



# DR. BUU NYGREN *PRESIDENT* RICHELLE MONTOYA *VICE PRESIDENT*

The Navajo Nation | Yideeskáądi Nitsáhákees

## LAKE VALLEY CHAPTER

**COPY**

Danny Simpson, Council Delegate | Tony Padilla, President | Edison Tso, Vice President | Betty S. Dennison, Secretary/Treasurer  
Janice Padilla, Land Board | Lucinda Begay, Community Service Coordinator | Flora Gus, Accounts Maintenance Specialist

### MINUTES OF LAKE VALLEY CHAPTER REGULAR MEETING Sunday, SEPTEMBER 8, 2024

#### A. ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. **Call to Order:** The Chapter President, Tony Padilla, Jr., called the regularly scheduled Chapter meeting to order at 12:54 p.m. with a quorum of fifteen (15) registered voters of Lake Valley Chapter present to constitute an official business meeting.

2. **Invocation:** The invocation was provided by the Chapter Secretary/Treasurer, Betsy Dennison.

The following people were present in person for the meeting: Chapter President-Tony Padilla, Jr.; Chapter Vice President-Edison Tso; Secretary/Treasurer-Betsy Dennison; Janice Padilla-Land Board; Community members signed in are John Sandoval, Jr., Stella Valdez, Etta Holmes, Tabitha Harrison, Marita Padilla, Jimmy Burbank, Johnson Sandoval, Helen S. Yazzie, Milton Harrison, Pandora Pine, Arley Pekin, Glen Pablo, Jean Begay, Evelyn Smith; and presenter, Mariann Benally.

3. **Review/Adoption of Agenda:** Chapter Vice President, Edison Tso, read the meeting agenda for review. **Action of Adoption & Approval:** A motion to adopt & approve the agenda was made by JOHN SANDOVAL, JR.; and seconded by ETTA HOLMES. Add-on to the meeting business was recommended, so that was added entitled "Approve Lake Valley Chapter passed a Resolution for a Vote of No Confidence in Community Services Coordinator, Lucinda Begay." A vote of sixteen (16) in favors, none (0) oppose, one (1) abstained; and motion carried for approval of the meeting agenda.

4. **Reading/Approval of AUGUST 18, 2024 REGULAR MEETING:** Chapter Secretary/Treasurer, Betsy Dennison, read the Meeting minutes for review. **Action of Adoption & Approval:** A motion to adopt & approve the meeting minutes was made by STELLA VALDEZ; and seconded by JOHNSON SANDOVAL. A vote of sixteen (16) in favors, none (0) oppose, one (1) abstained; and motion carried for approval of the meeting minutes.

5. **Review & Approval of Financial Statements for Period Ending AUGUST 31, 2024:** The Chapter Secretary/Treasurer, Betsy Dennison, provided financial reports as follows:

General Fund	NN General Fund	Land Claims Trust	Supplement Youth Funds	Housing Discretionary	LGA Grant Fund	Chapter Stipend
\$2,654.20	\$1,071.22	\$1,121.19	\$36,549.16	\$12,124.84	\$23,536.88	\$8,829.10
Scholarship General	Scholarship Claims	PEP Fund	Veterans Fund	Emergency Fund	County Fund	NN Sales Tax
\$8,695.00	\$2,409.18	\$54,916.09	\$4,610.18	\$30,140.80	\$2,281.50	-\$723.92
NN 180,000 CIP	NN 200,000 CIP	Agriculture & Infrastructure	Unhealthy Food	Senior Citizens		<b>TOTAL BAL.</b>
\$424.33	\$110,589.03	\$0.27	\$7,313.88	\$348.89		<b>\$309,073.27</b>

**Action of Adoption & Approval:** A motion to adopt & approve the Financial Statement was made by JOHNSON SANDOVAL; and seconded by STELLA VALDEZ. A vote of sixteen (16) in favors, none (0) oppose, one (1) abstained; and motion carried for approval.

#### B. PRESENTERS:

1. Gary Nez, AIR MED CARE – No show.

2. MariAnn Benally, Bilingual Coordinator from San Juan County Election Office, provided information regarding the 3-Ways to Vote-Absentee Voting, Early Voting & Election Day Voting which is November 5, 2024 7am-7pm with alternative voting sites, last day to register to vote is October 8, 2024 for mail-in & on-line registration, Candidate List for Federal/State/County Offices, Constitutional Amendments, General Obligation Bond, Poll works or interpreters needed, and for further information, call 505.334-9471 San Juan County Clerk's Office or website @ [www.sicclerknet](http://www.sicclerknet).

C. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None listed for this meeting.

D. **Full-Quorum Rule:** Effective June 23, 2023, the Commission on Navajo Government Development passed Resolution CEM-20-06-15 which deactivated the State of Emergency declared in CEM-2003-11. This means that CJA-01-22 has also expired. As a result, Chapters are no longer able to exercise any of the authorizations under CJA-01-22. To be clear, this means that there is no more three-quorum rule. All Chapters will need to establish chapter meeting quorums through in-person meetings. Non-LGA certified Chapters can no longer execute contracts under \$50,000.00. Basically, the Chapters will need to begin following the Local Governance Act, the Five Management System, and all relevant policies. Essentially, it is back to normal for all 110 Chapters which also means that all 110 Chapters will need to be fully reopened to the public. Lake Valley Chapter is now back to full-quorum of 15 membership to officially conduct Chapter meetings.

