Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. and attendance was noted by the secretary.

Members Present

Tom Smith, Chair
Lynne Smith (for Bill Bell)
LeRoy Brady

Representative John Kavanagh
Lynn Favour
Jamie Hogue
Wellington Reiter

Members Absent

Senator Jake Flake
Thomas Chapman
Kevin DeMenna

Donald Keuth Jr.
David Richert

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Smith called for approval of the Minutes from the December 21, 2007 meeting and ordered the following corrections:

- Lynne Smith attended for Mr. Bell
- Accuracy and/or popularity of the statements on the Memorial, per GladysAnn Wells

Ms. Smith moved to approve the Minutes as corrected. The motion carried by a voice vote.

FINAL APPROVAL OF THE NAVAJO CODE TALKERS MONUMENT

Chairman Smith informed the committee members that this approval had been delayed due to some unresolved Department of Administration issues.

Nola Barnes, Building and Planning, Arizona Department of Administration (DOA), addressed the committee to recommend approval of the monument. She stated that the two pending issues have been resolved:

- lighting design
- construction costs to include pro bono and in-kind contributions
She stated that DOA recommends $24,000 for deposit into the State Monument and Repair Fund, based on construction costs of $160,500. She also outlined requirements which must be fulfilled before construction can begin (Attachment 1) and must be expedited in order to meet the February 28, 2008 date for dedication.

Chairman Smith asked if Ms. Laughter had been consulted; Ms. Barnes replied in the affirmative.

Sylvia Laughter, Navajo Code Talker Foundation, addressed the committee in favor of approval (Attachment 2). She explained the history of the Memorial and requested a waiving of the $24,000 maintenance fees in order to meet the February 28, 2008 dedication date, adding that the Foundation’s available funds were only $3,000 at this time.

Ms. Favour asked if Ms. Laughter’s group had the financial resources to complete the final construction documents for DOA. Ms. Laughter replied that her group would be able to do all the requirements but the $24,000 maintenance fees.

Chairman Smith asked for assurance that all the insurance and other contracts would be concluded before the February 28, 2008 date; Ms. Laughter stated that the requirements of the DOA would be met.

Peter McDonald, Navajo Code Talker, addressed the committee in favor of approval of the Monument. He stated that he joined the United States Marine Corps (USMC) in 1944 and was trained in the code, which had been in development and test since 1942. He stated that, at that time, there were more than 400 certified code talkers. He informed the committee that the code was not declassified until 1963, and that the service of the Code Talkers had, until then, been kept a secret from the country.

Ms. Smith asked the total amount collected by the Navajo Code Talker Foundation; Mr. McDonald replied that more than $200,000 has been raised, which was also used to fund the monument erected several years ago in Window Rock, Arizona.

Mr. Reiter inquired if there was special significance to the dedication date of February 28; Mr. McDonald explained that February 28, 1942, was the day the USMC first successfully communicated via the Navajo code and authorized the recruitment of 200 Navajos.

Clayton Lonetree, USMC, representing himself, testified in support of approval.

Joe Hart, Arizona State Mine Inspector, testified in support of approval.

Chairman Smith asked for and received Mr. Hart’s assurance that he will work with Ms. Laughter to meet the schedule identified by Ms. Barnes.

Representative Kavanagh stated his opinion that the maintenance fee should not prevent the dedication on February 28, 2008. He suggested, since the fee cannot be waived, that a fee of $1 be set for now and that a comprehensive plan for general maintenance be devised at a later date.
Ms. Smith concurred with Mr. Kavanagh, stating that DOA thought the maintenance monies were available and only now has learned that they are not.

Chairman Smith stated that the monuments are deeded to the State of Arizona, which is therefore responsible for maintenance, and that there have been thoughts about having corporations sponsor or fund maintenance costs. Mr. Reiter concurred that the committee should take a holistic approach to maintaining the Mall monuments.

Mr. Brady moved that the Navajo Code Talkers Monument be approved as recommended by the Arizona Department of Administration with the exception that the required deposit into the state Monument and Memorial Repair Fund be $1.

The items outlined in the Department of Administration summary letter (Attachment 1) must be addressed and completed by the Navajo Code Talker Foundation.

The motion carried by a voice vote.

Chairman Smith reiterated Mr. Hart’s involvement in assuring that the requirements are met in a timely manner.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

There was none.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

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Jane Dooley, Committee Secretary
January 18, 2008

(Original minutes, attachments and audio on file in the Office of the Chief Clerk; video archives available at http://www.azleg.gov/)