



NORTH CAROLINA COMMISSION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES March 04, 2026

Hilton North Raleigh-Midtown

Grand Ballroom – Salon CDE
3415 Wake Forest Road
Raleigh, North Carolina 27609

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Gregory Bryant, Chair, called the meeting to order at 09:56 a.m.

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST: The Chair welcomed everyone, acknowledged guests, Commission Members, Tribal Leaders, Chiefs, State Officials, and staff.

INVOCATION: Commissioner Tony Hayes recognized the Fallen Warriors who passed away this quarter and delivered the invocation. Commissioner Larece Hunt honored the memory of the late Mr. H. Dobbs Oxendine, former Commission Member, and the late Mrs. Rebecca Hillane Lambert, wife of former Commission Member Mr. Sam Lambert. A moment of silence was observed in their remembrance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Ms. Page Freeman, 2025-2026 Miss Indian North Carolina led the membership and guests in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Chairman Bryant requested that Ms. Daphne Pinto, staff member, to call the roll.

TRIBAL AND ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

Coharie	Ed Simermeyer	Present
Coharie	Lenora Locklear	Present
Cumberland County Association for Indian People	Harrison Jones	Present
Cumberland County Association for Indian People	Tina Dicke	Present
Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation	Michael Lambert	Present
Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation	Jarrett Crowe	Present via TEAMS
Guilford Native American Association	Perry L Hunt Jr.	Present
Guilford Native American Association	Amanda J Ballard	Present
Haliwa Saponi	Alfred Richardson	Present
Haliwa Saponi	P. Sunshine Richardson	Present
Lumbee	Larece Hunt	Present
Lumbee	Ricky Burnett	Present
Lumbee	Vernanda Oxendine	Present
Meherrin	Edward Livingston	Present



ROLL CALL *(Continued)*

Metrolina Native American Association	Walter D. Baucom	Present
Metrolina Native American Association	Greg Bryant	Present
Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation	Tony Hayes	Present
Sappony	Dorothy Yates	Present (Arrived late)
Triangle Native American Society	Danny Bell	Present
Waccamaw Siouan	Elton R. Jacobs	Present
Waccamaw Siouan	Nadine F. Patrick	Present

STATE OFFICIALS

President Pro Tem Appointee	Gerald Goolsby	Present
Speaker of the House Appointee	Craig D. McMillian	Present
Department of Administration (DOA), Gabriel J. Esparza, Secretary		
Designee: Noelle S. Talley, Deputy Secretary		
Designee: David Elliott, Deputy Secretary		Present
Department of Commerce/ ESC, Lee Lilley, Secretary		
Designee: Emily Roach, Director of Policy and Strategic Planning		
Designee: Betty Marrow-Taylor, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion		Present
Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), D. Reid Wilson, Secretary		
Designee: Jeff Hart, Environmental Justice Manager		Present
Department of Health & Human Services, DevDutta Sangvai, Secretary		
Designee: Debra Farrington, Deputy Secretary Health Equity		Present
Designee: Portia Pope, Acting Director, NCDHHS Office of Minority Health		
Department of Labor, Luke Farley, Commissioner		
Designee: Chris Bullard		Present
Department of Cultural Resources, Chris Southerly, Advisor,		
Ad hoc- Non-Voting Member		Absent
Designee: Rosie Blewitt, Assistant State Archaeologist and Site Registrar		

OTHER STATE OFFICIALS

Mark Teague, Attorney, NC Department of Justice	Present
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YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE

NCNAYO Kenly McLaurin (Co-Chair) - Non-Voting Member	Absent
Vacant (Co-Chair) – Non-Voting Member	Absent
NC NACOHE Thorn Grove - Non-Voting Member	Absent

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM: The Chair declared that a quorum was present; therefore, the meeting proceeded according to the agenda.

