

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
**NAVAJO COUNTY, ARIZONA**  
Special Meeting at the Petrified Forest National Park  
**September 20, 2004**

Supervisors' Chambers, Holbrook, Arizona – Time: 9:15 a.m.

**PRESENT:** J.R. DeSpain, Chairman; Percy Deal, Member; Jesse Thompson, Member; Pete Shumway, Member; James G. Jayne, County Manager; Lance Payette, Chief Deputy County Attorney; Kathy Hieb, Deputy Clerk of the Board. (Vice-Chairman Jerry Brownlow was unable to be present as he was attending meetings in Washington, DC) Mr. Thompson led the Pledge of Allegiance and offered the Invocation.

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:** Welcome and opening statements on behalf of Navajo County: Chairman DeSpain welcomed the public to this special meeting and introduced Lee Baiza, Superintendent of the Petrified Forest National Park.

**PETRIFIED FOREST NATIONAL PARK:** Welcome and Overview of the Petrified Forest National Park: Superintendent Lee Baiza introduced his staff and began a presentation on the park and the proposed expansion project, which has been going on for about six years now. The current acreage in the park is approximately 93,533 acres, with a wilderness area of about 50,000 acres. The proposed expansion area is about 128,000 acres. Mr. Baiza explained that the park has 55 permanent employees, plus seasonal workers, researchers and occasional VIPs. There is staff housing in Holbrook, which enables the staff to contribute to the local economy and to participate in local events, such as the Parade of Lights and the Navajo County Fair. There have been approximately 400 jobs created by the Petrified Forest being here. Studies indicate that annually, over 55,000 vehicles pass by the park entrance on I-40, with 20% of that being truck traffic. However, only a small portion of that remaining 80% actually comes into the park itself. Visits for 2003 were up only 1% from 2002. Tourism needs to be developed, and there are challenges that must be overcome. These challenges include improvements to the entrance road and the road through the park itself. The Painted Desert Inn today is very different from the original building. This historical landmark was once nearly demolished because it was in such bad shape. Although much work remains to be done, the roof has been completely replaced and the building is now used as a visitor's center. A rehabilitation project will soon be underway, which will close the center for one to one and one-half years. There are partners with the park who sell petrified wood in their stores (Jim Gray, Lone Wolf, etc), which helps to protect the petrified wood within the park boundaries.

The proposed boundary expansion is being considered in Congress at this time. The park is primarily working with four major property owners on the boundaries of the current park who want to help clean up the blight within the "viewshed". Many areas here are archaeologically rich and must be protected. The question has been asked, "Why obtain more land when we can't protect what we have?" The answer is that with extended boundaries, part personnel can respond better to emergencies, thefts, etc., with more and better roads in the park. Rather than build new facilities, we can manage and take care of the infrastructure we already have. Mr. Baiza explained that the current concessions contract is on a year-by-year basis. This makes it extremely difficult for the concessionaires to upgrade infrastructure. A prospectus will be prepared and sent to the public for a new contract. Staff would like to develop a partnership to provide educational opportunities regarding our natural and cultural heritage. There are

many challenges to overcome, but with terrific staff and the help of the park's neighbors, the park can progress. Mr. Jayne commented that we have a great jewel here in the Petrified Forest and we must work with the I-40 corridor communities to make it even better.

**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE: Retaining and expanding business and the workforce in the Plateau Region: Bill Bolin, Northeast Arizona Regional Representative and Tom Belshe, Asst. Deputy Director for Community Development:** Mr. Bolin began with an overview of the Department of Commerce and its function. Their motto is: "Our Job is Jobs!" He noted that there are gaps in Arizona resources and opportunities. We have competition from other states and other countries. Arizona has low industrial diversity and our per capita income is in decline. We need to build a better job base, as we are importing more than we are exporting. For example, we are experiencing a flood of imported goods and services from China. Key strategies for FY 2004 include: Developing a 10-year Economic Development Plan; Increase services to small businesses; Broaden the rural economic development efforts; Develop strategies to protect Arizona military bases; Increase trade with Mexico and Latin America. As a whole, Arizona is strong on tourism and distribution, but we need better manufacturing and IT capability. ADOC has many programs available to help grow our economy: 1) Job Training; 2) Mainstreet Program; 3) Rural Economic Development; 4) Enterprise Zone; 5) Growing Smarter; 6) Apprenticeship System; 7) Arizona Film Office; 8) Greater Arizona Development Authority (GADA); 9) Military Re-Use Zone Program.

Mr. Bolin explained that there are state regional grants for economic planning. Our region, the Plateau Region, consists of Southern Navajo and Apache Counties, and Northern Gila County. The general characteristics of our region are the I-40 and state highway corridors. We have many assets in our region, including two airports with 2700 ft. runways; NAU & NPC. Our largest employers are EuroFresh, Abitibi and local government. There is \$250,000 available in regional economic planning grants. These funds are available in competitive, matching grants, divided among the six regions. (\$40,000 each)

Current copies of the Arizona 2004 Official State Visitor's Guide were presented to the Board. Mr. Deal noted that the maps of northern Arizona contained in the guide are outdated. He said that perhaps a grant is available to help complete the update. Mr. Belshe noted that there is a state cartographer, and he will pass along this concern.

**PETRIFIED FOREST MUSEUM ASSOCIATION: Overview of Association:** Chairman Bill Jeffers explained that the Museum Association is a cooperating association that assists the Petrified Forest National Park. Their main job is to generate funds for the park that do not have the strings attached like federal funds do. These funds allow for the purchase of books and interpretive materials; pay employees to man the desks and interpret along the trails; and help for the many researchers who come to the park from around the world. Each year, the Association gives from \$70,000 to \$125,000 to the park. These funds come from the Association's operating budget of \$150,000, which is generated through sales of books, t-shirts, etc. The current members of the Association Board include: Bill Jeffers, Chairman, Art Standiford, Barbara DeSpain and Paul Barger.

**ARIZONA STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD: Rural Consultation Process: Bill Jeffers, District 5 Representative:** Mr. Jeffers began by summarizing the Rural Consultation Process meeting. He noted that public comment is always welcome and is always taken seriously. Some of the projects approved at

the meeting include: Construction on I-40, Cottonwood Wash Bridge (2006-\$600,000); City of Show Low, for construction of roads, etc., for rescue and firefighting building (\$2,155,000); City of Holbrook for improvements to airport (\$420,000). Mr. Jeffers noted that a Show Low construction company received the bid for an ADOT project in Graham County.

Discussion began regarding the problems with the railroad crossing in Holbrook. Mr. Jeffers noted that ADOT is working on it, but it is anticipated that within the next 5 years, the number of daily trains will double, as will the length of those trains. There are also two sites in northern Arizona being considered for a truck transfer site. Although still in the consideration stage, Winslow is one of the sites being looked at. Another issue being looked at in ADOT's quest to look toward the future is the possibility of expanding I-140 to three lanes in each direction.

**GUIDED TOUR OF THE PETRIFIED FOREST NATIONAL PARK:** The tour was conducted by Mr. Baiza.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, the meeting was adjourned until Monday, October 4, 2004, upon a **motion made by Mr. Thompson;** motion seconded by Mr. Shumway; vote unanimous approving the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

**APPROVED:**

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**Chairman**

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**Date**

**ATTEST:**

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**Kathy Hieb, Deputy Clerk**