

**NAVAJO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTES**  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 12, 2006**

Present: At Navajo County Complex: Supervisor J.R. DeSpain and Clerk Darlene Fraley. Present by cell telephone with speaker phone at the county complex: Chairman Jesse Thompson, Supervisor Percy Deal, County Manager James G. Jayne, County Attorney Mel Bowers, and Public Works Director Dusty Parsons. Supervisors Brownlow and Tenney were not present.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Thompson called the meeting to order at 4:40 p.m. advising that this meeting is called as a result of rainfall creating an emergency situation in the Whippoorwill area. He advised a request for assistance has been received from Johnny Johnson, Incident Commander for Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management, as authorized by an August 7, 2006 Resolution of the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management. He reviewed the faxed request for assistance.

Supervisor Deal reported he is at the command center in Whippoorwill, has assessed the flooding situation and is requesting the assistance of the county. He introduced Sergeant Dempsey Harvey who has set up a station at the command center to direct emergency services. Sergeant Dempsey reported:

- There have been several rescue missions as a result of yesterday's rain and right now there is a heavy rain.
- They had to use horses to do damage assessments due to road wash outs.
- Several communities are without water. The Nation's public works department is making repairs to the water systems and advises it will take approximately three days since they can not get a backhoe to the location of the break. They need tankers of potable water for about three days.
- Three dams are in danger of breaking and if one breaks, it will create a chain reaction and flood the lower valley of Whippoorwill toward Hopi.
- Two dams did break and released water at Whippoorwill Springs.
- If evacuation becomes necessary they will utilize the Pinon Public School gymnasium and there may be a need to relocate the incident command to that facility.
- The main incident command center is in Window Rock and is directed by Johnny Johnson.
- They are now relying on ATVs for transportation.
- The Red Cross will be activated.

In response to a question from Dusty Parsons as to what the BIA has provided, Sergeant Harvey said they only have one motor grader and it can not be used for deep ditches. In response to a question from Supervisor DeSpain, Dusty Parsons advised the county has no tankers that can carry potable water and he would research renting a tanker. He requested and received directions to the site to provide to the rental companies.

Mel Bowers advised that the Supervisors can authorize county staff to provide support that is available as needed after staff has assessed the situation and evaluated where best to put resources. He stated that for the record, this is an emergency meeting of the Navajo County Board of Supervisors pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02 (D) to address a flooding emergency in northern Navajo County affecting a large portion of the Navajo Nation including the Whippoorwill area, leaving roads washed out and residents stranded. He advised the Navajo Nation has requested assistance and the county could not provide 24 hour notice of this meeting due to the emergency nature. He advised that the Clerk of the Board would post appropriate notice of this meeting within 24 hours. He reported action could be taken by resolution or by direction to the County Manager and the Public Works Director.

The Public Works Director and County Manager discussed renting potable water tankers from the closest areas to the site and strategies and timelines to mobilize staff and equipment.

Supervisor Deal discussed the plight of the people in the area, reporting large numbers of people, some in need of medical assistance, are stranded and families are short on food and water. He advised that one 9' culvert is

washed out leaving approximately 25-30 people unable to get across the washout. He advised that a blade could cut in a temporary road for these people.

The County Manager and Public Works Director reported they will travel to the site this evening and Supervisor Deal advised he would arrange lodging in the area for them. Mr. Jayne stated that since the biggest immediate issue seems to be potable water, they will begin arrangements to rent equipment to transport water to the area.

Mel Bowers advised this action could be authorized through two motions. **Supervisor Deal made a motion** that, based on personal observation and information received from Navajo Emergency Management out of Window Rock and from Incident Commander Sergeant Harvey, the existing issues do present an emergency situation and that the Navajo County Board of Supervisors declares an emergency; motion seconded by Supervisor DeSpain; vote 3-0 approving the motion.

**Supervisor Deal made a motion** to direct the County Manager and Public Works Director to travel up to the Whippoorwill area and meet with the incident commander to further assess the situation and determine needs; with authorization to the County Manager and Public Works Director to expend the funds that may be necessary to provide assistance for equipment, supplies or for roads; motion seconded by Supervisor DeSpain; vote 3-0 approving the motion.

Chairman Thompson requested that the Whitecone area be assessed also.

**ADJOURN: Supervisor DeSpain made a motion** to adjourn at 5:16 p.m.; motion seconded by Supervisor Deal; vote 3-0 approving the motion.

**APPROVED:**

**DATE:**

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Jesse Thompson, Chairman

**ATTEST:**

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Clerk of the Board