STAFF PRESENT

Gregory Richardson, Executive Director
Daphne Pinto, Administrative Secretary to the Executive Director
Stephen (Steve) Maynor, Program Director, Section 8 Housing Program
Elkton (Elk) Richardson, Program Director, State Recognition Program



Pamela (Shena) Brewington, Program Director, Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)

Maria Richardson, Program Director, Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program

Tenley (Nikki) Locklear, Program Director, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program

Laury Chavis, Program Director, Tobacco Survey Program

Ashley Patrick, Program Coordinator, Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program

Sonya Lang, Grants Administrator

OTHERS PRESENT: A list of attendees is on file with the Commission.

ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA: The Chair requested a motion to adopt the agenda.

MOTION: Commissioner Tony Hayes made that motion. Commissioner Sunshine Richardson seconded the motion. The agenda was approved with no amendments or objections. Motion carried.

ETHICS STATEMENT: Director Richardson read the Ethics Statement on Behalf of Chairman Bryant and urged Commission Members to declare any conflicts of interest or any appearances of any conflicts of interest that may exist in relation to any matters before the Commission, as mandated by the State Ethics Act. No conflicts were noted.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 05, 2025, MEETING MINUTES: December 05, 2025, minutes were presented for adoption.

MOTION: Commissioner Gerald Goolsby moved to approve the minutes of December 05, 2025. Commissioner Alfred Richardson seconded the motion. The Chair asked whether there were any objections to the motion. None was noted. The motion was approved.

GUEST PRESENTATION:

Welcome from the Triangle Native American Society, the local Urban Indian Association in the Raleigh area.

Ms. Wanda Burns-Ramsey, President of the Triangle Native American Society, provided the formal welcome to attendees of the Raleigh area for the Commission's Quarterly Meeting, being held in conjunction with the 51st North Carolina Indian Unity Conference.

Key Highlights:

- Ms. Burns-Ramsey recognized the significance of the Commission's role, the importance of unity among North Carolina tribes and urban Indian organizations, and the broader significance of recent federal recognition of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

UNC Pembroke Presentation - Indigenous Oral History Project

Ms. Sheena Holdbrook, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, provided an overview of the Indigenous History Project.

Key Highlights:



- A PowerPoint presentation included *Pembroke Farms: Reclaiming Lumbee Identity* – Research initiative involving 1930's photographs of Indigenous individuals in and around Roxie, Pennsylvania.
- Metadata correction and community identification of individuals and places represented in archival materials. Commissioners were encouraged to share project information with their communities.

Supporting Documentation

A handout on the Reclaiming Lumbee Identity: An Interactive Exhibit was provided and is on file with the Commission.

DEQ Presentation: Energy Saver North Carolina Program Overview and Update
Mr. Francisco Martínez-Márquez, Environmental Program Consultant, and Ms. Brittny Holden, State Energy Office, at the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ). Their presentation included a PowerPoint titled "Energy Saver North Carolina Program," covering program scope, funding, eligibility, and partnership opportunities.

Key Highlights:

- **Program Overview:** Program supports income-eligible homeowners and renters with energy-efficiency and home electrification upgrades.
- **Total program funding:** \$208 million available through 2031 or until fully obligated.
- **Program Objectives:**
 - Reduce utility costs for qualifying households
 - Improve residential energy performance and comfort
 - Advance clean-energy adoption in communities
 - Support economic growth and workforce development
- **Eligible Improvements:** Include heat pump HVAC systems, insulation, duct sealing, air sealing/weatherization.
- **Additional Rebate Options:** Heat pump water heaters, electrical panel upgrades, wiring improvements.
- **Financial Structure:** Includes upfront rebates for approved energy-efficiency upgrades.
- **Contractor Eligibility Requirements:** Installations must be completed by registered, program-approved contractors.
- **Program Timeline:** Program launches January 2025 with implementation planned through 2031.
- **Identified Collaboration Areas:** Outreach coordination, technology resource sharing, contractor network integration.
- **Key Resources Shared:**
 - Website: energysavernc.org
 - Customer inquiries: energysavernc@aptim.com
 - Contractor inquiries: contractors@energysavernc.org

Supporting Documentation

A hard copy of the PowerPoint presentation along with the flyer, distributed during the meeting, are maintained on file with the Commission.