E. **NEW BUSINESS:** Agenda items established from August 4, 2024 Planning meeting are as follows:

1. LVC-SEPT08-060: Approve Requesting Lake Valley Chapter to purchase wood hauling permits (20) from the Bureau of Land Management/Farmington, NM for community membership for the upcoming winter season preparation.

John Sandoval, Jr., community member, inquired about concerns for the elderly people with no vehicle or tools to gather & haul loads of fire wood for themselves, and asked how can they get assisted.

Answer: If there is a dire need, the Chapter truck can be used to haul woods for them, and PEP workers can assist.

Chapter Vice President, Edison Tso, commented that seeking assistance is up to the elders and report of selling fire wood purchase from a vendor burns quickly. Let us do it on our own and ask members to help. We can be self-sufficient and we did spoke of it at the planning meeting.

Pandora Pine, community member, said she sees unused fire wood still piled up at the chapter in the latter part of summer and that could attract mice; seen people hauling wood and is wondering if this is only for the elders, and that she & spouse did 10 loads paying out of pocket.

Answer: Fire wood is for all registered voters. Some people reported that they tried getting fire wood from the chapter, but are being told they will get assisted if they come to monthly chapter meetings.

The wood chips are also piled up that several people are hesitant to ask for it, and it is for people that utilize to start a fire in their stoves.

Etta Holmes, community member, said when she came to the chapter asking for a load of wood the first go round, she was told she was not on the list. She did ask why since she is a voter and is a senior citizen. She was told that she will be on the next go round and her name will be on the list. The second go round, she was given a hard time but workers were willing to load up wood for her. Some members are given a hard time and for that reason, community people should be treated equally regardless.

Answer: Further discussion of fire wood will be on the meeting agenda at the next meeting.

Etta Holmes, community member, provided an idea that members with wood hauling permit with no vehicle especially the elders can request to have the Chapter allow to utilize the chapter truck with PEP workers assistance.

Recommendation: Allow one wood hauling permit per household of family, one cord of fire wood.

**ACTION OF ADOPTION & APPROVAL:** STELLA VALDEZ entertained a motion for approval of wood hauling permits for community members; and seconds by ETTA HOLMES. *A vote of eighteen (18) in favors, none (0) oppose, one (1) abstained; and motion carried for the record.*

2. LVC-SEPT08-061: Approve Requesting all Travel Advances and Travel Reimbursements request be approved through Chapter Membership during a duly considered called meeting prior to all official travels.

Travel authorization for travel expense coverage includes per diem rate for lodging, meals & incidental expenses incurred while on official business travel to be included for elected chapter officials and chapter staff that are required approval before travel begins. The monthly travel authorization reimbursements for community services coordinator is done; but is usually processed until a month or two after travels are completed, which should be processed before approval and travel begins. An issue of a travel authorization for the Chapter President has been requested by him to Las Vegas, NM August 27-29, 2024 prior to two weeks of travel, which he continuing asking CSC Lucinda Begay for his travel authorization before departure. He was informed his TA will be done Thursday, August 22, 2024 upon return trip of the CSC from Albuquerque after her conclusion of training. On Friday, August 23, 2024, during collaboration meeting with the Chapter President & Secretary/Treasurer present, the Chapter President inquired about his TA since he will be departing the following Monday, August 26; however, CSC Lucinda Begay said SPPS Tyrone Begay disapproved his travel since it was not necessary for him to go to La Vegas, NV. His training is on the law enforcement professionals, tribal leaders, and federal agencies to collaborate, learn, and share best practices in safeguarding communities, which Mr. Padilla will include his training documents to become a part of the community Emergency Management Plan Manual. On Friday August 23, 2024 at the end of the day, Mr. Padilla inquired about his TA but CSC Begay informed him that Betsy (Chapter Secretary/Treasurer) said NO, which is false information. The Chapter President was finally informed that his TA along with a check to Las Vegas, NV was completed while Mr. Padilla was half-way traveling to Las Vegas, NV Monday August 26. His TA was blank and given to him as a blank TA upon his return trip, which indicates travel documents were done incorrectly and not according to the travel policy manual. The monthly travel reimbursements for CSC Begay are done until a month or so later, and is not an issue for approval and sign-off checks. For this reason, it was requested and recommended that all travel requests will be approved through Chapter membership prior to all travels for transparency purpose with remarks by members there is evidence here to do approval by community membership, which is for accountability initiative process within our chapter.

