



# 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

### Tohatchi Community Land Use Planning Committee Meeting Minutes May 12, 2026

I. Call to Order: Time: 9:15 am Roll Call: 5 Invocation: Priscilla Duncan

II. Approval & Reading of Agenda:

Motion: **Delphine Bitsilly** 2<sup>nd</sup>: **Priscilla Duncan** Vote: 4-0-1

III. Approval of Minutes: **Tuesday, April 21, 2026**

Motion to waive and read on your own:

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

IV. Old Business:

A. **Community Land Use Plan, Schedule Final Manual**

\***Elvis Bitsilly** – had review on land use plan at last meeting with LaTasha James from Department of Community Development, today we will cover and review our manual, you all brought your draft copies, we are having our work session Friday and it was confirmed with LaTasha James who will be here Friday, update and add input, we looked at recommendations from the last several months, that’s why we brought LaTasha to get a direction we are going or what our progress is on the Tohatchi Land Use Plan manual for Tohatchi Chapter, the timeline sheet is a good example to look at the progress of our manual, any questions by committee members, she did hand out a community facilities, plan public space, buildings and the timeline is attached, still need input to add and got a lot of good pointers from LaTasha, she brought out things we did and didn’t have; \***Delphine Bitsilly** – our last meeting with LaTasha James, she asked to do a task and I would fulfill that portion of it, she wrote on the whiteboard the Chapter Track for the community, the second sheet is what is on the front top page, that is what is written and that’s what all in the community and surrounding area of Tohatchi Chapter, if we missed anything let me know and we can add on Friday or add today and update this paper, I thought of the other half of the post office, we are trying to get a business on the other side of the post office, I didn’t add it and I don’t know what you guys think of this, everything was on the list, we have the timeline and I may have missed some things, according to what she wrote here is typed out on this timeline sheet, April, May/June, July, August/September and we hope to have it at the fall session for council, by December we will have our Land Use Plan recertified, done until the next four years, the timeline she wanted to discuss, we removed the history Tohatchi which is section 4, she thought we should keep in the manual, we will decide that on Friday, as you all know in the 2018 land use plan manual, if we do keep it will be transferred to our 2026 manual, the question is the timeline history, are we going to make it current to 2026, it ends at 2017, it will be a task to update to 2026, I think that’s why she said we will discuss it at the work session and decide at that time, she wanted a print out of the ICIP, at the work session we will look at current projects, chapter resolutions and funded projects; \***Fern Spencer** – on your sheets in front of you, you have this here, you have this, the project timeline, what’s on the dark paper; \***Delphine Bitsilly** – this is what she wrote on the board, it’s the same thing on these paper, I typed it; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – final authority is at RDC, Resource Development Committee who finalized the 5 year plan, it’s not the council; \***Fern Spencer** – RDC, how long does it take for them to certify; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – same day, hear us out and vote, we will furnish them copies; \***Pernell Halona** – depends on who reads it and they