Presentation: US Census Preparations and Data Access – Mr. John Quintero
Mr. John Quintero, Governor’s Census Liaison with the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM), provided an overview of statewide preparations for the upcoming Census.

Key Highlights:

Noted the State’s coordinated strategy to ensure a complete and accurate census count.

- Ongoing collaboration with federal agencies, local governments, community organizations, and other stakeholders.
- Reviewed key milestones in the preparation timeline, including outreach activities, data verification efforts, and interagency planning.
- Various forms of federal and state aid are awarded on a population basis.
- The 2020 Census was challenged due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Census data is based on race and ethnicity.

Discussed tools and resources that will be available for accessing Census data once released.

- Emphasized the importance of Census data for state and local decision-making, resource allocation, program development, and long-term planning.
- Noted OSBM’s role in supporting data users through guidance, technical assistance, and curated data platforms to help agencies and partners interpret and apply Census information effectively.
- The Census data is protected.

No handout was provided.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS:

- The Commission discussed the importance of Census 2030 preparation, including current federal geographic review, and boundary-related programs that will affect future counts. Members discussed the direct relationship between accurate counts, representation, and future funding for American Indian communities.
- Questions were raised about how Native identity is captured in census data, including concerns about tribal specificity, enrollment distinctions, urban Indian populations, and the need for outreach and training to improve enumeration accuracy.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Executive Director’s Report

Mr. Greg Richardson, Executive Director of the NC Commission of Indian Affairs, presented the Executive Director’s Report. The report was included in the Board packet sent to the Commission before the meeting.

He expressed condolences regarding the death of the Late Mr. H. Dobbs Oxendine and the Late Mrs. Rebecca Hillane Lambert. Mr. Richardson recognized and expressed his gratitude to the late Mr. H. Dobbs Oxendine, a former Commission Member, for his distinguished service and advocacy for Indigenous people during his time on the Commission. He also expressed condolences to the family of Mrs. Rebecca Hillane Lambert, wife of former Commission Member Sam Lambert, for her long career in nursing and her service on the Cherokee Indian Hospital Board in Cherokee, NC.



Mr. Richardson provided the Division update as follows:

Key Highlights

- Reported the historic federal recognition of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina as the 575th federally recognized tribe in the United States, acknowledging strong local leadership, which resulted in that success! He noted that he is initiating a process to update the Commission's website and related materials to reflect that the Lumbee Tribe is now federally recognized.
- He announced that a Recognition Reception was hosted by Governor Josh Stein at the Governor's Mansion on February 24, 2026, to commemorate the federal recognition of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.
- Provided an update on the Catawba Nation's petition for state recognition and the State Recognition Committee's work associated with that petition.
- Commented on the importance of State recognition, provided a summary of NC General Statute Chapter 71A, and how that legislation enables the Commission and the state-recognized tribes to tap into such programs as Workforce Development, Indian Housing, and Indian Education. Without state recognition, these programs would not be available to our tribes.
- Explained the purpose and scope of U.S. Census Tribal Designated Statistical Areas (TDSAs). It authorizes the tribes to designate their specific geographic area, from which specific data is collected and tabulated by the US Census, every 10 years.
- Announced upcoming Spring 2026, the 2030 U.S. Census–Tribal Relations Office will be conducting Virtual Talking Circles, to get input from tribes regarding the US Census.

Operational Highlights

Updates included:

- 2026 Indian Legislative Day at the NC General Assembly
- Impacts of the Fall 2025 Federal Shutdown
- Section 8 Program Audit
- Haliwa-Saponi Public Water Crisis

Upcoming Events

Preparations underway for:

- 2026 NC Indian Unity Conference
- 2026 Indian Child Welfare Gathering
- 2026 Indian Economic Development Symposium
- Ongoing collaboration with the NC Department of Transportation

Additional Updates

- Announced Year 2 funding for the FVPSA Grant.
- Announced the reposting of the Deputy Director and Economic Development Director positions.

