

Joint Village Strategic Planning Meeting Notes
Tuesday, February 16, 2021
10 AM MST
Zoom Videoconference and Telephone

1. Call to Order—Cedric Kuwaninvaya, CSA, Upper Moenkopi Village

Cedric Kuwaninvaya called the meeting to order at 10:10 am.

2. Self-introductions

Attending the meeting included Cedric Kuwaninvaya, Le Roy Shingoitewa, Doris Honanie, Robert Sumatzkuku, Andrew Gashwazra, Lorna Quamahongnewa, and Brian Cole.

3. Recap of Previous Meeting

It was generally recognized that the meeting from the previous week was very well attended and very informative. Cedric Kuwaninvaya noted how appreciative the group was for the attendance of Jack Jackson Jr. from the Office of Congressman Tom O'Halleran, Luther Lee from the Office of Senator Kelly, and Josh Clause, the attorney/lobbyist for the Hopi Tribe.

After Kuwaninvaya's brief overview of the highlights of the previous meeting, a lengthy discussion ensued which served to update all of the attendees on the past activities of the JVSP effort and the immediate next steps ahead.

Le Roy Shingoitewa inquired as to the amount of discussion and review that was conducted in order to put together the budgetary request for the three villages. Mr. Shingoitewa stated, for example, that there may be some projects such as the landfill project that have had recent activities or progress that might impact the remaining funding requirements for such projects. The landfill project, for example, is coordinating with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) related to the relocation of the landfill. Mr. Shingoitewa also offered a high-level question related to the applicability of some of the other budgetary items. He also noted the lack of developable land at Upper Moenkopi Village with the exception of the lands control by the Moenkopi Developers Corporation.

Kuwaninvaya responded that, indeed, recent meetings had been held related to the future of the landfill. The village people, staff and leadership are adamant that the landfill be moved off of the Hopi reservation. Kuwaninvaya indicated that the BIA is preparing to respond to the recommendations from UMV.

Kuwaninvaya continued that he agreed that UMV lacked a land base for future growth and development. Kuwaninvaya indicated this was the reason why UMV is pursuing land at Range Unit 251 with the Hopi Tribe. Kuwaninvaya stated that this effort is underway although it has been slowed due to the impacts of Coronavirus. He is awaiting information from Land Information Services (LIS) related to this land request.

Kuwaninvaya continued that considerable work had been done to develop the budgetary needs for UMV, VML and YPC. Kuwaninvaya stated that they were trying further refine the budget in

late September/early October, but the Coronavirus has substantially impacted the ability to convene meetings and to have such deliberations.

Robert Sumatzkuku added that the landfill issue has been on the table since the late 1990s. He reiterated the statement by Kuwaninvaya that the people are adamant that they do not want the landfill on Hopi Land.

Brian Cole added that approximately 20 Zoom-based meetings took place in 2020 with good attendance from UMV, VML, and YPC to provide an updated budget listing of projects. Cole noted that it was generally agreed that the budget was “probably on the high side” but this would be addressed given the three-phased project and budget request. Budget estimates would be refined in phase one and the budget would be recalibrated for the last two phases.

Shingoitewa stated that he thought the group should continue to work on the Hopi Tribal Resolution to make sure some of the specific issues such as the repurposing of ONHIR were addressed. Cole indicated that he would review the draft resolution and provide an update. Shingoitewa also inquired as to the process that has been completed by the planners to reach out to grazing permit holders and others that might be impacted by the listing of projects.

Kuwaninvaya noted that UMV has recently coordinated with the Hopi Department of Natural Resources and has probably secured a \$150,000 commitment from the US Department of Energy to conduct an analysis of the engineering requirements and costs associated with repurposing the slurry line right-of-way to bring water from Water Well #9 to Moenkopi.

Shingoitewa indicated that he would be very willing to reach out to the leadership of the Villages and the Hopi Tribal Council to encourage positive movement on this effort.

There was some discussion about the utilization of the \$6 million that was split between UMV and VML. These are the funds known as the “Escrow Fund.” Shingoitewa noted that these were funds that were distributed from the Hopi Tribal Council in about 2010 to make sure that the funds benefited the ultimate intended beneficiaries – the people of VML and UMV.

Doris Honanie inquired as to the status of local support in the form of resolutions from UMV and VML. She stated that it was important that the local governing authorities be on record in support of the project if they were looking for support from the Hopi Tribal Council. Andrew Gashwazra noted that there had been a lot of local support and commitment from all three of the villages/community, as they have participated in strategic planning efforts and committed local funding for the planning process. Nonetheless, it was agreed that Brian Cole would create a draft village ordinance for consideration by all three participating villages/community.

Brian Cole did note that Building Communities has been paid for strategic plan development by UMV and VML. Cole noted that his JVSP strategic planning services for YPC were done at no cost. Gashwazra reminded the group of a 2018 joint resolution that was developed in support of the JVSP effort. No one could recall whether the resolution had actually been executed. Cole indicated he would refer to that 2018 resolution in the development of village-based resolutions.

Shingoitewa stated that we should all be mindful of the comment made by Philton Talahyewa at the previous meeting related to not stating that there was a “broken promise” by the federal government as it related to the Bennett Freeze. The correct terminology would be to refer to this as an investment strategy. Cole indicated he was reviewing documentation to make sure that the “broken promise” phraseology was removed.

Cole made note of the methodology that has been developed for both the Navajo Chapters and the Hopi Villages with respect to identifying projects and budgets. Cole indicated that the same planning process was put in place for both Navajo and Hopi. That is, this is all about developing sustainable economies. With the proper investment in infrastructure, housing, and economic development opportunities, great job creation and growth could occur at both Hopi and Navajo which could ultimately sustain the investments made. The project budgets were generated “from the ground up” recognizing such economic strategies and needed projects. There has never been a methodology that would yield an “equitable split of funding” between the two Nations. Rather, it is based upon the needs and opportunities as defined in the 13 Community and Economic Development Strategic Plans.

Kuwaninvaya updated the group on the approach made by the JVSP team to the Hopi Land Commission. This meeting, which took place in the fall of 2020, resulted in strong support from the Hopi Land Commission.

Lorna Quamahongnewa, who serves on the Board of Directors for the Assisted Living Facility, indicated that one important consideration is funding that historically has come from the Hopi Tribe to maintain critical facilities such as Assisted Living Centers and Senior Centers.

4. Other Business/Next Meeting

Brain Cole asked the group if it would be possible to pick a day and time of the week for reoccurring meetings. It was agreed by all attendees that all future meetings would be regularly scheduled at 10 am MST each Tuesday morning. Cole would distribute a regular agenda and Zoom link for every meeting.

5. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 pm MST.