just approve it; **\*Fern Spencer** – on RDC is there anyone from this area: **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – no; **\*Mike Begay** – how Deon did it was when the plan was finalized here at the chapter level, the council delegate approached the council to introduce to their agenda and set a date when Tohatchi Chapter would come in and RDC look at it, Naschitti was picked first, Deon Ben sent me and Mr. Becenti over there to observe and ask questions, reported back to Deon Ben and shared what the questions were, Kieyoomia set up everything for us, at the final meeting Deon Ben when to the meeting himself, he answered the questions and they approved it; **\*Fern Spencer** – when was that; **\*Pernell Halona** - 2018; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – a good point, we need a sponsor for legislation to RDC for our land use plan, it would be our own delegate or someone to step up and present to RDC, it gets on the RDC agenda, they setup the meeting and we all be there with our sponsor, answer questions to the manual, we are comfortable it is done, RDC is final authority and need 3 votes; **\*Fern Spencer** – who are on the committee; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – Brenda Jesus - Chair, Casey Allen Johnson – Vice Chair, Shawna Ann Claw, Rickie Nez, Danny Simpson, Otto Tso, we can go on as a consent agenda, do a community public meeting one or two, the final process of the manual, we are needing a list of facilities, is this it, you were asking me what the facilities were and where is it in our old manual 2018, I don't recall and we can look at, I think there isn't no page with the facilities listed; **\*Fern Spencer** – do you have a copy of the 2018 plan; **\*Mike Begay** – we were working with a girl, she handled all of that and she was training, we discussed a lot of things and working with her, some she accepted and rejected; **\*Delphine Bitsilly** – did I give you all a file on a flash drive; **\*Fern Spencer** – what about the community cemetery, did we put that in there, 2018 it has a community cemetery, gravel pit; **\*Mike Begay** – cemetery at the time, we were told to find a new site, we added one to two acres on the north side, we were in the process of working on that and it wasn't on our list; **\*Fern Spencer** – senior center we don't have; **\*Mike Begay** – the senior citizen was looking to get a new building and chapter, Window Rock came and said it would take about 10 acres and we only have 6 acres, senior citizen wanted to be on that too, not enough land and they were all in the process at the time, and not included in the manual; **\*Lee Rodgers** – so you're saying land wasn't officially withdrawn; **\*Mike Begay** – the Veterans wanted something to do with it too, people jumped in and it died out; **\*Priscilla Duncan** – you were talking about the other half of the post office; **\*Fern Spencer** – isn't it TAOS; **\*Pernell Halona** – yes it's TAOS, they were supposed to do something with that extra building on the side of the post office, TAOS was thinking of putting a sandwich shop or something; **\*Fern Spencer** – the plumbing, that's the reason they pulled out; **\*Pernell Halona** – was going to cost them about \$20,000 dollars to fix the plumbing; **\*Mike Begay** – it would be a good place to put rural addressing system where people order large items, bring it in, store it and pick it up; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – do you have the old post office, vacant, what do you mean by old post office; **\*Lee Rodgers** – the old brick building; **\*Pernell Halona** – they were supposed to tear it down; **\*Delphine Bitsilly** – the post office is above the old post office; **\*Mike Begay** – if the old post office is in process of demolition and then that's what it should say; **\*Fern Spencer** - when that bridge gets done, they wanted the trailer to be moved back, can we move it back to the old post office was, nobody answered her; **\*Mike Begay** – the new road must be wide; **\*Fern Spencer** – Veterans will remove the trees; **\*Mike Begay** – by code regulation, if the old building is in the way it must be removed; **\*Pernell Halona** – the only place where I know was a problem was a 12 square feet didn't get approved, near the stop sign by the post office, half of the road, right of way to be done first and took about 10 years, 12 square feet didn't get on the list; money for the bridge is all there; **\*Fern Spencer** – money was there all these years; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – this bridge will be two lane road, reconstruct this road, not going any further out of what is required, the old post office has nothing to do with this project over here and here is the bridge, they will pave the road, go by the Veterans park, they will take down trees, it's in the 164 process and ready to be finalized, NNDOT will apply for \$4.6 million dollars to complete the construction and they do have the money for it, they needed Land Department to do a final signature and they got that, late summer for sure Fall.

V. **New Business:**

A. **1st Responders Safety Building**

**\*Elvis Bitsilly** – too many bosses, signature on final document was signed yesterday, waiting now on \$12 million, Dr. Greyeyes applied for TIFF funding for \$12 million, we need at least \$8 million to do

