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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— On June 13, Navajo Nation Vice President Jonathan Nez was in attendance at the Northern Agency Council meeting at Sanostee, N.M.

The meeting was scheduled during the same time President Begaye was at the funeral services for Navajo Code Talker Bahe Ketchum at Navajo Mountain. Vice President Nez provided an update on the Executive Branch issues he and President Russell Begaye have addressed since taking the oath of office on May 12.

Information included details of meetings with congressmen, congresswomen and senators on Capitol Hill, Navajo Nation Treaty Day, the Tódínéeshzheé Public Safety Complex, San Juan County fire support services, Birdsprings Memorial Day, Tsayatoh power line extension, graduation message for students, and cabinet appointments from the Begaye-Nez administration.

“We are working together and opening the door for our educated Navajos to walk through and return home to help the nation,” he said.

More than 100 people were in attendance for the meeting, a similar crowd as the Eastern Agency Council meeting that was held the week before at Nahodishgish, NM. Same as the previous meeting, the chapter officials were eager to begin working with the administration and meet the new leaders of the Navajo Nation.

Later in the morning, Vice President Nez attended the building dedication ceremony at Coyote Canyon. The chapter house was renamed the Marshall Plummer Memorial Hall.

A traditional blessing began the festivities, which included members of the Plummer family, Vice President Nez, Dr. Peterson Zah, Office of the President and Vice President Chief of Staff Robert Joe, Sen. John Pinto (D-NM), Rep. Patty Lundstrom (D-NM), former vice chairman Ed T. Begay and others.

“We appreciate the Plummer family and realize the sacrifice their father, uncle, brother and nalí made serving in a leadership capacity,” Nez said. “He was out there serving the community.”

While serving as vice president, Plummer was not home very much, Nez explained, offering gratitude for the family’s understanding and support. He also acknowledged the service and dedication of Navajo veterans and first responders, including police officers, firefighters and emergency medical technicians.

Nez also said it was appropriate for the community celebrate the legacy of Marshall Plummer by naming the building after him.

Speaking in Navajo, Vice President Nez said he is standing beside President Begaye and not “sitting behind him,” which is the literal translation for vice president in Navajo. “That is what Vice President Plummer did for President Zah, he stood beside him and supported him,”

Dr. Peterson Zah spoke of the time in office he shared with Plummer, who served as Navajo Nation Vice President during their administration from 1991-1994. He said it was a privilege and an honor to serve with Plummer.

“As a show of respect, the residents Coyote Canyon are renaming the chapter house after Mr. Plummer for his many years of service to their community and the Navajo Nation,” Zah said. “Thank you.”

Plummer was a true statesman for the Navajo people, Zah said, and had a unique ability to remain calm and collected during times of crises. Zah recalled a time in 2006, when the city of Farmington called upon Plummer to quell racial tensions that were growing after an Anglo police officer shot and killed a Navajo man. During that time, three Anglo kids were also charged with

severely beating a Navajo.

“Marshall Plummer was a Navajo leader with the innate ability of protecting his Navajo people, which shouldn’t be surprising when you consider his service to his country as a former Vietnam veteran,” said Zah.

Before serving as the first vice president of the Navajo Nation, Plummer served as a council delegate for Coyote Canyon from 1988 to 1991. During that time, he was a member of the 49ers, a minority group of council delegates that fought against former chairman Peter MacDonald after federal crimes were filed against him. Subsequently, the tribal council voted in Plummer to serve as interim chairman.

“Ever the statesman, [Plummer] stepped down when Johnny R. Thompson, former vice chairman, argued he had legal title to the chairmanship,” Zah said. “That’s the kind of man he was, diplomatic. “Thank you for honoring Marshall Plummer in this manner. It shows the character and commitment he had to the Navajo Nation,”

Joe said, “Marshall Plummer was a passionate leader that influenced communities and diverse cultures to work toward a common vision. His legacy is honored by the chapter.”