



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NBOES discuss budget, unmet needs
for special elections during regular meeting**

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Dec. 17, 2019 – The Navajo Board of Elections Supervisors convened for their regular meeting Dec. 9. The board passed three resolutions to extend the deadline for vacant elective positions, extend the time for appointment, and canvassing and certifying election results in a recall election.

The board voted 8-0 approving the resolution to extend the filing deadline for vacant elective positions, starting Dec. 10 at 8 a.m. and ending Dec. 23 at 5 p.m. This board discussed President Jonathan Nez's veto of Resolution No. CO-38-19, which was sponsored by Council Delegate Edison Wauneka (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) and passed by the 24th Navajo Nation Council by a vote of 20-0 during the fall session.

The legislation would have amended the Election Code for clarification purposes to provide that vacancies occurring in the first half of an elective position and continuing into the second half can be filled by appointment provisions of the Code.

President Jonathan Nez vetoed Resolution No. CO-38-19 Nov. 11 and stated that it takes away the right of the people to choose their leaders. He said the resolution lacked legislative intent language.

Supervisor Raymond Maxx, representing the Western Navajo Agency on NBOES, said the board has made several requests for supporting resolutions or position resolutions on the Council's resolution, but the request was not completed.

"We're playing catch up here. Still, we don't have a resolution of support for override and putting our position in black and white," he said.

"We just talk about it here." Maxx said the veto message from the president cited the lack of an NBOES supporting resolution for the election legislation.

Jackie Burbank, representing Chinle Navajo Agency, agreed with Maxx and said the board's position supporting the veto override should be on record. "Our position should be in place from here," he said. The board agreed that two months before the next session was enough time to issue a supporting resolution.

The board also approved a resolution "Canvassing and Certifying Election Results in Recall Election held on Nov. 19, 2019" by a vote of 8-0. The recall election was for the Nahodisgish Chapter President Etta Morgan. A petition for her recall received enough signatures for a special election Nov. 19, with Vanessa Begay Lee receiving the most votes. NBOES will ensure an oath of office is administered to the successful candidate as mandated by law.

The board also discussed budget shortfalls for the board and administration, in particular the \$368,000 in unmet needs. JP Roanhorse, accountant for the Navajo Election Administration, said \$54,000 was needed for 18 computers, including scanners and printers for the 6B rollout. Other needs include rental of shipping containers for storage, special elections costs, and voter outreach, such as resent Proposition 10 effort in San Juan County, Utah.

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