



# THE NAVAJO NATION

JOE SHIRLEY JR.  
PRESIDENT

FRANK DAYISH JR.  
VICE PRESIDENT

September 22, 2006

## EXECUTIVE OFFICES

Fourth Quarterly Report  
Fiscal Year 2006  
(July, August & September 2006)

### I. Program Information

Director Name: Larry Chee, Fire Chief  
Telephone No.: (928) 871 – 6915  
Department: Department of Fire & Rescue Services

### II. Budget/Performance Information

#### a. Funding and Expenditures

#### BUDGET EXPENSE FOR FY06

Funding Source	No. of Personnel	No. of Vehicles	FY2006 Personnel	% Budget Used	FY2006 Operating	% Budget Used
General	12	17	\$449,803.09	95%	\$576,280.93	92%
External	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	12	17	\$449,803.09	95%	\$576,280.93	92%

### III. Accomplishments

- a. Assistance to Firefighter: Grant Program number EMW-2004-FG-16110 in the amount of \$246,240.00 for SCBA was closed out.
- b. Assistance to Firefighter: Grant Program number EMW-2005-FG-02690 in the amount of \$269,496.00, equipment purchases with this grant are all operational.
- c. Volunteers on a per call: Through the 20<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council, supplemental funding was approved in the amount of the \$289,750.00 to address the shortage of volunteerism. With the allocation, the department will pay volunteers on a per call basis under our proposed Volunteer [Firefighter] Incentive Pay Plan (VIPP).
- d. Homeland Security Grant: Submitted invoices to Mark Howard's office under the Arizona Division of Emergency Management to spend the 2005 Homeland Security Grant in the amount of \$385,000.00 to establish our Hazardous Materials Response Team. Vendors were

- selected for the purchase of a command vehicle, storage trailer, haz-mat equipment and communication equipment.
- e. Bided for six (6) fire trucks: Three vendors met the bid deadlines and specifications and one vendor will be selected after the BNF committee approves the budget packets for this purchase. Fire trucks specification include, an International 7400 four door conventional cab, minimum of 1250 gpm pump and 750 gallon booster tank and compressed air foam system. With the assistance of the Office of Management & Budget and Department of Fleet Management, the department submitted for bid of six (6) fire trucks. Bid deadlines were on August 9, 2006 with three vendors bidding.
  - f. Job descriptions: firefighter series were revised to reflect the difficulty of hiring qualified people to fill firefighter positions. This is an accomplishment in that with the job description changes, our department has a better pool of volunteer firefighters to select from when a position is open within the organization. As a result, we had an excellent pool of candidate to hire from for the Chinle position.
  - g. July Fourth Fair and Rodeo: This special event encompass five days, from August 30 thru July 4, 2006, open 0800 hour to midnight. The department was involved in the planning, coordination of activities, and performing department functions. Assigned as Coordinator for the public fireworks display, the department assisted the Division of Resource, Park & Recreation, and Fair Office to oversee the handling of Class B explosives and proper discharge in compliance with NFPA standards. The department also assisted with fire department services such as operational and fire prevention functions. 5 fire personnel inspected the event before and during the event. In the 5-day period, we inspected 33 food concession stands twice per day. We inspected 5 facilities twice a day. The event posed some minor and major life safety and fire hazards. The primary problem with the food concession stands was handling of propane fuel cylinders. Many vendors were frequently reminded not to store, dispense/use propane inside the building. The management personnel and staff were equally resisting compliance with life safety as the assembly building were locked, doors were not operating; exit sign were missing, etc. Many new and many existing hazards from previous years were referred to the new Fair Manager.
  - h. Window Rock Sports Complex; or Navajo Special Diabetes Project's Wellness Center: On June 23, 2006, the new facility had the automatic sprinkler system go through an acceptance test, which was successful. On September 5, 2006, the fire alarm company representative conducted the acceptance test successfully. We are currently awaiting the floor plan for the equipment setup to allow for proper egress throughout the building. In the last quarter report, the concern regarding possible flooding did actually occur during the July and August heavy precipitation. Most of the facility underneath was flooded. The moisture is a concern as far as the stability of the footing & supports, wiring and unprotected steel structures. The north and west drainage is now back on the architect's drawing board. Another problem reported was the security alarm system was out of service due to lightning that may have been improper wiring of the system.
  - i. Window Rock Sports Center:(Civic Center): in conjunction with the Wellness Center, this building was impacted by the destruction of the original egress. Taking away the original path, stairs and egress, the new construction placed a well that was evaluated to obstruct and constrict the Civic Center east exits or egress. After three meetings and opposition by the Special Diabetes program personnel, the Architect and concern

