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Budget and Finance Committee approves grant agreement for the construction of a police and fire substation at Twin Arrows

WINDOW ROCK – The Budget and Finance Committee considered Legislation No. 0398-16 on Tuesday, approving the Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise’s grant agreement, construction plan, and fund management plan for the proposed Síhasin Fund Twin Arrows Police and Fire Substation Economic/Community Development Expenditure Plan.

According to the legislation, it would also direct the Navajo Nation Office of the Controller to release the \$4.5 million that was allocated toward the project through resolution CAP-20-16, which was approved by the Navajo Nation Council in April 2016 to construct a public safety substation at the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort – located approximately 24-miles east of Flagstaff, Ariz.

Additionally, the grant agreement included provisions that would give the NNGE authority and responsibility to administer the use of the appropriated funds to solely design, plan, and construct the Twin Arrows Police and Fire Substation, and requires NNGE to return any cost-savings or leftover appropriated funds back to the Síhasin Fund.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Seth Damon (Bááháálí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Lichíí’, Rock Springs, Tsayatoh) said the police and fire substation would create six law enforcement and 15 fire personnel positions that would be stationed at the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort.

“The public safety substation would not only provide services to Twin Arrows, but it would also serve surrounding Navajo communities such as Leupp,” said Delegate Damon. “We project the groundbreaking for the facility to take place in January 2017, and hope to have construction completed in October 2017.”

Delegate Damon added that by Dec. 2, the NNOOC would release the \$4.5 million to the NNGE to begin construction.

According to the NNGE executive director of compliance, Michelle Dotson, the facility is shovel-ready and all environmental, archeological, and biological clearances have been completed. The proposed 15,000 square-foot building would consist of a 9-1-1-dispatch room, three-bay garage

for fire trucks, sleeping quarters for personnel, fire/medical/police administrative offices, and training rooms.

NNGE will transfer all ownership and title of the police and fire substation to the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety, who will operate the facility. NNGE also agreed that it would continue to cost share when additional operations and maintenance funds are needed, said Dotson.

BFC member Council Delegate Lee Jack, Sr. (Dilkon, Greasewood Springs, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone) commended his BFC colleagues for approving the grant agreement and said the police and fire substation is a much needed service for surrounding communities.

“Any incidences that take place near Twin Arrows have had to go through the Dilkon Police District, who would have to patrol the area daily. This new substation will alleviate the time and resources it takes for them to cover the Twin Arrows area and return it back to the community of Dilkon and its surrounding areas,” said Delegate Jack.

BFC members voted 3-0 to approve Legislation No. 0398-16, and the committee serves as the final authority on the bill.

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