Commission Appointments

Noted upcoming vacancies:

- NC Indian Housing Authority: 1 vacancy
- State Advisory Council on Indian Education (SACIE): 4 vacancies

Upcoming Meetings

- Announced dates for future Commission meetings, locations forthcoming.



Closing

- Mr. Richardson concluded by reaffirming the agency's continued commitment to supporting and advancing American Indian communities across North Carolina.

Supporting Documentation

The Executive Director's Report is filed and constitutes an official part of the meeting minutes.

ACTION ITEM

Mr. Greg Richardson recommended that the Commission adopt his report.

MOTION

Commissioner Sunshine Richardson moved to approve the Executive Director's Report.

Commissioner Alfred Richardson seconded the motion. The Chair asked whether there were any objections to the motion. None was noted. The motion was approved.

COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS (Action Items Only)

American Indian Culture & Religion Committee:

The handout of the American Indian Culture and Religion Committee meeting minutes, dated February 3, 2026, was included in the Board packet for members to review.

Committee Chair, Danny Bell, presented the following recommendations:

ACTION #1:

Inviting Mr. Harlan Chavis to attend a future Commission meeting to briefly present his role, responsibilities, and collaborative opportunities. He will be added as an ad hoc member of the committee.

ACTION #2:

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

To invite Dr. Chris Southerly, Director of the NC Office of State Archaeology, to present the following:

- NAGPRA provisions for state-recognized tribes.
- The role of the Office of State Archaeology.
- Ongoing archaeological activities in North Carolina.
- Establishing periodic updates at the Commission meetings.

ACTION #3:

Pledge of Allegiance and Commission Reaffirmation. Mr. Bell recommended adding a brief "Commission Pledge" or reaffirmation statement to reflect the following:

- Reaffirm commitment to serving tribes and organizations.
- Emphasize responsibility to Native communities.
- Provide a visible reminder of service and accountability.

Committee Chair Bell noted that the language draft will be submitted to the Commission members for feedback, and the recommendation will be brought back to the full Commission as an action item at a future meeting.

MOTION:



- Mr. Greg Bryant, Chair, noted that the recommendation from the Committee does not need a second. The chair asked whether a discussion was needed.
- Mr. Greg Bryant, Chair, asked members to say “Aye” if they were in favor of the motion. With the Ayes being the majority. The motion was carried.

Supporting Documentation

The handout of the American Indian Culture and Religion Committee Meeting Minutes dated February 3, 2026, is on file at the Commission.

American Indian Housing:

Committee Chair, Harrison Jones, presented the following item for discussion.:

He read a letter on behalf of the Cumberland County Association for Indian People (CCAIP).

ACTION:

Committee Chair Jones recommended that the Commission provide a letter of support for the Cumberland County Association for Indian People (CCAIP) Behavioral Health Center Initiative.

MOTION – VOICE VOTE:

- Commissioner Ed Simermeyer moved to approve the request for a letter of support for the CCAIP Behavioral Health Center Initiative.
- Commissioner Gerald Goolsby seconded the motion.
- Mr. Greg Bryant, Chair, asked members to say “Aye” if they were in favor of the motion. Two members, Commissioner Elton Ray Jacobs and Commissioner Debra Farrington, abstained. With the Ayes being the majority. The motion was carried.

Supporting Documentation

The letter from the Cumberland County Association for Indian People (CCAIP) is on file at the Commission.

Ad Hoc American Indian Health Sub-Committee (Victim Services): No Report

Committee Chair Bryant requested a letter of commitment expressing support for Trillium Health Resources to collaborate with the NC ROOTS Lead Hub, Region 4. He indicated that Ms. Kay Freeman will take the lead on this initiative. This item does not require action at this time. Chair Bryant further directed staff to coordinate with Trillium Health regarding this request.

American Indian Education Committee:

Committee Chair, Michael Lambert, provided a brief overview of his committee meeting. and indicated that there is an action item to present.

