



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Law and Order Committee directs Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety to update police officer evaluations

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee considered Legislation No. 0366-16, which directs the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety to update and complete police officers' performance evaluations in accordance with the Navajo Nation Personnel Policies Manual. The performance evaluations would allow police officers to receive a step increase or merit pay bonus.

“NNDPS needs to update and complete all performance evaluations for all police officers. Completed evaluations will be needed before we consider any pay raises or bonuses. The evaluation process will give all officers a chance to get bonuses or raises,” stated legislation sponsor Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) who chairs the LOC.

According to the legislation, the Navajo Nation Personnel Policies Manual provides pay adjustment options such as general wage adjustments, step increases, merit pay bonuses, and bonus payments. Step increases can be achieved through performance evaluations and bonuses are considered and approved on a case-by-case basis.

“The directive will allow equal bonus opportunities to all officers instead of the ‘buddy system.’ The NNDPS director has the discretion to give raises to certain officers, which is not right. Each officer is impacted in a significant way, they are the first responders to emergency calls and in return they are not adequately compensated for their valuable services,” added Delegate Yazzie.

On Sept. 30, the LOC voted in support of amending the Navajo Nation fiscal year 2017 budget instructions manual and salary schedule to address the proposed salary increases for NNDPS. However, the police officers are not able to obtain a step increase or merit pay bonus because performance evaluations are not updated on an annual basis and this will be the first time NNDPS will conduct all evaluations, said Delegate Yazzie.

According to Department of Personnel Management, out of 295 NNDPS employees, 252 performance evaluations remain unfinished or overdue.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr. (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins) stated that he supports the directive because it will allow equal opportunity for all police officers.

“NNDPS needs to ensure that performance evaluations are conducted in a timely manner. Our police officers deserve every opportunity to succeed,” stated Delegate Smith.

The Law and Order Committee approved Legislation No. 0366-16 with a 3-0 vote and serves as the final authority for the bill.

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