



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Budget and Finance Committee approves supplemental funding for renovation of Teec Nos Pos Chapter

WINDOW ROCK – The Budget and Finance Committee considered Legislation No. 0247-15 on Tuesday, which approved supplemental funding for the Teec Nos Pos Chapter from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance in the amount of approximately \$500,000. If approved by the Council and signed into law, the funding would go towards the renovation of the building, which suffered vast water damage from heavy rain over the last several months.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Davis Filfred (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teec Nos Pos, Tóíkan, Red Mesa) said that during the Summer Council Session in July, he had hoped to add this bill as an emergency legislation because the Navajo Nation Occupational Safety and Health Office advised the chapter to close due to unsafe and hazardous conditions posed to staff.

“In the meantime, the chapter is [functioning] out of a hogan – our coordinator and staff. They have no running water and they have to resort to outside porta-johns,” said Delegate Filfred.

Delegate Filfred added that the facility’s roof has greatly deteriorated over the years, and due to the heavy amounts of rain that had occurred recently, it has caused the roof to leak and produced water damage inside the building. He said the chapter administration then relocated to the Navajo Nation Veteran’s Office, which has limited spacing.

According to the legislation, the Teec Nos Pos Chapter was constructed in 1981 and was assessed by NNOSHA in February 2015, who deemed the chapter house unsafe for occupancy, which later led to the chapter declaring a state of emergency.

BFC vice chair Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) said he understood the detrimental situation that the chapter is in, and asked if there were any other additional funding sources to aid in the renovation.

“I noticed that it is going to take more than \$500,000 to renovate the chapter, according to your budget documents, so how much will the chapter contribute to the capital outlay project? And are there any other funding sources?” asked Delegate Witherspoon.

Delegate Filfred responded saying that the chapter would be able to contribute an estimated \$120,000 to the project. He added that there is a matching fund from the Utah Navajo

Revitalization Fund Board, which has contributed approximately \$68,000 to the renovation project, and the Navajo Nation Capital Improvement Office will match the amount, totaling approximately \$136,000.

BFC member Council Delegate Tuchoney Slim, Jr. (Bodaway/Gap, Coppermine, K'ai'Bii'To, LeChee, Tonalea/Red Lake) said many Navajo chapters have renovated their facilities, but due to the poor quality of the renovation, additional problems arise within the buildings and their structural integrity. He suggested that the chapter begin capital planning to build a new chapter house to avoid further problems.

BFC members voted 3-0 to approve Legislation No. 0247-15, which now moves forward to the Naabik'iyáti' Committee for consideration. The Navajo Nation Council is the final authority on the bill.

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