



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Law and Order Committee supports the Northern Judicial and Public Safety Complex initiative

SHIPROCK, N.M. – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee met in the community of Shiprock and received a report from Shiprock Chapter officials and steering committee members regarding the proposed construction of the Northern Navajo Judicial and Public Safety Complex.

Northern Judicial and Public Safety Complex steering committee member Daryl Junes-Joe, stated that the committee had planned for the judicial complex to be located south of Shiprock, but the location was deemed infeasible. The steering committee and Shiprock Planning Committee then proposed a new location in northern Shiprock, located east of the Northern Navajo Medical Center, on a vacated property previously occupied by the Shiprock Boys and Girls Club.

The Shiprock Boys and Girls facility needs to be demolished on the proposed site before construction can begin, added Junes-Joe.

“Has the chapter and steering committee worked on the land withdrawal and have any clearances of the site been completed? Also, has Shiprock chapter, neighboring chapters, and the Resources and Development Committee supported this initiative?” asked LOC member Council Delegate Otto Tso (Tó Nanees Dizi).

According to Shiprock Chapter president Chili Yazzie, the new proposed site for the judicial complex has completed land surveys, archaeological and other clearances. In April 2013, the Resources and Development Committee approved a land withdrawal for 19.18 acres. A total of 21 Northern Agency chapters also provided supporting resolutions for the judicial complex, added Yazzie.

LOC member Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) asked questions regarding the strategic plan and funding needed to begin the judicial complex initiative.

“Where is the judicial complex on the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety priority listing? Is there a specific amount of funding needed for the demolition of the old Boys and Girls club gym and project cost of the judicial complex? From my view point, this project may be eligible for New Mexico state funding and I would be like to present this opportunity with the Naabik’iyátí’ Committee State Task Force,” stated Delegate Begay.

The estimated cost of the demolition will be \$250,000 and the estimated cost of the judicial complex is unknown, according to Junes-Joe.

LOC chair Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) recommended for NNDPS director Jesse Delmar and Navajo Nation Department of Corrections director Delores Greyeyes, to provide an update on funding and the design of the proposed judicial complex.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr. (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins) expressed his support for the initiative to ensure the safety and protection of Navajo citizens in the community of Shiprock

“I support this initiative. The judicial complex will service the growing population of Shiprock and surrounding communities. The old jail, court building, and emergency response facilities need to be replaced. The judicial complex will bring together the public safety team and it will make the community a stronger place,” stated Smith.

Council Delegate Tom Chee (Shiprock), who represents the Shiprock community, was also in attendance at Monday’s meeting and said the project of this magnitude should be free of political influence and preferences for the benefit of the community’s safety.

“The safety of the community is the top priority and that should not be overlooked for any reason,” stated Delegate Chee.

The Law and Order Committee approved the report with a 4-0 vote. NNDPS, NNDOC, and Shiprock Chapter will provide an update report during the next scheduled LOC meeting on July 28, in Window Rock.

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