- group (NNFD, I.H.S.- OEH, Safety) met to change the egress they constructed. On September 12, 2006, an update drawing from the architect was delivered.
- j. Conduct fire safety: class at the Regional Early Care and Education Conference at UNM – Gallup Branch. There were 10 participants for the 2-hour class. The conference was coordinated by Connections, 505-863-3377.
  - k. Smoke Alarm Project: NFPA High Risk Center is utilizing its resources to conduct training and install smoke alarms in homes across the Navajo Nation and other Native American communities. The project is currently at the beginning stage; training was conducted on August 17 and 18 for the Navajo Nation and Hopi tribe. We trained 24 personnel for the installation project on the Navajo Nation. We will be installing 8,000 smoke alarms. During the training practical session, we discovered the BSK First Alert smoke alarms were faulty. The test buttons broke off on three alarms plus one alarm battery was dead. We further evaluated the smoke alarm to find it would not meet our application and therefore not satisfactory. NFPA also begin evaluating based on my findings and has decided to go with another brand & model. This has halted smoke projects at four locations including ours, many alarms were return to BSK and large orders cancel. Based on NFPA and with research, we evaluated two new alarm brands. We have selected the Kidde model 0910 smoke alarm for the new project. With the delay another month has pass, we should begin receiving smoke alarm shipment by the end of the September 2006. The communities selected will include Sawmill, Red Lake, Crystal, Pinon and surrounding chapters, Ramah.
  - l. Navajo Nation Fair: September 2006: The annual event on a larger scale than the July 4<sup>th</sup> started on September 2<sup>nd</sup> and ended September 10, 2006. This department is involved from May 2006, with planning and consultation to the coordinators and fair office; we conduct preliminary inspections with Indian Health Service – OEH and tribal safety. The department assisted the Navajo Nation Fair Office with fire services resources. We participated in the Fair office meetings to assist with planning, provide consultation, and work with other coordinators. During the event, we provided fire services conducting inspections, crew standby and participate in the events. The inspections entail working with 40 food concession stands, 10 midway vendor stands, 40 vendor booths in Gorman Hall, 50 vendor booths in Nakai Hall, 6 buildings, 3 arenas (rodeo, pow-wow, song & dance). Also the fair schedule included events that required inspection prior to beginning, this included concerts, dances, contest (cooking), and daily opening of facilities. On Kids day the department participated in the daylong event with display of fire trucks, operating the smoke house, and lead the parade. The daily attendant of inspectors is required to monitor all events, facilities due to the various activities. The inspection begins at 0900 hours and ended around midnight each day, September 2 thru 10, 2006. This precaution is necessary to eliminate hazards before the gates were open to the public and to maintain a safe level throughout the day.
  - m. Window Rock Sports Complex: (Wellness Center): According to Design and Engineer Department, a meeting was held on September 15, 2006, to finalize and agree on the changes drawn up by the Architect regarding the egress from the Civic Center. This department was not represented, all other departments such Parks & Recreation staff, Fair Office, Special Diabetes office, Design and Engineer was represented. They had agreed to the new design presented on the new drawing we