ACTION #1:

State Advisory Council on Indian Education (SACIE) Vacancies – 2026

Committee Chair Lambert presented the following recommendation for the upcoming vacancies at the State Advisory Council on Indian Education (SACIE). The term begins July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027.

State Advisory Council on Indian Education (SACIE) Nominees for FY 2026-2027 are as follows:



- Candice Revels; 2nd term; Educator; Cumberland County Association for Indian People (CCAIP); Application Complete.
- Sheri Herndon; 1st term; Educator; Lumbee; Application Complete
- Mercedes Lanier; 1st term; Educator; Coharie; Application Complete
- Philip Harley; 1st term; Parent; Haliwa-Saponi; Application Complete
- Donya Edwards; 1st term; Parent; Coharie; Application Complete

MOTION – VOICE VOTE:

- Mr. Greg Bryant, Chair, noted that the recommendation from the Committee does not need a second. The chair asked whether a discussion was needed.
- Mr. Greg Bryant, Chair, asked members to say “Aye” if they were in favor of the motion. With the Ayes being the majority. The motion was carried.

Supporting Documentation

The handout of the Education Committee meeting minutes dated February 20, 2026, along with the Action Item on SACIE Nominations, are on file with the Commission.

ACTION #2:

Tribal Consultation Committee Support Letter

Committee Chair Lambert made a recommendation that the Commission provides a letter of support to the Tribal Consultation Committee, regarding concerns about federal Title VI/ Indian education program potential changes, to the US Department of Education (USDOE) impacting all state-recognized tribes and urban Indian organizations Education program funding, ensuing from a proposal to move these programs from the Department of Education to the US Department of the Interior (USDOI) and to the US Department of Labor (USDOL).

No handout was provided.

MOTION – VOICE VOTE:

- Commissioner Gerald Goolsby moved to approve the request for a letter of support to the Tribal Consultation Committee regarding the continuation of Indian education funding and the protection of state-recognized tribes during the federal transition of these programs.
- Commissioner Danny Bell seconded the motion.
- Mr. Greg Bryant, Chair, asked members to say “Aye” if they were in favor of the motion. With the Ayes being the majority. The motion was carried.

OTHER RELATED BUSINESS ITEM: (Continuation of the AI Ed Committee Report)

Pass-Through Grants:

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS:

- Members asked clarifying questions. Discussion ensued on pass-through grants.
- Mr. Greg Richardson requested Committee Chair Lambert to contact Mr. Jarred Lowry regarding the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Conference in Seattle.



- Question was addressed on intertribal support across state and federally recognized tribes. Will Cherokee, Lumbee, and Catawba be able to fund the state-recognized tribes through pass-through grants?
- Committee Chair Lambert noted that he was unsure about this matter.

American Indian Child Welfare Sub-Committee Update

Committee Chair Lambert invited **Ms. Laury Chavis, Program Director for Indian Child Welfare (ICW)**, to provide a brief update as follows:

- Indian Child Welfare Gathering, March 17, 2026, at Campbell University, Buies Creek, NC. She requested that everyone register for the event to get an accurate head count.

No handout was provided.

LUNCH BREAK

Chair Bryant announced the lunch break at noon. Commission Member Rev. Ricky Burnett blessed the food. The meeting was reconvened at 12:31 p.m.

COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS (*Continued*)

Economic Development & Employment Committee

Environmental Justice

Agriculture

Committee Chair, Craig McMillian, provided an overview of recent initiatives. A handout was provided for members to review and follow along with the presentation. The following was discussed.

Key Highlights:

Workforce Development and Economic Progress

- Update on workforce training programs at Robeson Community College: 15 participants completed training, 14 received job offers.
- Track workforce training program outcomes.

Agriculture and Tribal Trade Route Revitalization

- Initiatives to support tribal producers to improve market access for agriculture and craft products.
- Focus on creating aggregation hubs, cooperative marketing systems, distribution networks, and logistics coordination.
- Encourage tribal producers to register on the state farm website for program participation.