preconstruction, we do have some money for preconstruction, LAN and Parsons who are the contractors said they can do preconstruction plans and start the ground breaking, they can do the infrastructure on the ground while we are waiting on the full funding for the project; \***Pernell Halona** – how long before the state takes the money back; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – all the \$5 million dollars or 4 is expedited this month according to Greyeyes, she had less than \$1 million and it has been encumbered, we had another million 50 thousand from the state this year and will apply to the construction cost, \$16 million for total cost of the project; \***Fern Spencer** – what will happen to the gas station, will anything be done to that; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – yes and no, they are holding off on that because they don't know what to do with it, Navajo Oil and Gas are waiting for others to come forward to make a commitment to do business with them, the Fleet Management Department and they want to work with them so they can have something guarantee from them to do business with them so they can fuel their vehicles, we told them why are you waiting for that process, open it up and get it going, work with it later; \***Lee Rodgers** – a conflict occurred there that is Fleet Management wanted to come move in and use the lot, the chapter didn't want it they wanted a store because this store here doesn't handle the capacity sometimes especially at lunch time, it's congested and it's a small place, they wanted more options for the store to remain open, we finally were able to get a meeting with them, they want a guarantee this time when they do open up they will have an economic base there, as a community we are not a big enough site for an economic base so they wanted a guarantee that there will be money coming in so they asked Navajo Nation Fleet Management (NNFM) that wanted to come in and Navajo Nation Department of Transportation (NNDOT), if they can do a memorandum of agreement saying yes we can be exclusive partners and buy gas from your store, needed that commitment, Fleet Management wanted it for themselves, NNDOT politics going around that we don't see, we are Navajo Nation and we should get it, Navajo (Petroleum) Oil and Gas need a guarantee there is an economic base, our community is growing, we have so many people traveling 491, not every day even on weekends, the need is there, they continue to go to the next stop when they see Speedway congested; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – contact and called Brett Wauneka, we met the deputy about 3 months ago; \***Lee Rodgers** – she gave us the run down on what is going on and gave ideas of what we are up against; \***Fern Spencer** – the Navajo Transportation are bringing their bus there and are picking up the people there, people are leaving their vehicles to go to work because Speedway is too congested, truckers sleeping there, Wauneka came and asked the people to start applying for jobs, what about the Veterans place; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – it's still idle and still there, Veterans have not followed up on that, last administration asked to return back to chapter so we can utilize it, the acreage; \***Lee Rodgers** – we approached them about it, if you guys are not going to use it, we would like it back, they said give us time to think about it; \***Pernell Halona** – the Veterans had money to build a building and then the money went back; \***Fern Spencer** – we get this and you get the ball park, it didn't happen; \***Lee Rodgers** – revisit with them next meeting, keep following up with them; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – 3 or 4 business sites that are ready to go, we are working with Economic Development to advertise and they are not answering our call, they need money to advertise for these sites and they have a budget, the waste station, Veterans site, Chuska Lake turn off site, Rental Flick – no land withdrawn, it's there we need people to get interested for businesses, I recommended a storage unit facility by the lake turnoff and we need power, infrastructure was one thing, waste station does have water, sewer, electricity, Veterans site has everything, first responder site, the Francisco site a business site across the Petroleum, once was Tohatchi Chapter, the family kinda took over that area, they have a homesite there on the business site, we need to approach them and see what they are going to do with that, I would like to talk with them and I don't know if the past administration has done that ever or didn't want to deal with it, we still should get something going there, it's a potential site; \***Fern Spencer** – they did try to talk to him, the same with the Nakai's and the Catholic Church, they did have meetings with them, the families but nothing said or done; \***Mike Begay** – the guy Francisco came over and surveyed the place, the old trading post and post office, they said it's all Navajo Nation land, it doesn't belong to any community member, it created a serious dispute officials didn't want to deal with that, it was hands off from that point on, even Leonard Francisco didn't want to get involved; \***Lee Rodgers** – it's hard when community members take over a site like this, originally intended for business zone, at the time it happened there was no enforcement to make sure it stays a business, they took

