

Sawmill Veterans' Organization

Commander Lenora Dez

Vice Commander Tanya Dooline

Secretary Christine Jesus-Begay

Sawmill Chapter

Sawmill, AZ

Meeting Minutes

Thursday November 13, 2025 (1300 hours)

1. Meeting Called to Order by Commander Lenora Dez at 1:13 pm
2. Invocation by: Leona Laughing
3. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence: All
4. Review and Adopt Agenda: Motion to Approve Agenda by Juantina Yazzie, 2nd by Leona Laughing with a vote of 11-0-1
5. Welcome and Opening Remarks:
 - A. Review of meeting objectives- Forms and Budgets
 - B. Introduce guests: NA
6. Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
 - Motion to approve minutes for October 01, 2025
 - Motion by: Leona Laughing 2nd by: Elvina Carl with a vote of 11-0-2

A. CORRECTIONS:

- Elvina H. Carl- there is a difference in the Uranium exposure, Down wind and Exposure. Down wind is when the water, air etc. source was released and contaminated the drinking water which can be passed down through generations. Exposure are the workers who worked in the mines and had direct contact.

7. Officers Reports:

A. Commander:

- Veterans Day Dinner on November 09, 2025, Dickey's Barbecue catered and we had a good turnout.
- Various Items donated by Cecelia Sandoval- Tanya, Ceceilia is a USAF Veterans from Pinetop, AZ who gathers donations and delivers to the Navajo Nation. She is also Navajo herself and usually contacts us Female Veterans to let us know that she has donations and usually brings up on her own but this time Commander drove down that same day to pick up donations. We still have a few items left in the Veterans Building if you want to take a look.
- 2/3 quotes for Food Baskets- 35 baskets, so far Commander Dez has received 2 quotes from Shop and Save and Gallup Food Pantry in Gallup, NM. We are working on getting a few more to make sure we have choices.



Sawmill Veterans' Organization

Commander Lenora Dez

Vice Commander Tanya Dooline

Secretary Christine Jesus-Begay

Sawmill Chapter

Sawmill, AZ

- Budget Transfer- Sawmill Chapter 16 Funds (Chapter Meeting) in the amount of \$2000.00 to food purchases for food baskets. The Chapter Meeting will be Monday November 17, 2025
- Dog Tags- where?
- Hogan- can we use funds to renovate the NAC Hogan? Dr. Nez has to get back to us.
- NNVA Budget= \$8,155.00 (Balance)
 - o Stipend- \$2,925.00
 - o Hardship- \$495.50
 - o Energy- \$734.50
 - o Self Help- \$4,000.00
- Sawmill Chapter 16 Funds= \$5710.40 (Balance as of 11/03/2025) Budget Transfer to be voted on at Sawmill Chapter Meeting on November 17, 2025.
 - o Food Purchases= \$2,000.00
 - o Gifts & Awards= \$3,710.40 Will ask which account we use to purchase food baskets for Veterans (35).
 - o \$5000.00 will be added to Chapter Funds. Ron will let us know when the funds come in.
- Legislation 0168-25 Codify CVOs and AVOs 180 days to deadline. The Agency Veterans Organization has 180 days to come up with a plan to be added into the NNC Title 2. We received email from our agency Commander Kyle Lewis, and he told us to stand fast as the Veterans' Advisory Committee is working on the plan.
- Agency Meeting on October 04, 2025, in Kin Dah Lichii' Chapter:
 - o Tom White Stepped Down as Agency Vice Commander and Patricia Burnside from Oak Springs Chapter was voted in.
 - o Grievance Process for FDAO members introduced by Kyle Lewis, AVO Commander.
 - o NNVA- Fallyn Begay VSO is taking appointments for VA claims.
 - o Check processing is being delayed due to staff training on new systems. Your patience is required.
 - o Housing- discretionary funds provided by Chapter House to pay fees following requirements by Chapter House policies and procedures.
- Contact List of current Sawmill Veterans- Working on contact list for our Sawmill Veterans.

B. Vice Commander:

Sawmill Veterans' Organization

Commander Lenora Dez

Vice Commander Tanya Dooline

Secretary Christine Jesus-Begay

Sawmill Chapter

Sawmill, AZ



- Native Intensive Clinical Program for Veteran and families. No cost, 7-day program.
- November 20, 2025, Talking Circle at the NNVA office in Window Rock. Lunch will be provided. 10 am to 12 pm.
 - Veterans Village- Tribute to Fallen Heros. Deadline is December 1, 2025.
 - NNVA Personal Loan Program- Loan Officer Jessica Shirley (505)371-8461
 - Commander brought Flyer and info for MEDICARE open Enrollment.
 - Fallyn Begay VSO is taking appointments for filing claims for Compensation, Pension, Surviving Spouse benefits. Her number is (928)871-7307
 - Annie Ayze- VBC AZDVS is in Window Rock on the 1st Wednesday of the month and takes walk ins. Also, for VA Benefits. Her number is (602)535-1215
 - NNVAC Work Session- November 17, 2025.
 - Veterans Building, pick from Army green or Khaki color. Interior will be Navajo White. Will need to ask about the bathroom and running water. May paint until the weather gets warmer.
 - Do have a few T-shirts and caps left.
- C. Secretary: Had to be excused to go back to work.

8. Open Floor / Member Feedback

- A. Dean Morgan- Flags for the Chapter house. Add to the American Flag, Arizona, Navajo Nation and a POW flag. Chapter House needs to build bigger. There was no flag raising in Window Rock this year. Commander Dez will bring the issue up at the next Chapter meeting, January Planning meeting.
- B. Laurita Begay- asked how many times we can get assistance through NNVA. Vice Commander Dooline went thru the NNVA forms, documents needed to register at the NNVA office in Window Rock and here at the Chapter House. We must register every year around June to be counted at the NNVA office and that is how the budgets are dispersed. Chapter house you must be a registered voter.
- C. Dean Morgan- Coal can someone get the coal for Veterans who do not have trucks? VC Dooline will ask Ronald and get back to you.
- D. Pellets- How many Veterans use pellets stoves? Can we buy pellets with the Veterans funds here at the chapter? Will ask Ron. If we can how many "pallets" How many do we get? 8-10?
- E. Food Distribution- will post locations on FB site and flyer at chapter.
- F. Franklin Francisco- can we have meetings on Wednesday or Fridays?

9. Action Items and Assignments

- - Coal Tickets and Wood issued by Chapter House see front office

Sawmill Veterans' Organization

Commander Lenora Dez

Vice Commander Tanya Dooline

Secretary Christine Jesus-Begay

Sawmill Chapter

Sawmill, AZ

- o - Holiday Food distribution at Window Rock High School on November 18, 2025
- o - Flu Shots and Medicare Open Enrollments
- o - No wood distributions until further notice from Chiz for Cheii, Lupton, AZ.

10. Closing Remarks and Next Meeting Date:

A. Sawmill Veterans Meetings Every Second Thursday of every month.

- Next Meeting: Wednesday December 10, 2025, at 1 pm

B. Ft. Defiance Agency Veterans' Meetings:

- Friday October 3, 2025, 9 AM Kin Dah Lichii Chapter
- January 09, 2026, 9 AM Oak Springs Chapter House
- April 03, 2026, 9 AM Mexican Springs Chapter House
- July 10, 2026, 9 AM Tohatchi Chapter House
- October 02, 2026, 9 AM Houck Chapter House

C. Motion for Adjournment by: Elvina Carl 2nd by: Mary Tom

Vote: 12-0-1