Land Board, Janice Padilla, remarks that everybody should be treated equally within this chapter community. She has been told that Betsy Dennison and Tyrone Begay said no to issue TA for the Chapter President, and she cannot figure which one of them are disapproving travel authorizations. The Land Board has asked for a TA from CSC Lucinda Begay before but she is always being denied and informed that she needs to ask Becenti Chapter for a cost share since she represents that chapter too. The Land Board do not understand why she is being denied when she is a registered voter with Lake Valley Chapter. The Tribal Government are utilizing the same Federal Government policy for per diem for lodging, meals & incidental expenses incurred during official business travel. There are no monthly travel authorization/reimbursements for staff and you cannot claim over 50 miles radius and the cut-off is \$300, not over. Hearsay by CSC is brought up to the Chapter President that the Chapter Secretary/Treasurer is talking about her family. People are being pressured here and it should not be like that. There is always retaliation when you stand up to CSC, and usually it is put on the Chapter Officials prolonging their meeting stipends and they are being told wait, wait because she is too busy.

Etta Holmes, community member, said this chapter is dealing with creating unpleasant and hostility environment for all community members coming to the chapter and that practice is not allowed in any work place, including hearsay which is very wrong.

The community members are not accommodated during their meetings because all doors are locked except the meeting room, and the coffee pot is locked up with no access to make coffee for community membership to utilize during the meetings.

Job interview for PEP applicants is done by one person, which is CSC Lucinda Begay. She picks her own relatives or people she is friends with. Past practices, the chapter had interview panel committee composed of the Chapter Officials so selection is conducted fairly without nepotism.

Elderly people are put in the back burner when they ask for emergency assistance because they are told by CSC that they are being assisted through other funding source so they do not get assisted immediately although it is an emergency situation. The other funding source like ARPA infrastructures is taking forever, and other resources have been pending for over a year, which makes it difficult for the elderly community people get emergency assistance.

Community member, Johnson Sandoval, has been asking for assistance through the CSC work at the chapter to fill in corrosion next to his house every time it rains for the past three years. It is unsafe place right now that really needs attention so he has been asking for backhoe work to do the work but he is not getting assisted. The ARPA is taking forever and does not know if he qualifies under that program.

John Sandoval, Jr., community member, remarks that it is obvious reports of travel authorization and reimbursement is a concerned issue within this Chapter, and there should be some kind of resolution before it gets out of hand. From past employment, a disciplinary action is a process to use to address employee behavior that does not meet expectations.

Chapter President, Edison Tso, interprets to Jean Begay, our elder pertaining to discussion so she can understand the business item clearly.

**ACTION OF ADOPTION & APPROVAL:** JOHN SANDOVAL, JR. entertained a motion for approval of all Travel Advances and Travel Reimbursements request be approved through Chapter Membership during a duly considered called meeting prior to all official travels for accountability purpose; and seconds by STELLA VALDEZ. *A vote of eighteen (18) in favors, none (0) oppose, one (1) abstained; and motion carried for the record.*

3. LVC-SEPT08-062: Approve Requesting Chapter Administration to provide a full financial report of the Combining Revenue Statement, Budget to Actual and Combining Revenues & Expenditures to Chapter membership for transparency purpose.

The Monthly Finance Review Monitoring Checklist is to be reviewed by the Chapter Officials after the CSC completes it for accurate information that budget is established according to financial management. At every planning meeting, financial reports are not reviewed because CSC Lucinda Begay always inform the Chapter Officials that reports are not ready. During August 4, 2024 planning meeting, CSC Lucinda Begay said reports for October-April is completed & ready for review & signatures by the Chapter Officials but she did not present it. All she said was the budget booklet is in the office and the Chapter Officials can look through and sign-off. She also reports that May & June will be done when she is available. July & August finance is pending. The monthly finance review monitoring checklists are behind, and it is the responsible of the Chapter administration to accomplish and properly sit down with the Chapter Officials for review like it was done before with the former AMS and CSC. The Chapter Secretary/Treasurer should provide all three financial reports when provided to her by CSC so she can present it to community membership but she only reports Balance Sheet-Detail Combining Balance Sheet to community members at each regular chapter meeting. All three financial reports should be posted on the bulletin board for transparent information to community members, but is not displayed. Recommendation is merely to display all financial reports on the bulletin board after report is presented to chapter membership for approval.

**ACTION OF ADOPTION & APPROVAL:** JANICE PADILLA entertained a motion for approval, and seconds by ETTA HOLMES. *A vote of eighteen (18) in favors, none (0) oppose, one (1) abstained; and motion carried for the record.*

4. LVC-SEPT08-063: Approve Lake Valley Chapter passed a Resolution for a Vote of No Confidence in Community Services Coordinator, Lucinda Begay.

After hearing concerns and complaints by community membership, it was recommended to establish a resolution by Lake Valley Chapter for a vote of no confidence in Community Services Coordinator, Lucinda Begay relating to the Chapter Services Coordinator showing no confidence in areas of not maintaining and providing full financial reports to community membership which is for transparency purpose & accountability so community members will understand and know how the chapter budget in managed if a full report is provided to them. Nepotism-Job interview for PEP applicants is done by one person, which is CSC Lucinda Begay who picks her own relatives or people she is friends with. Retaliation-There is always retaliation when you stand up to CSC, and usually it is put on the Chapter Officials prolonging their meeting stipends informing them to wait because she is too busy or community people when they come in for services yet they are reporting that they were not treated right and denied assistance when they do speak up.