advantage of that little loop hole and got homesites established, Francisco and Nakai's have homesites and now if we tell them we want the business sites back, it's like pulling them from their roots and it makes it a delicate situation, especially when we are getting back to our culture Ke, now we have to deal with it, the old trading post is an historic site, under the law it qualifies under Historic buildings, it's even more impossible to uproot it now, not sure about the old post office and it could be under that law as well, the idea to demolish it we will be up against a big hill; \***Pernell Halona** – the idea to demolish came from the Denver office; \***Mike Begay** – it's the same as the old barn, structurally it is sound, the shell is deteriorating, it could be designated as an historical building, there's no money available; \***Pernell Halona** – it was coming up to 50 years, pushed it through BIA before the 50 years cause we can't take it down, it's right at 50 years; \***Lee Rodgers** - the old barn would make a good dance hall and Zumba; \***Pernell Halona** – they used to store hay there; \***Fern Spencer** – laundry; \***Mike Begay** – the bottom is rotted and take out; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – final plans for the First Responder floor plans, to move forward and go to Dr. Greyeyes, she will review and sign off on it; \***Fern Spencer** – there will be people sleeping there at night; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – yes, EMS and Fire mainly, 24 - 7; \***Lee Rodgers** – stakeholders got involved, stakeholders meaning emergency management, firefighters and police, I invited them to our meetings, what do you guys want in the building and never came around, they had the Window Rock office speaking for them, we looked at 3 site plans and we decided on one, someone comes along we are Navajo and we like to drive our vehicles out easterly instead of coming in from the west, they had to reconfigured and that how they came up with this one, the last meeting we had with them, they said it was going to be a substation not a major hub like Crownpoint, Shiprock, Kayenta and Dilcon, we don't need a dispatch unit in there, now they want a dispatch unit in there, which means we need a little tower setup to utilize the dispatch, this was added at the last meeting we had, people who do geological studies are coming in to test the soil and see how much that needs to be configured into the engineering of the foundation that will be laid, we do have the money; \***Pernell Halona** – a road going out to the main highway on this side; \***Lee Rodgers** – there's two access points, put in two gates for the safety of the personnel there, gate will be open to the public during public hours, it's coming together, storage – each department have their own storage space; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – explaining drawing on screen, parking lot, entrance, Petroleum station, highway; \***Fern Spencer** – no cell in the plans; \***Lee Rodgers** – to have a holding cell requires federal regulations; \***Fern Spencer** – I thought that was the main intent; \***Pernell Halona** – it was the main thing to put it in then they said no, then yes; \***Lee Rodgers** – whoever writes the grant proposals and we were told no, I thought it was our building, our community people to use it; \***Pernell Halona** – they said no, just for a holding cell; \***Fern Spencer** – if there was a crime committed here where do they take them, I thought it was a whole point; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – liability insurance, federal regulation, state and county, if a cell was included it was only temporary, if there was a cell you would need full staff to man the place, entrance into building and where was it going to be located was an issue, work around a cell here, avoiding the general work area of staff and everyone else because an endangerment to everyone, person escaping; \***Fern Spencer** – were you guys part of that conversation; \***Lee Rodgers** –yes; \***Fern Spencer** – the apparatus; \***Lee Rodgers** – the lady, Greyeyes said something without being straightforward, if you're going to run this you will do it all yourself, go get the grants yourself, she stated a whole list, asking for more money to get staff and we don't have the money, county said the same thing, didn't want to work with the federal; \***Fern Spencer** – hiring will be them, this will only be for EMTs and fire; \***Lee Rodgers** – they are running the department and building, they are paying the utilities, upkeep and maintenance, we only provided the land; \***Pernell Halona** – director said we needed a holding cell; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – police chief is no longer there, acting is Dr. Greyeyes, this will not change the process; \***Fern Spencer** – can these vendors move to the gas station; \***Lee Rodgers** – no, it's private property; \***Fern Spencer** – why don't they fenced the whole thing; \***Lee Rodgers** – whatever is not fenced is right of way to US Highway 491; \***Fern Spencer** – you know those people who come in and clean up, what about those electrical cars, build at the post office; \***Elvis Bitsilly** – we were not eligible, if Petroleum was open we would have got the grant, Speedway is congested and not feasible, coming from New Mexico DOT, they had a \$10 million grant fund, two were approved Crownpoint and Beclabito who got the EV chargers, our thoughts were 491, it's a busy road highway, there's traffic and people have electric vehicles, tourists, school