Environmental Justice and Water Quality

- Committee engagement with environmental advocates and riverkeepers.
- Discussion regarding groundwater contamination, identify concerns regarding PFAS contamination.
- Indicated that access to clean drinking water should be recognized as a priority for public health and environmental justice reasons!
- Advocacy for monitoring, litigation strategies, infrastructure upgrades, and funding for remediation efforts.
- Discussed the need to monitor water quality in Indian Communities.



- Discussed the need to coordinate with DEQ and community stakeholders on remediation efforts.
- Discussed the need to advocate for funding and remediation/policy measures to ensure safe drinking water.
- It was noted that information regarding water quality and landfill updates will be brought back to the full Commission at the June 5, 2026, meeting.

Business Symposium and Economic Engagement

- Update on funding balance was provided.
- It was noted that approximately \$8000 was received in donations; the funds will be used at the upcoming September 2026 Business Symposium. Location to be determined.

ACTION

Committee Chair McMillian recommended planning a Business Symposium in September 2026, and will be using the donated funds of approximately \$8000 for the event.

MOTION – VOICE VOTE:

- Commissioner Gerald Goolsby moved to approve the recommendation to utilize the donated funds of approximately \$8000 at the upcoming September Business Symposium event.
- Commissioner Tony Hayes seconded the motion.
- Mr. Greg Bryant, Chair, asked members to say “Aye” if they were in favor of the motion. With the Ayes being the majority. The motion was carried.

OTHER RELATED BUSINESS ITEM: (Continuation of the ED, EJ, and Ag Committee Report)

- WIOA Program Update
- Staffing and Operational Capacity
- Priorities and Next Quarter

Supporting Documentation

The handout of the Economic Development/Environmental Justice/Agriculture Committee report presented at the meeting is maintained on file with the Commission.

State and Federal Recognition Committee

Committee Chair, Perry Hunt, provided an overview of the state recognition petitions. He addressed the Commission, noting that he represents the Guilford Native American Association on the Commission.

Committee Chair Hunt provided an overview of the Recognition Committee’s report. He highlighted ongoing work related to both state and federal tribal recognition processes. Handouts were distributed at the meeting so that Commission members could follow along as he made his presentation. The following was discussed:

Program Activities

Key Highlights:

- Lumbee Tribe gained the distinction of being the 575th federally recognized tribe in the United States.



- New River Catawba – No Change
- Roanoke-Hatteras Indian Tribe of Dare County, NC – No Change
- Catawba Nation of South Carolina, all documentation is in order. Details are listed in the Tribal Recognition Program Quarterly Report.
- Public Hearing on the Catawba Nation’s Petition is scheduled for March 18, 2026. This is a hybrid meeting (In-Person and Virtual) open to the public. Public Comments will be noted, and the final recommendation will be brought back to the full Commission.
- Mr. Mark Teague, Attorney, NC Department of Justice, provided a brief overview of the Administrative Rules. He noted that the Commission's action will be published on the Department of Administration (DOA) website, as part of the rule-making process.

Supporting Documentation

Handouts of the Recognition Committee meeting minutes dated December 10, 2025, January 28, 2026, February 17, 2026, and the Tribal Recognition Program Quarterly Report distributed at the meeting and are on file at the Commission.

Veterans Affairs Sub-Committee

- **2026 American Indian Veteran Awards Ceremony:**
The Veteran awards will be presented during the 2026 Indian Unity Conference banquet, scheduled for Friday, March 6, 2026, at the Hilton North Raleigh in Raleigh, North Carolina.

No handout was provided for this item.

Legislative Committee

Legislative Agenda Discussion: 2026-2027

Committee Chair, Tony Hayes, presented this report.

Key Highlights:

- Noted that the Legislative Committee met on February 25, 2026, via Microsoft TEAMS. Committee Chair Hayes provided a brief overview of that meeting. A handout was provided for informational purposes.
- He indicated that a Legislative Meet and Greet session will be held tomorrow, March 5, 2026, at the Indian Unity Conference, Hilton North Raleigh Hotel, to provide tribal leaders with an opportunity to meet with key legislators and invited Commission members to attend.
- Clear communication of funding needs should be echoed to legislators during the Meet and Greet session; however, it is also important for commission members to visit their legislators regularly and develop relationships, as that is how the political process works. Out of sight—Out of Mind!
- Encouraged collective strategies.