- n. Window Rock Sports Complex (Wellness Center): Received on September 12, 2006. In the meeting prior to this, Indian Health Service – OEH recommended 21 feet wide egress, later in a draft sketch, we recommended at least 10 feet wide egress to accommodate the varied occupant load (exceeding & unapproved O.L.) normally occurring with the building. On the September 12, 2006 Architect and September 15, 2006 meeting, they agreed on a 5 feet wide egress. Here are continued concern regarding flooding and water draining underneath the floor possibly affecting the footing and supports, with moisture under the floor the building will settle more causing some doors to hang or difficult to open affecting exits; moisture introduced in the walls may affect the electrical wiring and components. The additional settling of the building will affect the entire structure.

#### **IV. Status of On-Going Activities**

- a. Homeland Security Grants
  - i. Waiting for acknowledgement of our two (2) Homeland Security Grants under the Arizona Division of Emergency Management.
- b. Volunteer Incentive Pay Plan was submitted to the Department of Personnel Management for review. The department's budget was adjusted to incorporate the new amount.
- c. SOP/SOG's were revised and ready to be resubmitted to DOJ for final approval.
- d. Sport center and the new Wellness center coordinators are finally in agreement to re-do the sidewalks to increase the occupancy level and decrease obstruction entrance and exit of the Sports Center.
- e. Navajo Nation Fair standby and response to emergency calls and life safety inspection of building occupancy, and food courts, were checked and corrective measures were accomplished.

#### **V. Status of Action Plan (A, B & C Lists)**

- a. Homeland Security Grants
  - i. Assistance to Firefighter Grant Program number EMW-2004-FG-16110 in the amount of \$246,240.00 for SCBA was closed out by our department and contract accounting.
  - ii. Assistance to Firefighter Grant Program number EMW-2005-FG-02690 in the amount of \$269,496.00 for fire hoses and foam has been drawn down, payment made to the vendor and all equipment is in operation. The department and contract accounting needs to close out the grant.
- b. Vehicles
  - i. We are still triaging the repairs on the fire trucks, addressing trucks that need major repairs to ensure service delivery in the districts. Because of the age and condition of these trucks, repairs and maintenance still continue at considerable cost to the department.
- c. We are still trying to hire another paid firefighter for the Chinle District. Last position advertising resulted in twelve (12) applicants, however none were qualified. As a result of this, we have submitted new job descriptions with amended qualifications to the Classification Section of Personnel Management. Qualifications that were changed included the need to possess NIMS and Basic ICS training, and comparative training up to the Firefighter I & II level.

- d. VIPP – We are still waiting for Department of Personnel Management’s review. Until we have received their input, we cannot go forward paying the volunteers on a per call basis.

## **VI. Outstanding Program Issues**

- a. Vehicles
  - i. As previously indicated in other reports, each fire station has but only one fire truck. When that fire truck is out for service, there is no fire protection until that vehicle is placed back in service. The DF&RS needs to obtain additional fire truck to supplement its current fleet and to serve as a spare when the other truck goes in for service.
  - ii. The newest fire trucks with the DF&RS are reaching their 15-year mark. Many of these trucks have problems with them due to their age and the terrain the Navajo Nation affords. Cost to maintain them is becoming burdensome on our department’s budget.
  - iii. Previous and this quarter, our department spent \$28,000.00 in fire truck repair and maintenance.
- b. Fleet Management – Lack of attention from Fleet Management is still on going. Our department is still not being treated as a priority. Fire trucks are not being repaired in a quick manner as expected.