teachers, those who live here; **\*Cody Jansen Anaya** – on the Navajo Petroleum business site lease there, with the business site lease is there a use it or lose it, they last for about 20 years; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – Speedway business lease was ready to expire and just was renewed; **\*Cody Jansen Anaya** - with CLUPC or chapter community what input does economic development asked of you guys when you are approving leases in your area for something that has been dormant for so long; **\*Lee Rodgers** – the chapter has to be proactive, working with Economic has been working with us, it's the chapter's responsibility to ask economic development what is going on, what do you have going on for us, they may send an email to the chapter and say what are you doing in your area, we don't know about it until we're notified; **\*Cody Jansen Anaya** – I know your chapter is working towards certification and getting out of sanctions, doing corrective actions on audit findings, with certification what are the chapters upcoming plans for local chapter tax to justify any decisions; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – it will happen when we are certified, we are working towards that, we are going through our audit, go through another phase and see if we want to be certified chapter, we're looking at one to two years; **\*Lee Rodgers** – do research when we are close to getting certified and look to the other chapters for guidance; **\*Cody Jansen Anaya** – for chapters to exercise that authority to have their taxes and community to participate more will be helpful, for my community certification is right there, I think for your chapter if you want community participation and buy in to creating change especially on the economic side and pushing those to be developed, businesses that pay taxes so you can get money through local chapter tax and educate the community will be helpful, local chapter tax how are you going to use it, it's directly impacting your community, money for junk food supposed to be use for diabetes prevention, I don't hear so much about that even though it exists; **\*Lee Rodgers** – bottom line is to promote buy Navajo, we get store built on the reservation we go to Gallup, Farmington, Page, Flagstaff, Grants, go to border towns, pay triple taxes, Navajo Nation still has the diabetes department, they didn't do a lot for our people, the Native American ancestry DNA is different from the Europeans, when our elderly say let's go back to eating what our ancestry ate, we are eating food not for our bodies and it's for the European populous, our children going into the medical field study your own people and what will work for us; **\*Cody Jansen Anaya** – planning for the future and getting certified, potentially considering a local chapter tax, getting the community to get more involved and voice their opinions on business sites; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – legislation to certified each chapter, model A or model B and will be up to the chapters if they want that, the tax goes to the tax commission and we have to abide by their policy even if we become certified, we need approval for taxation from the tax commission, it comes downs to legislation and changing the law, so much red tape, they will be challenged by everyone; **\*Lee Rodgers** – chapter meetings in the past was in Navajo, youth today don't want to go to meetings because they don't understand, today it's English, last meeting someone told us to speak Navajo, how do we please everyone with speaking English and Navajo at meetings, they are welcome to listen to our planning chapters meetings, DOJ hasn't approve the virtual online for users to be online to listen, then chapter will need to justify the voter by bringing out a staff member to verify a member; **\*Fern Spencer** – add Dine College, when kids come here they only come when they want jobs or scholarships, do they ever come back and say thank you; **\*Delphine Bitsilly** – when I was in college I came here to ask the chapter for scholarship, at the time Carol Tom was the Council Delegate, I got the money and came back to thank the chapter for giving me that money, you're right I don't ever hear anyone say thank you who received money; **\*Fern Spencer** – they give it to college and graduate students, do they open it for technical schools, students who go to welding school, do they apply for scholarship; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – we don't have students who want to go to a technical school, welding school, it comes to the chapter for assistance and we never heard of it, it's just for regular college courses, if a student comes in and states they are going to a welding or carpentry school, approved, that's what we would do now; **\*Fern Spencer** – when our students go to UNM, the Branch, that's where they have the welders, automotives, hair dressers, you're hurting the hands on kids, technical schools we should address so we can help those students too because they are part of our community; **\*Delphine Bitsilly** – I think it can apply because they have to apply for admission, you keep up your grades, I'm sure it all fits in to going to a university and I don't see it as a problem ; **\*Priscilla Duncan** – a granddaughter taking online courses, IT and she was funded; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – we took a tour of the new high school and there's a classroom for carpentry; **\*Fern Spencer** – the architect

asked what we want in the building, I heard about the gym, score board in the center of the gym, Friday meeting at 9:00 am.

