



Maggie Toulouse Oliver
New Mexico Secretary of State

Linda Yardley - Taos Pueblo April Chavez – Santo Domingo Pueblo Arden Kucate - Zuni Pueblo
Amanda Tolino - Northern Agency Vacant - Eastern Agency Julie Bedonie - Ft. Defiance Agency
Annette Martinez - Jicarilla Apache Nation Eric Spitty - Mescalero Apache Tribe
Lisa LeFlore Davis - Ft. Sill Apache Tribe Vacant - Urban Native American

MINUTES

Meeting: Native American Voting Task Force Meeting
Date: January 14, 2021,
Time: 3:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Location: Tele-Conference Santa Fe, New Mexico

1. Call to Order and Welcome:

- Chairman Arden Kucate Time: 3:06pm

2. Roll Call

Arden Kucate - Present	Amanda Tolino - Present
Linda Yardley – Present	Julie Bedonie - Absent
April Chavez – Present	Annette Martinez – Present
Eric Spitty – Present	April Darrow – Present for Lisa Leflore Davis

3. Invocation: Linda Yardley Pledge of Allegiance: Maggie Toulouse Oliver

4. Approval of the September 17, 2020

Motion: Made by Linda Yardley to accept the minutes with all the changes being made.

Second: Made by April Chavez

Approved: All Members

Against: none, passed unanimously

5. Presentations:

A. NAVTF and NAVA 2020 GE Partnership Summary – NAEIP/NAVA Ed Project

Ahtza Chavez & Austin Weahkee. Only Ahtza present for the presentation

Ahtza: Greeted everyone on the meeting and thanked everyone and thanked Martin. She stated that both programs were able to collaborate well together and numbers do show that. It was incredibly challenging for this election to get folks out there to vote.

We were able to fulfill a lot of the deliverables we stated in the tool-kit that we were putting together and to initiate that partnership. Materials that we printed was provided to Martin and Task Force members to disseminate. NAVA were able to disseminate to tribal communities. In total we had 20,000 pieces that went out in the 2020 election get out to vote.

One of the main things that we coordinated together was the radio messaging in languages that communities spoke, some of the languages, Tewa, Northern Tiwa, Zuni, Navajo, and Mescalero Apache.

Called each of the polling locations to see when they are opened and the hours, based on that we created flyers 2 weeks prior to the election. Covid cases started to increase and we wanted to make sure that our tribal precincts had their PPE's and Information to stay open, began to see that some early voting locations were beginning to close, as well as election day location. We were able to work with the Task Force and the Secretary to be able to create a letter that we sent to the tribal leaders to let them know that the SB4 that was passed during the special session would let them have the privilege to have a polling location keep opened. Regionally and nationally got support to gain a huge amount of PPE's to make sure that our tribal communities had them. In total we had about 1500 masks, 7000 face shields and gallons of hand sanitizers were able to provide to communities and deliver them to Pueblo, Apaches and Navajo Tribes. We are able to work with a lot of partners. We met the need that we are hearing from the communities of how they are afraid of going to polling locations. We had a number that was set for the polling workers as well as others that needed the kit, able to give them a mask, hand sanitizer and a pin so they don't have to worry about any of those types of things. Thanked Maggie for getting things out there. Ahtza showed the flyers NAVA made which were disseminated. Worked together to get message out there, about drop off and ballot boxes, especially to Navajo locations. Didn't have numbers of people requesting absentee ballots which was due to legislation, not sending out automatic ballots to our communities, that's what brought the numbers down. Did robo calls towards the last 2 days of closing of requesting absentee ballots to a list of community members that are high percentage to request absentee ballots. Did ballot chase to where we know that a percentage of those absentee ballots were not returned and called them to remind them and shared where those locations are at. There was a higher percentage with Navajos that weren't returning their ballots. Recognized issues with county clerks as to how they are set up. Maggie has authority at certain times and other times she doesn't. She is a great ally for us. But if county clerks are not willing to work with us or work with our communities then that makes our job a lot harder. We need to put these on our positions on who we vote for and who might support in these types or areas. Created a messaging app and a tool-kit. (Showed the flyer on the screen) pointed out the table of contents for the tool-kit. We provided all the information to the Task Force and Martin. As we move forward and continue to work together is a good strategy, we are strong as an collective entity and as long as we continue to collaborate these messaging, it is a good collaboration. We had weekly meetings with all our stake holders in the coalition that we built, members of which are tribal leaders, tribal members administration. Started to hear that folks wanted to exercise their rights to vote, but they weren't able to leave their homes and they needed a way to vote. We were able to disseminate the information about affidavit to get that support for them, moving forward. In a large part we were able to come together to share and create those messaging to our communities which was very successful. From previous elections where

