



Tóhajiilee gas station and convenience store economic development project progress report shared with delegates

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Council Delegate Jamie Henio (Alamo, Ramah, *Tóhajiilee*) delivered an update report on the *Tóhajiilee* economic development project that will establish a gas station, convenience store and facilities for a laundromat within the community. Henio spoke during the Mar. 17 meeting of the Permanent Trust Fund (PTF) 5 Year Expenditure Plan and *Sihásin* Fund Projects *ad hoc* task force, which is comprised of members of the Navajo Nation Council.

The Council approved a total reallocation of \$4 million in funding from the PTF 5 Year Expenditure Plan in May, 2020, through Resolution No. CMA-40-20. “I do appreciate the 24th Navajo Nation Council for passing this legislation and for President Nez signing this into law. Now, it provides a path to economic development opportunity for the community of *Tóhajiilee*,” said Henio.

Over the past few months, Henio, Legislative District Assistant Chancey Martinez, *Tóhajiilee* Chapter officials and administrators, and Eastern Regional Business Development Office (RBDO) Senior Economic Development Specialist John Largo have worked to identify a land tract on *Cañoncito* Band of Navajos property. The particular location would allow the chapter to realize revenues from the lease payments generated from future proprietors of the facility, said Henio.

Henio also indicated the group has received assistance from the Eastern Navajo Agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), which is involved with the land withdrawal process for the *Tóhajiilee* satellite Navajo community.

As of Mar. 17, a 3.5-acre parcel of *Cañoncito* Band of Navajos Health Center, Inc. land was identified for withdrawal and transfer for the gas station and convenience store.

With the project’s business unit established in the Navajo Nation’s financial system, which was reported earlier in the meeting by the Navajo Nation Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Henio said funds will begin to be drawn down to procure an architectural firm. The firm’s design and build work may resemble a similar recent development in the Alamo Navajo community.

“We hope to have a groundbreaking by summertime. The community is looking forward to it, they are anxious. It would be the only gas station for them next to Route 66,” said Henio in closing.

PTF projects are funded through interest income and attendant 5-year expenditure plan, as established through Resolution No. CAP-19-16 and amended through Resolution No. CMY-40-20.

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