**B. N108 Bridge**

**\*Elvis Bitsilly** – this project has been going on for many years; **\*Lee Rodgers** – we pushed it through; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – a lot of conversation, a two lane bridge with pedestrian sidewalk, they do have a design, they are aware of the Veterans Park, recommendation from community to chop down some of the trees, some are dead trees; **\*Fern Spencer** – when is this going to start; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – summer 2026; **\*Lee Rodgers** – matter of it going through the SAS process, the 164 process; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – it took 6 months to sign the papers at General Land Department; **\*Lee Rodgers** – Byron, the hiccup was they needed to confirm that it wasn't going to interfere with the utilities in the area, they got confirmation that the waterline is further down, the powerline will not be effected and it took forever for Frontier to respond because they have their little internet lines going through there; **\*Pernell Halona** – it wasn't like this when we started this project and when we started this project then they started adding steps like Frontier and it held it back; **\*Fern Spencer** – we didn't lose the money; **\*Lee Rodgers** – no; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – it's federal dollars, NNDOT; **\*Pernell Halona** – BIA had the money for 20 years; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – Darryl Bradley in charge of this project, NNDOT will apply for \$4.6 million, it was BIA and NNDOT who were going between each other.

**\*Lee Rodgers** – work session this Friday 9 am; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – cover the manual and bring all your materials; **\*Fern Spencer** – did you hear any more about Ch'ooshgai, did they go to that meeting to talk about their school; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** - I went to their board meeting last week and they had other things on the agenda, the resolution, DODE, BIE and HEHSC is inviting them to the table to talk about this, they are the oversight for the school, Chuska school will have a meeting with HEHSC committee, DODE, BIE and discuss what is happening, our support resolution did make a difference for them, we cannot investigate and it's not our job, DODE is the one to handle that, this is the complaining party and people who are initiating this; **\*Fern Spencer** – Gallup McKinley County Schools in June will be going to each of the different schools or high schools in the area, I think it's the third week in June on a Thursday, in the Navajo Times last week you had those charges that were made on Native American teachers and support staff not being hired, it was an ongoing thing and I attended two of those meetings in the different areas with Department of Education from Santa Fe, what is going on our reservation in reference to our students in what they are capable of doing and what we are not doing for our kids, which is true, what bothers me is not hiring Native American teachers, we don't have enough teachers yet Arizona has a bunch of them, our kids learn from persons who we can identify with, what is happening with the discipline, main offices has changed on who they hire, meeting at Tohatchi Elementary; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – these schools to meet with HEHSC – Ch'ooshgai, Teec Nos Pos, Wide Ruins, Shonto Preparatory, not scheduled yet; **\*Lee Rodgers** – I got a call from them to speak on what is going on, I told them I recuse myself I'm an elected official and what I will say will be hearsay, I suggested to them to look at the documents they brought forth and it speaks for itself, they should be looking at that and it is a written document and is evidence; **\*Priscilla Duncan** – Boys/Girls Club updates; **\*Elvis Bitsilly** – we haven't talked with Marissa, I will follow up with them and left it in their hands, they still support the Boys/Girls Club, you can visit them in Gallup, we will be under the Boys/Girls Club and not the chapter, have to work out the details like the budget, we have the Unhealthy Food Tax and it covers that, looking at matching money for staff at the Boys/Girls Club, Catholic Church is still 100% supportive; **\*Pernell Halona** – have the guess introduce themselves; **\*Delores Jansen, Louise Curley, Cody Jansen Anaya** – introduction, running for District 14 Council Delegate, brief summary of education and work.

VI. Resolutions: none

VII. Announcements: CLUPC Work Session May 15, 2026, 9am-12N, Tohatchi Chapter

VIII. Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 @9am-12n

IX. Adjournment: 11:30 am

  
Delphine Bitsilly  
CLUPC Recorder