turn out ratio was not as high as what we had in this previous one. Although we were a little bit under the state which is 68% and tribally is was at 60%. In some elections we had a great turn out like President Obama's election we were still under the bench mark. Part of our need is to shelter our community from potential of another pass 4 years, you know who I mean. It created a lot of need for our community to make sure that they were able to get out to cast their votes. We would definitely love to continue to partner with the Task Force and try to mellow/merge our messaging. I don't know what the goals are for the Task Force. Here, NAVAED we already started working on our curriculum for the potential election for Deb Haaland's seat, municipal and with other elections. Would like to continue to partner with the Task force as we move forward on some of the education campaign for our communities. The last thing I wanted to say is that all of the work we did, this past election cycle really has set the stage for a bill that we are moving forward and that we are helping to lead this legislation session and that is a bill that will make permanent from some of the changes from SB4 from the special session. It's going to make sure that...the main protection is that it kept these tribal polling locations open and the fact that they were able to offer that voting space to tribal members and not have members come in from other communities. We know that closing polling locations had put our communities at a greater risk, because they are leaving a community and going to another community to vote and going back to their communities, this meant they were increasing their chances. When there was only one polling location left over with a possible that meant you were having everyone congregate and creating those longer lines. When you had lines for voting or dropping off absentee ballots then you had a longer lines to create a potential for people to catch this virus. We are going to be pushing this piece of legislation this legislation session. We have a draft ready and will be sharing with the task force, if your members is interested in helping to educate your stake holder's members on this particular bill.

Arden Kucate thanked Ahtza for her presentation.

Linda Yardley: commended NAVA and they work they did in a very short time. It was definitely important and thinks that this partnership can continue. She elaborated on having issues and problems with some of the county clerks.

Ahtza: replied that one of them just got re-elected, which is around the Farmington area. Made several calls but no answer/replies. Would like to make an organization against and converse about those particular areas and advocate a little bit more in terms of our votership.

Maggie Toulouse Oliver: Vied in on the part of the county clerks not cooperating and no support. Will talk more about this when it comes to her presentation, and will also speak on the legislation that Ahtza had mentioned.

Linda Yardley: Should have more discussion about accountability. Perhaps we make an memorandum of agreement between the Tribes and County Clerks.

April Chavez stated she has several points to make.

- The conversation about the County Clerks and our Tribal leadership.
- There was a debate in closing or keeping a polling location open in Santo Domingo and Cuba
- Commended NAVA for they work they did and the partnership happening right before the election was really good.
- Acknowledge the emotions that day, that presence was very much appreciated and the tribal community, tribal leadership was really grateful. Having that presence there as a community member and encouraging the community was really important.

Ahtza: Requested for everyone's address to share some bumper stickers and she showed them on the screen. Continued to express that she would like to have partnership with the Task Force and she was wanted to share the sticker template so that the Task Force members can make it for their communities. Be able to sit down with some of the members here and really create a strategic plan, as the people of color start to take over the majority instead of minorities and having that particular voice and being organize and know our communities have the ability to have the information that they all need to cast their vote is increasingly important.

Maggie Toulouse Oliver

- Thanked NAVA and her team in working with her office and a lot of other folks. We all made this happen, coming together and getting it done in a short time.
- A wonderful model, would like to continue but there are different rule.

Arden Kucate

- Agreed with Maggie Toulouse Oliver, blessed to collaborate this effort despite all that we got through this election due to combining other resources and effort of contributions.
- Successful of this collaboration and thanked all. Continue working together and strengthen that capacity.

Martin Aguilar

- Congratulated the Task Force, NAVA, and our program and with the blessing from Maggie Toulouse Oliver. Thanked her for the leadership in giving us this opportunity to partnership.
- Main points was working with former Task Force member Laurie Weahkee on the language radio spots. Getting in contact with our interpreters and accommodating them with recording device due to the radio stations being closed due to the pandemic.
- Hearing our language over the radio is very powerful. Materials created by NAVA were very successful and being able to share with all 23 tribes and the Task Force members.

