

Speaker Seth Damon resigns

Written by Staff Reports

Friday, 18 November 2022 06:26



24th Navajo Nation Council to elect new Speaker

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council convened in the Navajo Nation Council Chamber for a Special Session to place Speaker Seth Damon on administrative leave on Nov. 4. Legislation No. 0208-22 was introduced by Hon. Otto Tso to place the Speaker of the 24th Navajo Nation Council on administrative leave without pay and to establish Speaker Pro Tems for the remainder of the term.

The legislation noted the chairs of the four standing committees would rotate in increments of 15 days in the following order:

Chairman Daniel Tso - Health, Education, and Human Services Committee

Chairman Jamie Henio - Budget and Finance Committee

Chairman Rickie Nez - Resources and Development Committee

Chairwoman Eugenia Charles-Newton - Law and Order Committee

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According to the legislation, each chairperson would be able to designate another committee member to act as Speaker Pro Tem for the period assigned to the committee.

During the Special Session, Hon. Wilson C. Stewart, Jr. proposed an amendment to strike a majority of the language in the legislation to completely remove Damon as Speaker of the 24th Navajo Nation Council.

In response, Otto Tso stated the proposed amendment by Stewart would require a new legislation to be drafted and would need to be discussed at a later date. Delegates also stated it was imperative to address the issue at hand as quickly as possible to ensure the Navajo Nation has a leader of the Legislative Branch.

After much debate on the proposed legislation and the amendment, Daniel Tso motioned for a caucus to discuss the details in depth to find a solution in order to move the Nation forward.

As a result, Damon decided to step down for the remainder of the term and appointed Daniel Tso Speaker Pro Tem for five days beginning on Nov. 7. Damon will appoint a Speaker Pro Tem for every week until a new Speaker of the 24th Navajo Nation Council is elected.

“In order to begin the healing process, my resignation as Speaker will ensure the 24th Navajo Nation Council will continue to be united on behalf of our Navajo people,” Damon said. “Over the course of the next two months, through prayer and blessings, it is my hope that harmony will be restored throughout our communities.”

Damon is currently running unopposed and will represent the chapters of Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, and Tséyatoh on the 25th Navajo Nation Council.

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