



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Tuba City Judicial District provides update report to the Law and Order Committee



PHOTO: Honorable Judge Victoria Yazzie and Court Administrator Alice Huskie report to the Law and Order Committee at Tuba City Judicial Court on April 11, 2016.

TUBA CITY, Ariz. – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee approved a report provided by the Tuba City Judicial District regarding current activities and projects.

Tuba City Judicial Court Administrator Alice Huskie reported on activities, including a review of the Criminal Justice Summit, Pro Se Trainings, Child Support Enforcement, Parenting Arizona Class, and Page Regional Domestic Violence Services.

The report also included data collected from October 2015 to March 2016 regarding the following: daily visitor sign-in count, number of requests for court documents or audio recordings, collection of court fines and fees, number of caseloads, and statistics on individuals released on personal recognizance from the Navajo Nation Department of Corrections.

LOC member Council Delegate Jonathan Perry (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse'ii'ahi, Whiterock) thanked the officials for the detailed report provided by the district.

“I appreciate how the report highlights the issues that the committee can prioritize for the district. The data clearly illustrates where we can allocate funds for the next fiscal year,” stated Delegate Perry.

The report demonstrated alarming statistics on individuals released on personal recognizance from the Department of Corrections. A personal recognizance is defined as a written/signed agreement by a defendant promising that they will show up for future court appearances and not engage in any illegal activity while out on personal recognizance. A total of 2,566 defendants were released on personal recognizance since October 2015 and a total of 896 defendants appeared for court resulting in the prosecutor filing complaints against 50 defendants.

LOC member Council Delegate Otto Tso (Tó Nanees Dizi) stressed the importance of hiring prosecutors at each district.

“Tuba City Judicial system doesn’t have the capacity to file complaints against all criminals arrested because they lack prosecutors. Thus, they released over 2,000 defendants since October and only 50 defendants have been prosecuted. How can the Attorney General Ethel Branch address this issue?” asked Delegate Tso.

Acting Police Captain Rodney Yazzie also addressed the lack of police officers.

“We have 24 active officers on duty within the Tuba City District. During the last quarter we made over 2,500 arrests, that is 106 arrests per officer. We try to be in all places at all times on a 24/7 basis. On some occasions, we have to borrow correctional officers to finish our tasks. We cover a large land base as well,” stated Yazzie.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr. (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins) recommended to have all judicial districts provide detailed reports to the LOC.

“Detailed reports are necessary to frame priorities for DPS, which we will utilize during budget season,” stated Delegate Smith.

The Law and Order Committee voted 3-0 to approve the report from Tuba City Judicial District.

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