



25th Navajo Nation Council

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

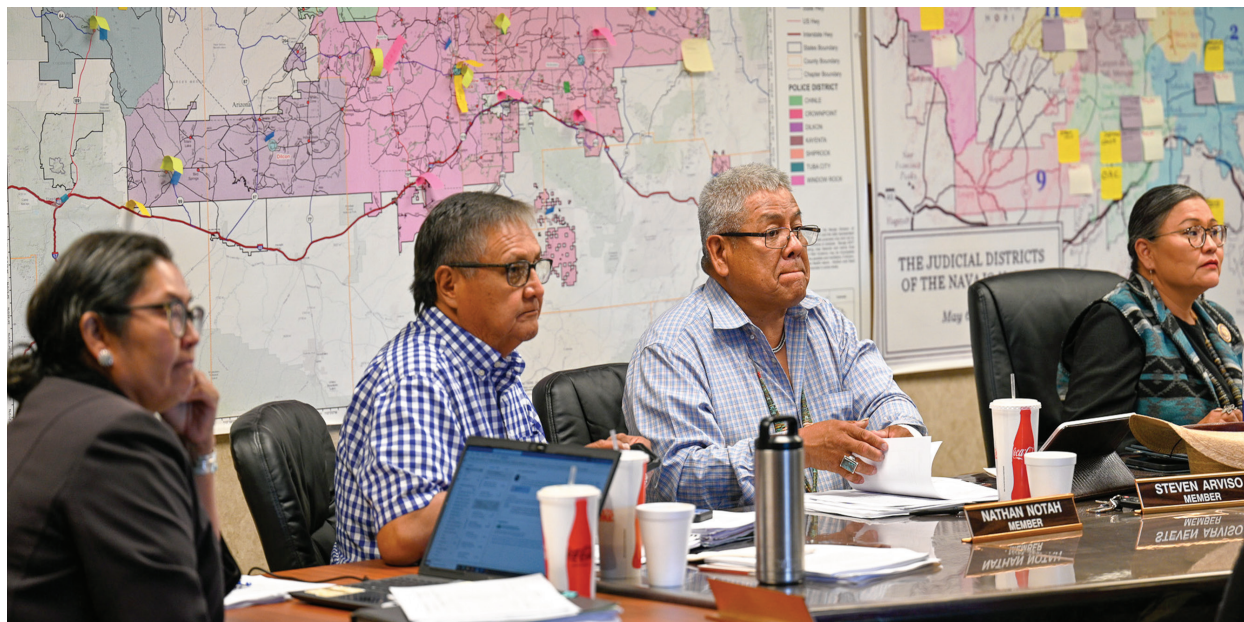
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Law and Order Committee receives report from Division of Public Safety Director Anderson



Left to Right: LOC Vice Chair Cherilyn Yazzie, Delegate Nathan Notah, Delegate Steven R. Arviso and LOC Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – The Law and Order Committee (LOC) convened on Monday, and received a report from the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety presented by Director Michael Anderson.

Anderson introduced the new Director of the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), Sharen Sandoval, to the Committee. LOC Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton questioned Director Anderson about Sandoval's qualifications and the hiring process that led to her hiring.

"Concerns have been raised because Ms. Sandoval is the daughter of [Office of the President and Vice President Chief of Staff] Patrick Sandoval, and other candidates applied for the position. This committee will be inquiring about her qualifications and selection," stated LOC Chair Charles-Newton.

LOC member Council Delegate Steven Arviso questioned Director Anderson about staff satisfaction and the work environment within the Division. Director Anderson responded that despite changes, the staff is expected to uphold their duties and continue their work efficiently.

An update on the E911 System and Rural Address program was also discussed, with Director

Anderson indicating that Deputy Chief of Police Leonard Red Horse is spearheading the project, which is expected to be completed within the next two years if all goes as planned.

Key strategies to improve public safety recruitment and retention were also discussed, including fostering a culture of respect and appreciation, providing adequate training and equipment, and focusing on realignment rather than restructuring.

"It's important to address the needs of our community proactively and ensure our public safety system is efficient and responsive," said LOC Vice Chair Cherilyn Yazzie. "Our focus should be on practical solutions and staying positive, even when facing criticism or challenges."

Additional discussions included questions about the Auxiliary Service Department, led by Commander Daryl Noon – former Navajo Nation Chief of Police. Director Anderson explained that the Auxiliary Services, located in Fort Defiance, oversee the Navajo Nation Police Academy and manage background checks through IMS and OPI. Director Anderson stated that Commander Noon could come before the LOC to report on his new position and his duties.

The LOC directed the Division to prepare a comprehensive report regarding the priorities and restructuring plan, to be presented to the Committee within the next 30 days. LOC accepted the report from Director Anderson with 3 in favor, one excused vote and LOC Chair not voting.

The LOC also announced the revised schedule for the public hearings of probationary judges:

Judge Letitia Stover: Aug. 9, 2024, in Kayenta, Ariz.

Judge Victor Clyde: Aug. 16, 2024, in Window Rock, Ariz.

Judge Malcolm Laughing: Aug. 23, 2024, in Ramah, N.M.

A special LOC meeting is scheduled for Aug. 30, to deliberate the outcomes of the hearings.

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