LUMBEE TRIBE OF NORTH CAROLINA

Tribal Council Business Meeting

Summary of Proceedings — Thursday, September 17, 2026

Meeting Called to Order: Speaker, Alex Baker

Invocation by Councilman Harold Smith

Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Homer Fields

Preamble read by Councilman Larry Chavis.

Roll call by Councilwoman Chocajuana Oxendine, confirmed a quorum.

The Speaker read the ethics and conflict-of-interest statement under Ordinance 2010-0312-01.

Election board members and Admin Court staff were recognized as guests.

The agenda was amended to add a presentation by the new clinic providers and to allow a blanket vote on the Boys & Girls Club items, requested by Larry Chavis.

The agenda and the prior minutes were both approved.

Council Members Present at Roll Call: 18

Billy Oxendine

Harold Smith

Jody Bullard

Larry Chavis

Rubalena Locklear

Kathy Hunt

Johnny Bell

Bobby Emanuel

Chocajuana Oxendine

Josephine Doss

Alex Baker

Homer Fields

Sharon Hunt

Nanci Locklear

Mary Locklear

Larry Soles

Rudy Locklear

Eric Chavis

Health & Human Services — Jody Bullard

Two landmark ordinances, both described by the Speaker as historic.

CLLO-2026-0917-01 — Lumbee Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)

Establishes a formal tribal process for child welfare notice, enrollment verification, family searches, placement recommendations, and culturally grounded permanency planning, together with an advisory committee to advise tribal leaders and coordinate with county DSS, courts, schools, and other child-serving agencies. Passed by roll call vote. Framed as the Tribe exercising its newly recognized federal rights.

CLLO-2026-0917-02 — Clean Water Fundamental Rights Declaration

Declares clean water a constitutionally protected fundamental right of the Lumbee people, building on CLLR-2026-0820-03, the August 20 PFAS resolution. Key points:

- This is the first fundamental right adopted in the 25-year history of the tribal constitution.
- Under Article 8 §1B, the Chairman cannot veto it — he must certify it within 10 days, after which it goes to the Board of Elections and then to a referendum of the people.
- If ratified, Council must adopt implementing legislation within 180 days.
- Expressly preserves sovereign immunity and does not prohibit responsible economic development.

General Counsel Josh Malcolm, answering questions from Rudy Locklear, explained the ordinance is less an enforcement tool today than a long-horizon shift: it obligates the administration to weigh clean water in every policy and programmatic decision, and puts the county, the Town of Pembroke, and other sovereigns on notice. He noted that standards and regulations have not yet been developed, and that legal standing would be the hurdle in any future action. He also cited a recent Fifth Circuit ruling holding that clean water is not a fundamental right in that circuit. Passed by roll call vote.

Finance — Nancy Locklear

Boys & Girls Clubs (CLLR-2026-0917-01 through -07)

Approved by blanket voice vote. $20,000 each in OJJDP 2025 Mentoring in Native America funds for: Pembroke, Hawkeye Sands, Southern Spirit, Two Strings, Scotland County, Four Winds, and First Nations.

CLLR-2026-0917-08 — Continuing Resolution

Extends the FY2025-26 budget from October 1 through October 31, 2026. Amended on counsel's recommendation to add two provisions: all vacant positions remain vacant until a budget passes, and no salary adjustments or departmental transfers. Counsel clarified that the grants approved that night are not subject to the continuing resolution. Passed by roll call vote.

Grant budget ordinances — all passed

Ordinance	Program	Amount
CLLO-2026-0917-03	Duke Energy Foundation — vocational rehabilitation / workforce	$10,000
CLLO-2026-0917-04	Harm Reduction (NC DHHS via Trillium), year 2	$50,000

Ordinance	Program	Amount
CLLO-2026-0917-05	NIH ICRISP substance misuse research, year 3	$634,721.14
CLLO-2026-0917-06	Transportation Services (Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC)	$15,000
CLLO-2026-0917-07	Youth RISE (SAMHSA), year 1 of 5	$311,845
CLLO-2026-0917-08	ICWA Program Budget (Healthy Blue)	$230,000
CLLO-2026-0917-09	HUD Indian Housing Block Grant — Competitive	$4,607,996
CLLO-2026-0917-10	Strengthening Tribal Education Partnerships (STEP), yr 1 of 3	$381,545.85
CLLO-2026-0917-11	Native producers / intertribal food system (NAAF)	$241,595.28

Notes: the NIH award brings total ICRISP funding to roughly $1.81 million. Youth RISE will create a tribal prevention coalition and a Lumbee Youth Council with representation from all 21 districts. The housing grant funds the Rendered elderly site — nine duplexes, 18 new affordable rental units for low-income Lumbee elders. STEP builds the infrastructure for what will become the Tribe's educational authority; Larry Chavis recused himself from that vote.

Rudy Locklear raised clerical corrections on the Harm Reduction and ICRISP ordinances regarding original resolution numbers versus amended dates; both corrections were adopted along with the ordinances.

Total new funding approved: over $6.6 million. Nancy Locklear and the Speaker both credited tribal staff and grant writers rather than Council.

