



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 2, 2016

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### **Law and Order Committee receives report on Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety initiatives**

**LEUPP, Ariz.** – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee received a report from the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety regarding police officers salary increase, Bureau of Indian Affairs 638 Contracts, Navajo police officer training academy, police officer retirement plan, Monument Valley fire station and traffic, police district for Pinon community, and sign-on bonuses for new police officer recruits.

LOC chair Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) stated that all update reports from NNDPS are important to identify any policy challenges that the committee can address and resolve.

Navajo Nation Police Department chief of police Phillip B. Francisco said the pay raises for police officers is currently going through the administrative process at Navajo Nation Department of Personnel Management. After NNDPM completes the reclassification of job descriptions and personnel action forms for officers, the pay raises will be given with a retro payment dating back to Oct. 1, added Francisco.

LOC member Council Delegate Otto Tso (Tó Nanees Dizi) asked if NNDPS would give pay rises to all police officers.

“A suggestion was made from the Budget and Finance Committee that patrol officers should be the only officers to receive pay adjustments. I do not agree with the recommendation because we need to honor the police ranking system. It would be unfair if lower ranked officers receive the same amount of pay as officers with higher rankings,” stated Delegate Tso.

“All police officers will receive pay adjustments,” said NNDPS executive director Jesse Delmar.

LOC member Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) asked how NNDPS plans to prepare to request for additional funding to sustain the police officer pay adjustments from the BIA.

“The actual BIA 638 Contract is due up to 2020 and how is the division planning to ask for more money? As I look at the current contract, I am not satisfied with the strength of the agreements. We need to include additional services within the contract such as retirement and training. How can we work together to modify the contract?” asked Delegate Begay.

“This is the perfect time to sit down with the BIA and renegotiate the contract. The officers’ pay adjustments leverages the request,” said Delmar.

Delegate Tso also inquired on the progress of developing a Navajo police-training academy on the Nation.

According to Delmar, the proposed training academy would cost \$51 million, which includes a dormitory, cafeteria, and training classrooms. The training academy would benefit the whole division but the division does not have any funding for the proposed plan, added Delmar.

In addition to the reports, Delegate Yazzie recommended NNDPS to conduct further research on the police officer retirement plan, meet with Utah San Juan County to work on an agreement regarding the Monument Valley fire station, develop a plan to make a police district in Pinon, and develop a marketing strategy to recruit new officers, which would include a sign-on bonus.

The Law and Order Committee approved all the reports with a 3-0 vote.

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