



25th Navajo Nation Council

# 25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **25th Navajo Nation Council approves funding to assist operations of homeless shelter**



**PHOTO:** Left to right, Hozho Center for Personal Enhancement Executive Director, Ken Collins, Council Delegate Seth Damon, and Navajo Nation Division of Social Services Executive Director Thomas Cody.

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – Today, the 25th Navajo Nation Council passed Legislation No. 0240-23, approving \$50,000 from the Navajo Nation’s Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance to help continue operations for a vital homeless, transitional, and low-income housing facility located at the former Lexington Hotel, located in in Gallup, N.M.

Legislation sponsor, Council Delegate Seth Damon (Baahaali, Chilchiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tsayatoh) explained that the Hozho Center for Personal Enhancement, a non-profit organization that offers the services, currently houses 31 homeless individuals, of which 25 are Navajo and three are veterans.

“This \$50,000 will be matching funds from the Navajo Nation. These funds will help cover the monthly budget for the Hozho Center for the remainder of the year,” said Delegate Damon, who also noted that the City of Gallup and Zuni Tribe have also contributed funds and a funding request to the state of New Mexico is pending.

Hozho Center for Personal Enhancement Executive Director, Ken Collins said the organization has been operating since 2005. Collins said the closing of the center led the City of Gallup and

McKinley County to come together to see how they can assist in keeping the center open.

“We’ve presented a proposal to the City of Gallup to use Liquor Excise Tax funds to help us keep our operation open,” Collins said. “Whatever you can do to help us is beneficial. It will save lives.”

Council Delegate Casey Allen Johnson (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Birdsprings, Leupp, Tolani Lake) said he supports the legislation and that he would like to see more support for similar projects that benefit people on the Navajo Nation.

“Last week, I met with a Navajo veteran from the Flagstaff area who had lost his house to a fire and was asking for assistance with a place to stay,” Johnson said. “How can we act on requests from our own people for emergency services like this?”

Delegate Helena Nez Begay agreed that more services like these are needed for Navajo tribal members and veterans.

“It’s heartbreaking to see our people in these situations, especially our veterans,” she said. “Sometimes when we ask for a dollar amount here, it’s not considered. My people out there, they hurt. We see them out on the streets.”

Delegate Damon said that upon approval of the legislation, he would continue working with other entities, including McKinley County, to secure additional matching funds.

“The Navajo Nation has stepped up and we’re asking McKinley County to step up as well,” he said.

Legislation No. 0240-23 was approved by simple majority vote with 16 in favor and none opposed. Once the resolution is certified and delivered to the Office of the President and Vice President, Navajo Nation President Dr. Buu Nygren will have ten calendar days to consider the resolution.

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