Supporting Documentation

The Legislative Committee meeting minutes, dated February 25, 2026, presented at the meeting, are maintained on file at the Commission.



SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTATION

NC Department of Administration (NCDOA) Secretary: *(This item is not listed on the agenda)*

Chair Bryant welcomed Secretary Gabriel Esparza of the NC Department of Administration (NCDOA).

Remarks by Secretary Gabriel Esparza

- Secretary Esparza expressed appreciation to Commission leadership, members, and DOA staff.
- Highlighted the Lumbee federal recognition celebration and its statewide significance.
- Noted the General Assembly will reconvene on April 21 and encourage early legislative engagement.
- Advised refining Legislative Committee priorities, clarifying when members speak for the Commission, and scheduling meetings to advocate for approved items.
- Reported that funding has been restored for all Commission programs except for the USDA funding.
- Reaffirmed his commitment to ongoing engagement and visits with tribes across North Carolina.

NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Presentation: *(This item is not listed on the agenda)*

Chair Bryant welcomed Ms. Tonya Smith, Senior Director of the NC Department of Transportation.

Ms. Tonya Smith, Senior Director, Office of Economic Opportunity and Compliance-Historically Underutilized Business Program (formerly Office of Civil Rights), North Carolina Department of Transportation, provided updates on departmental initiatives:

Key Highlights:

- Office of Economic Opportunity and Compliance / Historically Underutilized Business Program (formerly Office of Civil Rights) expansion.
- Community outreach and engagement targeting tribal communities.
- Review of land use policies, project funding, and infrastructure development in tribal areas.
- Importance of cultural recognition in infrastructure: tribal signage, road naming, and other markers.
- Compliance with Title VI, addressing disparities in transportation services.
- Workforce development initiatives with a focus on tribal representation and reducing vacancy rates.

Discussion:

- Members were encouraged to include transportation priorities in legislative agendas.
- Emphasis on developing a collective strategy to address infrastructure, cultural recognition, and community engagement.
- Coordinate with NCDOT to develop a tribal representation strategy for infrastructure and workforce development.
- Research and address community safety, public transportation, and rail line concerns.

No handout was presented.



OTHER BUSINESS ITEMS:

Flower Fund Report

Commissioner Nadine Patrick, Secretary/Treasurer, presented the Flower Fund report as follows:

Key Highlights:

Membership Dues

- **Deposit:** \$292, as of December 5, 2025.
- **Expense:** One purchase was made following this deposit.
- **Total Balance:** \$636, as per February 2026 Bank Statement.
- **Purpose:** The Flower Fund is designated to support Commission members and their families during times of illness or bereavement.
- **Annual Dues:** Members were reminded that the annual contribution is \$24 per person, per year.
- **Method of Payment:** Accepted payment methods include credit card, check, cash, or Cash App. The check needs to be made out to Nadine Patrick/Special Account, as required by the Bank.
- **Closing:** Appreciation was expressed for timely dues payments, and members were encouraged to continue submitting dues regularly. Commissioner Patrick confirmed that the information presented reflects the current account and operational status.

No handout was provided for this item.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS:

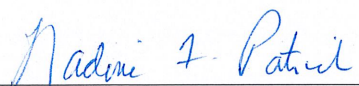
- Commission members announced their upcoming events.

CLOSING PRAYER:

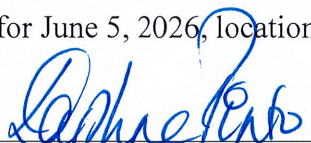
Chair Bryant requested Commissioner Rev. Ricky Burnett to lead the membership in a closing prayer.