B. 2020 GE Native American Precinct Turn-Out Report – NAEIP; Martin Aguilar & Helene Crosby

- Martin shared the Native American Precinct turn out numbers to all members and participates on the call.
- Explained the outcomes for all Tribes from the excel spread sheet that was used.
- Touch based on each Tribal Numbers in the New Mexico, all 23 Tribes and all Tribal precincts.

C. 2021 Legislative Session Up-Date; SOS Maggie Toulouse Oliver

- Suggested to stay in touch through the legislation session, it will be an unusual session. Will be gaveling in person. After that it will be virtual. At times legislators will come in in-person to vote.
- Have a pretty aggressive agenda on the voter access forum on the election forum front.
- Ahtza brought up the bill that I will help shepherd, get it off the ground. Representative Georgene Lewis will be sponsoring the bill. It will give protection like from SB4 that gave to our

tribal community in order to preserve to continue to conduct election even if the tribal authority decides that those community needs to be closed.

- Being a county clerk and making last minute changes is hard, having a procedure in place and having a basket with all the responsibility.
- Other bills related to election that aren't related to tribal communities, like an election code clean-up bill, statutes not aligning well and conducting elections. Another bill, felon voting removed. If you get out of jail you can vote if all criteria are met. Paying fees and fines is a whole tax.
- These are all the big ones.

Eric Spitty: What ever happen to the straight voting ticket, will it ever come back? Maggie replied it was written into state law and that would be an option, the election code got amended and it got take out and believe it was unintentional. In a way it made it back to the voting ballot even though it's not spell out in the election book.

Arden Kucate: It was a very successful endeavor and thank you for all your effort in looking out in the interest of Native Americans here in New Mexico.

6. Public Forum: members of public wishing to speak must request the Chairman to speak.

Peter Madelena: Thanked everyone for their hard work. We need to thank our leadership and get them involved and they are important. Get them involved during election times. Thanked Maggie for her support. Team work we can do a big thing, like to have everybody's support, the hard work and keep that going.

Helene Crosby:

- Shared her report on this past election in how she kept Navajo communities informed about the 2020 general election. She continued to work tribal communities by attending via-telephone chapter meetings. Pass out flyers to senior centers, chapters, tribal leaders and other programs to keep them informed and up to date.
- Thanked the Task Force members for attending this meeting and making the effort.
- Thanked Ahtza and her team/program for partnership with Task Force and it was successful
- She expressed to everyone to continue as a team.

Shirley Smith:

- Thanked the Task Force for letting her speak, thanked Maggie and her staff for being invited.
- Applaud NAVA and Task Force on their collaboration on disseminating information
- Touch based on cooperating with county clerks
- Coordinators are out there doing what they are doing, maybe causing a clashing with the county clerks.
- Poll official recruitment is a struggle with every election and it was the hardest this past election due to the pandemic.
- NAVA continue to collaborate they should inform the coordinators ahead of time about meetings.
- Your assistant, guidance helps to make this complete for our people
- Agree with Maggie about the notification from the tribe. The last minute to get the memorandum in place, it should be in place a year ahead. This time COVID happened.

Annette Martinez:

- Has a new assistance and he will be taking part when she can't attend these meetings. His name is Tyrel Largo

Amber Carrillo:

- Spoke on the 2020 General Election, mostly appreciated everyone. A very difficult election, but the effort and dedication is always displayed by us. Native Americans do have a great very interesting, strong, powerful in how decisions are made. This shows that...(went offline)
- Told everyone to be strong and thanked everybody again for their dedication to elections and campaigns.

April Chavez:

- Thanked everyone for being really honest and hearing all the challenges that we faced. Want to honor everyone's courage, resilience on an individual and community level.
- We are strong, stronger together. Honored to be part of this group and know that all my love and prayer are with you.
- Hope for this coming year for the Task Force we can honestly, share our war stories, strategize, thinking positively and there was a lot of things that we didn't see coming and we found ways to navigate all these challenges. Open to creating a discussions, maybe next meeting or in between meetings to strategize and Athza has a plan of attack or how did she say it.
- Have outlines from all these communities, regions, departments is really important because we are still in it. Maybe create a road map.
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Arden: Thanked April Chavez for the oversight and he encouraged the Task Force members to continue, looking at a strategic path and regrouping to see and re-evaluate and measuring the road map that we need to continue to stay on. It takes a lot of effort and obligations to keep this thing going and it's the only way we represent our interest of our Native communities.

7. Adjournment:

Motion by: Amanda Tolino at 5:00 pm

Second: made by Linda Yardley

Approved: all members

Against: none