



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 6, 2020

**RDC receives reports on
Northern Navajo Fair, disabled Navajos**

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The Resources and Development Committee convened for their regular meeting Feb. 5 and took action on two legislation items. Legislation No. 0019-20 was approved by a vote of 3-0 for the master lease for NM15-30 between the Navajo Nation and Navajo Housing Authority for a housing project in the Twin Lakes Chapter area.

Legislation No. 0021-20 approved a change in Resolution No. CAP-35-18 for Tse Daa Kaan Chapter project by amending project type, duration and funding years. The committee passed the legislation by a vote of 3-0.

The Northern Navajo Fair Board reported before the committee on the 2019 fair activities for the Shiprock community. The board reduced admission fees to \$5 and made \$494,051.32 during the 2019 fair. Building Nations, LLC was brought in to assist with the fair and will manage the funding for the 2020 fair to ensure accountability. The fair board began the 2019 fair season with a zero balance and for 2020, the Northern Navajo Fair Board will start with a balance of \$130,830.09 for the fair. The report was received by a vote of 3-0.

Hoskie Benally, community and government liaison for the Native American Disability Law Center, provided a report on Navajos with disabilities. Visually impaired all his life, Benally said he lost his eye sight 48 years ago. He now serves as president of the Navajo Nation Council on Disabilities. He said three different acts related to disabled Navajos have been passed in the last decade. These include the Guardianship Act and Children and Elderly Protection Act. “NHA is supposed to provide five percent of the housing stock as accommodated units,” Benally said, noting that housing is the number one challenge for disabled Navajos.

Sixty-five percent of Navajos with disabilities are unemployed, he said, adding that the tribal government is not actively recruiting for disabled employees. “We’ve been working with the Navajo Nation human resources. Personnel doesn’t have anything regarding recruitment of disabled Navajos,” Benally said. He said the board made revisions to the personnel and policies manual and submitted recommendations to Office of the President and Vice President, but they have not received a response.

The committee also received reports from Navajo Department of Justice on the Little Colorado River adjudication for Navajo allotment owners, an update on the San Juan Generating Station and PNM transition for closure from Navajo Department of Water Resources, and an update from the Office of Navajo Government Development.

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