ADJOURNMENT:

- There being no further business, Chair Bryant requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.
- Commissioner Elton Ray Jacobs motioned to adjourn, and Commissioner Perry Hunt seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- The meeting adjourned at 1:34 pm.
- The next Commission meeting is scheduled for June 5, 2026, location to be announced.



Nadine F. Patrick, Secretary-Treasurer
NC Commission of Indian Affairs
(Sign & Date)

 6-5-26

Daphne Pinto, Recording Secretary
(Sign & Date)



These minutes were approved by the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs on June 5, 2026.

Nadine F. Patrick

Nadine F. Patrick, Secretary-Treasurer
NC Commission of Indian Affairs
(Sign & Date)



**N.C. COMMISSION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
QUARTERLY COMMISSION MEETING**

Hilton North Raleigh - Midtown

Grand Ballroom - Salon CDE
3415 Wake Forest Road, Raleigh, NC 27609

March 4, 2026

9:30 am to 1:30 pm

DRAFT AGENDA

Held in conjunction with the 51st NC Indian Unity Conference, March 4-7, 2026

Opening Session	9:30 am
Welcome and Call to Order	Mr. Greg Bryant, Chairman
Introduction of the Guest	Chairman Bryant
Invocation	Tony Hayes, Commission Member
Pledge of Allegiance	Page Freeman, 2025-2026 Miss Indian North Carolina
Roll Call and Adoption of the Agenda (Please Say - Present and Agree)	Daphne Pinto, Administrative Assistant
Presentation of Ethics Statement	Gregory Richardson, Executive Director
Presentation and Approval of December 05, 2025, Meeting Minutes	Chairman Bryant
Guest Presentation: (Please be brief-10 minutes maximum)	10:00 am
Welcome from the Triangle Native American Society	Wanda Burns-Ramsey, President, Triangle Native American Society
Special Presentations	
Indigenous Oral History Project	Sheena Holdbrook, University of North Carolina at Pembroke
Energy Saver Program Overview and Update	Francisco Martínez-Márquez, Environmental Program Consultant Brittney Holden, Outreach & Engagement Specialist State Energy Office North Carolina Dept. of Environmental Quality
Census Preparations & Data Access	John Quintero Governor's Census Liaison Office of State Budget & Management
Business Items:	11:00 am
Executive Director's Report, Briefing (Highlights Only) Staff Quarterly Program Reports (Included in meeting packet)	Director Richardson

Commission Committee Reports *Committee Reports with Action Items Only	11:30 am
American Indian Culture and Religion Committee	Danny Bell, Chair
American Indian Housing -NC Indian Housing Authority Appointment (1 vacancy for 2026)	Harrison Jones, Chair
American Indian Health Committee (Victim Services)	Chairman Bryant
American Indian Education Committee/ American Indian Child Welfare Subcommittee 2026 State Advisory Council of Indian Education (SACIE) Appointments	Dr. Michael Lambert, Chair
WORKING LUNCH	12:00 Noon
Blessings of the food	Rev. Ricky Burnett, Commission Member
Economic Development & Employment Committee Agriculture	Craig McMillian, Chair
State and Federal Recognition Committee Update Veterans Affairs Subcommittee - Update	Perry Hunt, Chair
Legislative Committee Legislative Agenda Update 2026-2027	Tony Hayes, Chair
Other Business Items	
Flower Fund Report	Nadine Patrick, Secretary / Treasurer, NC Commission of Indian Affairs
Announcements (Items from Commission Members)	
Convening of the 2026 NC Indian Unity Conference- 2:00 pm Hilton North Raleigh - Midtown 3415 Wake Forest Road, Raleigh, NC 27609 March 4-7, 2026	Chairman Bryant
Upcoming 2026 Commission Meetings: Meeting Sponsors Requested • June 5, 2026 – Location to be announced • September 4, 2026 – Location to be announced • December 4, 2026 – Location to be announced New Commission Website: Commission members are encouraged to review our new website at: https://www.doa.nc.gov/boards-commissions/commission-indian-affairs	
Closing Prayer	Rev. Ricky Burnett, Commission Member
Adjournment	1:30 pm