Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and 24th Navajo Nation Council Speaker Seth Damon met with the City of Gallup Mayor, Louie Bonaguidi, New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, Gallup Inter-tribal Ceremonial Director Melissa Sanchez, and state legislators on Aug. 5 to address the events that occurred during the Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial Night Parade on Aug. 4 in Gallup when a suspected impaired driver drove recklessly through the parade route.

According to a report from the City of Gallup, during the parade, Gallup Police Officers were notified that several people were consuming alcohol in a vehicle that was parked along the parade route. Contact was made, the driver put the vehicle in drive and proceeded to strike police officers, pedestrians, vehicles and a business before the vehicle backed into a New Mexico State Police unit and those involved were taken into custody. All injuries were assessed by medical personnel and transported to local hospitals with moderate but no life-threatening injuries.

“We are thankful that no lives were lost due to this senseless act by a few individuals. The perpetrators must be held accountable to the fullest extent,” Nez said.

Nez said he and his family were at the parade and saw the events as they unfolded.

“My family and I, as well as many of our Navajo people, witnessed the tragic events firsthand. We saw children who were shedding tears and people shaking with fear and we did our best to comfort them and let them know that everything would be okay. It’s important that our people talk to one another and share your experiences with one another. Our faith and prayers will carry us through this tough time. The Navajo Nation will have a day of prayer on Sunday to bring all faiths together so we can heal together,” Nez said.

Lujan Grisham stated that the New Mexico State Police are leading the investigation and will have increased law enforcement presence at the ceremonial events for the remainder of the week. Officials also reported that there are no significant injuries or deaths reported. The governor also confirmed that there were no gunshots fired during the incident.

Council Delegates Edmund Yazzie, Nathaniel Brown, and Amber Kanazbah Crotty were also in

attendance and spoke about the need to step up efforts to address substance and alcohol use and mental health and called on the City of Gallup to do more to protect the safety of the ceremonial event attendees and participants.

Sanchez read a statement on behalf of the ceremonial office and board, expressing their thoughts and prayers. She added that the safety of community members, participants, travelers, and event staff and volunteers is their top priority as the events continue as planned.

The proclamation issued by Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer recognizes Aug. 7, 2022 as a “Navajo Nation Day of Prayer” to bring all faiths together to help recover and heal from Aug. 4’s tragic events.

If you or a loved one is impacted there are resources available with the Navajo Nation Department of Mental and Behavioral Health at 988 or your local Indian Health Services at:

- Tsehootsooi Medical Center (928) 729-8000
- Nahata’Dziil Health Center (928) 688-5600
- Gallup Indian Medical Center (505) 722-1000
- Crown point Health Care Facility (505) 786-5291
- Sage Memorial Hospital (928) 755-4500
- Chinle Comprehensive Health Care Facility (928) 674-7001
- Winslow Indian Health Care Clinic (928) 289-4646 or (800) 786-8907
- Tuba City Regional Health Care Corp (866) 976-5941

- Kayenta Health Center (928) 697-4000
- Inscription House Health Center (928) 672-3000
- Northern Navajo Medical Center (505) 368-6001
- Four Corners Regional Health Center (928) 656-5000
- Dzilth Na O Dith Hle Health Center (505) 960-1801 or 1 (888) 531-7233
- Chinle Comprehensive Health Care (928) 722-1000
- Dilkon Field Clinic (928) 657-3800