

Black Mesa Chapter  
Planning Meeting Minutes  
February 06, 2023

I. Meeting Called to Order by Larry Biltah @ 4:15 pm.

Participants: Marlene Biltah, Larry Biltah, Albert Lee, Lynn Dean, Francis Honie, Roger Bahe, Lita Bahe, Daisy Kiyaani, Samantha T Ranger, Agatha Todechine, Etta Begay, Carol Nelwood, Marie Rose, Lorraine Yazzie, Kathy Terry, Joe Benally, Yolanda Tsosie, Dorothy R Yazzie, ~~Benally~~, Derek Yazzie, Carolyn Ben, Emma Dixon, and Lakeisha T James.

A. Invocation provided by Lita Bahe.

B. Reading & Approval of Meeting Minutes of January 12, 2022:

Motion: Lynn Dean                      2<sup>nd</sup>: Albert Lee                      VOTE: 04-00-00

C. Adoption of Agenda

Motion: Albert Lee                      2<sup>nd</sup>: Lynn Dean                      VOTE: 04-00-00

D. Announcements:

1. COVID-19 vaccinations continue at I.H.S. Clinics
2. 2/22/2023 – Black Mesa CLUPC Meeting @ Pinon, 10am
3. 2/20/2023 – President’s Day Holiday

II. Introductions of Resolutions and Brief Reports:

A. Council Delegate, Germaine Simonson – Absent.

B. Grazing Official, Francis Honie

1. Road issues – backfilling of dirt along both sides of the roads need to happened since it’s getting deeper.
2. Submitted approved chapter resolution to BIA NPL Office and Dept. of Agriculture regarding horses being in Right-of-Way on paved N8066.
3. Will posted announcement on livestock reduction and getting rid of livestock if no grazing permit. Any questions, contact: NPL Office 928-725-3343 and Dept of Agriculture 928-871-6605

Concerns:

1. Who is responsible for the notices?
2. More feral horses will wonder into the grazing areas when spring comes; need to do round up of all unbranded horses, donkey and cattle.
3. A question on whether if tally counts are conducted for every livestock owners.

C. CSC, Albert Lee

1. For Emergency Assistance, the Chapter distributed food, hay and fire wood using the emergency funds. Another order for food is taking placed again for other that did not received food boxes. Another truckload of hay will be delivered again.
2. Monthly financial reports are completed.
3. Heavy equipment machines are down and ordered parts for them; since there was no diesel mechanic locally, Empire from Flagstaff will be coming next week to repair the equipment.

4. Submitted Appendix J form and budgets for ARPA project.
5. With joint effort, Apache County, NDOT and chapter cleared the snow within Black Mesa Community.

D. Call to the Public

Concerns and Comments:

1. N8034 should be maintain on regular basis, can't say nobody is living in the area; 2 individuals are actually living in Oak Ridge and one needs constant medical attention. Due to recent snow storm, they left because of deep snow and roads becoming impassable.
2. CSC needs to assist everyone regardless of locations.
3. Extra helpers should be hired to assist CSC during the emergency situation because he was doing all the tasks by himself. Chapter website needs to be updated on regular basis. Emergency Plans should be available at all time and follow the guidelines.
4. Some expressed their appreciation for the work and assistances by the Chapter during the emergency declaration.
5. Advisement by some: be prepare for the winter such as piling of firewood and storage of foods for self and livestock; have your children assist during the summer with firewood.

Chapter Officers:

1. They assisted with boxing food items at the chapter house and distributed them to local community members; Using their 4x4 vehicles, BMCS helped with picking up the food from Pinon Bashas, delivering them to the chapter house, boxing the food item and distributing the boxes of food. Not everyone were given boxes of groceries due to limited of boxes, but plans to purchases more food for others of community .
2. They contacted and requested NDOT, BIA, Apache County, and Peabody Coal Mine, by phone and emails, for snow removal. There were several obstacles encountered but slowly roads were cleared, also with the help of chapter's own equipment.
3. They cautioned that negative comments and remarks made to some chapter workers almost caused some workers to quit during the progress of emergency assistance; advice to community members to be more humbled and cooperate with the chapter workers.
4. The chapter officers and administration did the best they can to acquired assistance.

E. BM Veteran's Organization, Richard Claw – Absent.

F. CLUPC, Dorothy R Yazzie

1. The meeting scheduled on Thursday was rescheduled to February 22, 2023 in Pinon; location might be at NDOT building but still pending (no response to the request).
2. Committee still working on updating the CLUP Manual; delayed due to the snow storm.
3. Rural Addressing – Need to order road signs including house numbers. The project was vetted by DOJ for ARPA funds but funds were given to Navajo Public of Safety whom have own guidelines. Approved chapter resolution was submitted requesting for allocated funds for Black Mesa Chapter Rural Addressing be used for same.