## **VII. Problems/Recommendations**

Many of the problems associated with the DF&RS stems from the following:

- a. *Non-Life safety compliance* - Among tribal workers, not complying with life safety codes is a concern, over the years and currently we continue to find non-compliance such as; to simply understand what life safety is and who should be practicing it. We have also found that even the managers/directors are declining to comply with life safety standards, although they know that there are deficiencies and some do know of the deficiencies who deliberately ignore there situation and under pressure run to political appointed officials to help them over come or force us to ignore the deficiencies, which we have not folded to do. As mention above, reoccurrence of deficiencies are evidence and only with the support of upper administrators, we can accomplished to re-enforce our efforts to have all personnel start complying with life safety codes in the work places and to also start enforcing to have the staff be aware of fire exits, fire extinguisher use, safe keeping of files and other daily use of machinery compliance. Fire Department can only do so much to enforce life safety code, but the Nation safety departments, Risk Management/ Directors/Managers/Coordinators also needs to come forward to educate the staff of daily use of office equipment and to be more vigilant to see hazards in their work area and to start making those corrective action.
- b. *Volunteerism* – Over the years, the number of volunteer firefighters signing up has declined, this results in emergency calls not being responded to, or only one or two firefighters responding to an incident that requires six or more to be effective and safe. The reason for the decline is attributed to personal reasons, such as family, personal life and work. In essence, the current volunteers and general public reported that they just do not have time anymore, because they need to attend to family,

- through their presence and wage earnings. It is evident that we cannot hire more firefighters based on current budget constraints. It is however more cost efficient to help the current volunteers with endeavors to care for the family by offering them a stipend of some sort. With the VIPP, we are confident that this will help address these concerns and improve recruitment and retention.
- c. *Aging and Insufficient Vehicle Fleet* - The DF&RS has but only one fire truck and a regular street vehicle (altered to serve as a rescue) per fire station. These fire trucks were purchased in 1991 or early, and are now exceeding 15 years of service. When these fire trucks were purchased, there was no plan in place to replace them. Currently, we are having more and more problems with them, from the engine and drive train to the fire pump themselves. Remember, there is only one fire truck per station or district. If that fire truck goes down for service or repairs, then the community is without fire protection. Any major mechanical problems with any single fire truck will immediately leave a community in risk. To ensure adequate protection, each fire station needs at the three (3) fire units – one or two engines or tanker and a quick attack rescue. With the aid of Fleet Management and the Controller’s Office, we have begun to address this need. With six (6) fire trucks in the future, we have begun to address the aging and insufficient fire truck fleet.
  - d. *Funds for Grants* – The old adage “it takes money to make money” is common in today’s grant process. Many grants now are asking organizations to help themselves through a matching fund process. The latest grant in which we applied for will require a \$38,000 matching funds (or 10%) for the acquisition of another fire truck. The DF&RS needs a budget supplemental to acquire grant funding for the purpose of addressing the fire truck and protection needs. We need help to help ourselves.
  - e. *Inadequate fire protection in other areas of the Navajo Nation* – The DF&RS finds that the communities of Pinion, Red Mesa and LeChee (among many secondary communities, such as Kaibeto, Jeddito, Hard Rock, Lukacukai, etc.) need to establish fire departments in their communities. These communities are growing communities and do not have adequate fire protection, nor do they have any organization that can respond to rescues or hazardous materials incidents. Although agreement may help in protecting the community, they do not satisfy the needs of the Navajo Nation, as many of these agencies are now pursuing “Fee for Service”, in which the Nation would have to reimburse those agencies called up to assist in large fires, rescue or hazardous materials incidents for the purpose of recuperating cost in manpower, equipment use, vehicle wear and tear and other amenities required to support the operations.
  - f. *Limited Budget* – Many of our problems could be resolved with an adequate budget. An adequate budget can address personnel issues, funding for grants and repair and possible leasing of fire apparatus. We are well aware that a larger budget will not fix all our problems and address our all our needs, but it will fix our most oppressing problems that results in inadequate service delivery and comprises the safety of our members. For FY2007, our budget is \$ 1,013,278.00. As previously noted, \$289,750.00 is directed toward the VIPP. Below is a breakdown of our budget.

### **VIII. Flow Chart (Most recent/updated chart attached)**

Navajo Nation Fire & Rescue Service



