapter will be providing training on how the numbers/signs will go up on your homes and streets/roads.

**\*Red Willow Farm Report:**

1. **Red Willow Farm Projects** –

**Geneva Begay** – States there are around 50 farmers who have signed up even though they are aware of the severe drought condition and the lack of water. She says some farmers want to work on their plot on weekends which is not open. The farm tractor is available to the farmers to use but they think the cost to rent per hour is way too much to pay. So the board has decided to lower the cost to \$40 an hour for rental and she ask for a resolution to reflect this. She also requested for another resolution for “in-kind services” from the chapter.

**\*Grazing Officer's Report:**

2. **Current grazing updates** -

**Grazing Office Moore** – the Dine college will be sponsoring workshops called agricultural days in Shiprock. Also, the BIA will be putting a pause on Grazing permits for probates and transfers. They

will be doing a vegetative study. There are currently public forums going on in the area for people to attend. Grazing Meeting was held on April 1<sup>st</sup> at Tohatchi Chapter.

**\* Veteran's Report:** Next meeting on April 10<sup>th</sup> at 10am.

**VII. RESOLUTIONS:**

1. Resolution to approve the March 2026 financial reports
2. Resolution to approve the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, January/February/March 2026 funds in the amount of \$3,706.03.
3. Resolution to approve and accept the Navajo Nation Sales Tax in the amount of \$79,056.00.
4. Resolution to support and approve in-kind services for Red Willow Farm from the Chapter.
5. Resolution to support and approve the \$40 an hour fee for rental of the Red Willow Farm tractor.
6. Resolution to support I'ni MarketPlace store to incorporate a Resilience/Health and Energy/Telecom Hub as well as an Emergency Operations Center.
7. Resolution to support the Chooshgai Community School.

**VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Red Willow meeting on April 7<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. Red Willow Farm Board District 14 meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm, and CLUPC meeting on April 21<sup>st</sup> at 9am. Ft. Defiance Agency meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup> at Red Lake Chapter at 9am.

**NEXT CHAPTER MEETING DATE: April 22, 2026 @ 10:00am**

**IX. ADJOURNMENT: 2:17pm**

Submitted by;



Jean Crawford, Secretary/Treasurer, Tohatchi Chapter – April 16, 2026

cc: Mr. Elvis Bitsilly, President

Ms. Lee Rodgers, Vice President

Mr. Gerald Moore, Grazing Officer

Ms. Maria Allison, CSC

Mr. Nathan Notah, Council Delegate