Good Neighbor Agreement with USDA

Passed as both an ordinance (roll call) and an identical resolution (voice vote). The resolution takes effect immediately so that Lumbee Holdings CEO Channing Jones can act while the ordinance posts. Terms:

- Initial contract of $5 million; indirect cost to the Tribe of $652,173.91, leaving roughly $4.35 million for direct services.
- Delegates performance to Lumbee Holdings, Inc. as the Tribe's federal contracting arm.
- The Tribal Council Executive Committee may approve subsequent USDA awards up to $50 million total by written concurrence, with reports back to the Finance Committee at its next meeting. Rationale: USDA disaster-recovery opportunities move quickly.
- Sovereign immunity expressly not waived.

Constitution & Ordinance — Rudy Locklear

One item: a resolution nominating two candidates to the North Carolina Indian Housing Authority Board, as the Governor's office requires two names per vacancy. Council recommended SunSarae Locklear Harrell as first choice and Whitney Bell as second choice. Bell has been holding over since her term expired earlier in the year. Passed by voice vote.

Presentations

Corbin Eddings — United Tribes of North Carolina

Reported 18 scholarships of $1,000 each from the Unity Conference, 13 of which went to Lumbee students. Reviewed board turnover and the new executive committee: Carly Graham as secretary, Al Richardson as treasurer, Kara Stewart as vice president, and Eddings re-elected president. Bylaws are being updated, including the possible addition of the Catawba Nation.

The next conference will be held March 3–6 at the Raleigh North Hills Hilton, with the theme "Native Sovereignty in the AI World." Miss Indian North Carolina Pageant applications are open, carrying a $5,000 scholarship, and community award nominations were requested. Larry Chavis pledged $1,000 from his community fund on the spot.

Medicine Waters Clinic — 201 Livermore Drive

Allison Scott, FNP, with 16 years of experience and a cardiology and cardiothoracic background, will serve as the main provider. Brooke Grooms, NP, serves as Director of Administrative Services and backup provider. Walk-in hours are Mondays and Fridays, with appointments by phone.

The Speaker clarified the billing question carefully: insurance will be billed, but tribal members pay no copay and no deductible, and uninsured patients are not turned away.

Chairman's Report (given by the Tribal Administrator Ronnie Locklear)

- Dance of the Harvest Moon powwow, September 25–27. Grand entries Friday at 7 p.m., Saturday at noon and 7 p.m., and Sunday at 1 p.m. Council invited to participate.
- Lumbee Tribe 5K, October 3. Registration 6:45–7:45 a.m.; $20 early, $15 for seniors 55 and up, $25 race day; the one-mile walk is free; starts at 8 a.m. The annual fish fry is the same day at the Culture Center.
- Administrative building: the Chairman has tasked the Administrator with scoping what it would take to build one, given staff growth. The Speaker pushed back on sequencing, asking first for bonding power, the Tribe's credit rating and interest rate, and what indirect costs can realistically support over a 30-year period — his concern being the Tribe's financial capacity rather than its wish list.
- Farmers market Saturday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Other Business

- Election board (Vice Chairman Bobby Emanuel): transitioning from manual to digital voting using the Tribe's existing Salesforce platform, beginning with check-in verification. Wi-Fi will be tested at proposed sites ahead of the November 17 tribal election — District 2 (Southern Spirit B&GC), 3 (National Guard Armory), 5 (Prospect Fire Department), 6 (CIS Academy), 11 (Hawkeye Sands Apartments), and 19 (Wagram Recreation Center). Testing will run three or four times to work out problems from the last election.
- Rubalena Locklear asked when educational scholarships will be distributed; referred to the Education & Culture Committee for a response.
- Recognition of Spencer Oxendine, the first Lumbee to play on the PGA Tour. Council asked that he be acknowledged on the Tribe's webpage.

- Rudy Locklear asked the Chairman to resolve the interim status of the Tribal Administrator, who has held the interim title since January.
- No one signed up for community comments.

Calendar

September

19th — Fun Day at Wagram Recreation Center, corrected to 10 a.m.–2 p.m., plus the farmers market and Project CREATE STEM Day at the Culture Center. 22nd — second budget public hearing, Hawkeye B&GC, 6:30–8:30 p.m. 24th — Fayetteville hearing, 143 Maxwell Street, 6:30–8 p.m. 25th–27th — powwow. 28th — final public hearing, Pembroke B&GC. 29th — District 18 community meeting at Cherokee Chapel and a Constitution & Ordinance meeting.

October

6th — Finance at 6:30 p.m., with the full night given over to a budget session. 8th — Education, Culture & PR at 6:30 p.m. and Federal Recognition at 7:30 p.m. 13th — Constitution & Ordinance at 6:30 p.m. and Housing, moved off the 12th because it is a federal holiday, noted from the floor as Indigenous Peoples' Day. 23rd — agriculture trip to the island, time and meeting place to be determined. Jody Bullard pressed for budget hearings to be scheduled so the Tribe does not operate on continuing resolutions all fall.

Adjourned with closing prayer by Homer Fields.