G. Chapter Officers participated in the discussion of resolutions and reports.

H. Others:

- 1) Fern Benally, Navajo County Supervisor
  - a. Navajo County assisted with snow removal in Hardrock, Forest Lake and Shonto chapters.
  - b. Emergency Centers were set up Pinon, Forest Lake and Kayenta chapters; firewood and boxes of groceries were distributed..
  - c. Discretionary funds were used for emergency at some chapters
  - d. Miles Begay will initiate a joint meeting on February 23, 2023 at NDOT, 9am, regarding culverts replacements and gravel.
  - e. Reported that opium and fentanyl drugs are being transported with Arizona, coming in from Mexico and California.
  - f. Will be traveling to Washington DC to meet with Senator Mark Kelly and his staff on road issues within Navajo Nation; requesting for inputs from the chapters.
  - g. Did road check on routes N8034 (Oak Ridge) and N8065. Peabody Coal Mine did bladed on N8034.
  - h. Expressed her appreciation for moisture on Dzilyjiin Region.
  
- 2) Marie Rose, Black Mesa Community School, briefly explained the purpose of resolution regarding the School Board Reapportionment Plan 6A.
  - a. The Plan 6A was not approved by the NN President, NNC and NN Board of Education.
  - b. It combined 27 grant school and created five regional school boards from each Agency and take away the local control of each community school and take over the operation of the educational programs.
  - c. The newly five created regional school boards are not established or recognized as a governing board and do not have their own Articles of Incorporation in place and do not have a grant agreement in place with the Federal Government to receive school operating funds.
  - d. HEHS Committee and DODE did not develop a transition plan or operating plan for newly created five regional school boards and there is confusion and unanswered questions with the implementation of Plan 6A.
  - e. The resolution is requesting the current HEHS Committee and NN Council to rescind the 2020-24 NN School Board Reapportionment Plan 6A.

III. Updates on Chapter Ongoing Chapter Projects: Information only.

- A. N8066 Road Construction Phase III & Permanent Bridges – Dibble Engineering is working on 100% plans and documents, including coordination with NTUA on waterline relocation design for the five waterline crossings and will need NTUA's review and approval to finalize the 100% plans. Additional archaeology field work was completed, and cultural resources report is also completed. NDOT has completed their review and prepared a letter for FHWA to review, sign, and submit along with the revised report to Navajo HHPD for their review and compliance. NDOT will complete a separate EA report for new bridge and addendum to original EA report. NDOT will submit EA report to BIA Regional Office once an addendum to CRCF (cultural report) is completed. Dibble Engineering draft ROW documents and needs completed EA and FONSI before submitting ROW package to BIA and Navajo Nation for approval.

Dept. of Project Management of NDOT conducted a cultural resources survey for 28 temporary construction easements, five staging areas, chapter area, chapter access road and N8065 bridge.

Cultural Resources Narrative Report was submitted to Navajo HHPD in March 2022 and waiting to receive compliance by May 2022.

The N8065 road and bridge, chapter house turnout, and parking lot will need additional funding of \$7.75 million. Two bridges and chapter access road might become stand-alone projects if no additional funds are secured.

- B. Black Mesa East Valley-Yale Point Waterline Extension – The Chapter needs to work on bathroom additions for some homes as priority.
- C. Black Mesa North Valley Waterline Extension – Same Information from Item B.
- D. N8065 Low Water Crossing – NDOT requested additional Road Funds (Fuel Excise Tax) of \$1,360,000, which was approved by the Resources and Development Committee on August 3, 2021. The Business Unit was set up by NN Office of Management and Budget on November 15, 2021. The total construction funds available is \$1,793,515.23. Unfortunately, the Contractor was unable to hold their original bid of \$1,045,668.43 and submitted a revised cost of \$1,693,478.20. NDOT followed up with NN Business Regulatory and they advise to rebid the project. The project was advertised twice for re-bid. Delegate Yellowhair said he will check with DOJ for any updates on the re-bids.
- E. Black Mesa Veterans Building – Approved allocations of \$144,000 from Sihasin Funds for Planning/ Predesigning, groundwork, and Architecture/Engineering and \$480,000 for construction. Still need additional \$1,400,000 for construction.
- F. N8065 Crossing (S-Curve) – NDOT has discussed with Navajo County on the possibility of the County funding both drainage study, including obtaining 401/404 permits and the purchase of recommended culverts. A partnership meeting between NDOT, Navajo County, BIA and the Black Mesa Chapter is pending to discuss the project.

IV. Resolutions:

- A. BMC-23-02-035: Approve and Authorize Emergency Funds of \$19,000
- B. BMC-23-02-036: Support and urges NN HEHSC and NNC to rescind 2020-2024 NN School Board Reapportionment Plan 6A.
- C. BMC-23-02-037: Support and urges NN HEHSC and NNC to rescind 2020-2024 NN School Board Reapportionment Plan 6A.

Motioned to Forward All Resolutions to Regular Chapter Meeting: Marlene Biltah

Seconded by: Albert Lee

VOTE: 04-00-00

V. The meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm. Motioned: Marlene Biltah 2<sup>nd</sup>: Albert Lee

VOTE: 04-00-00

TENTATIVE: Next Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, February 14, 2023 @ 3:00 pm

Next Planning Meeting: Monday, March 06 2023 @ 3:00 pm



Marlene Biltah, Chapter Secretary/Treasurer