

Lumbee Tribal Council Business Meeting

Summary of Minutes — Thursday, August 20, 2026

Meeting Called to Order: Vice Chair Bobby Emanuel

Invocation: Councilman Graylen Mitchell

Pledge of Allegiance: Councilman Carrington Locklear

Preamble: Councilwoman Sandra Dial

Roll call by Councilwoman Sharon Hunt

Ethics Statement read by Vice-Chair Bobby Emanuel.

Welcome: Johnny Hunt, (former Superintendant of PSRC), Ricky Harris, (former Tribal Administrator), Gary Dees, (Administrative Court), Allen Dial, (Mayor of Pembroke), Yvonne Dial, (former Tribal Councilwoman) and Charles Graham, (former NC General Assembly House of Representatives) and all in attendance.

The agenda was amended before approval:

- Item 9B was struck, since no July emergency meeting was held.
- The Constitution & Ordinance report was moved to the end.
- A scholarship resolution and a clinic presentation by Ricky Harris were added.
- All presentations were moved ahead of committee reports.

Council Members Present at Roll Call: 18

Billy Oxendine

Graylen Mitchell

Harold Smith

Jody Bullard

Carrington Locklear

Larry Chavis

Rubalena Locklear

Johnny Bell

Bobby Emanuel

Josephine Doss

Homer Fields

Sharon Hunt

Nanci Locklear

Larry Soles

Rudy Locklear

Eric Chavis

Mary Locklear

Sandra Dial

Quorum Established.

Review and Approval of Agenda- Councilwoman Sharon made a motion to approve the agenda and Councilwoman Rubalena Locklear 2nd the motion. With one member, Councilman Billy Oxendine opposing.

Review and Approval of July minutes-Councilman Jody Bullard made a motion, Councilman Larry Chavis 2nd motion, with one member Councilman Billy Oxendine opposing.

Presentations

Lumbee Warriors: Gary Deese described the color guard's July trip to the Seneca Nation in upstate New York. The Seneca presented a flag to the tribe in return, and a Lumbee female veteran received an eagle feather honor there. Separately, the tribe presented its flag to Abigail Moore for display in the USDA Hall of Tribal Nations in Washington.

Health clinic: Ricky Harris announced a new clinic on the bottom floor of the old Native Angels building, open to everyone.

- Council walkthrough: September 10 at 5:30.
- Soft opening: September 14.
- Grand opening: after the powwow.

Water quality: Craig McMillan of the NC Commission of Indian Affairs reported on three years of work with NCDEQ on water concerns in Lumbee, Coharie, and Waccamaw Siouan communities.

- A June 5 PFAS update found that 367 of 715 sampled private wells in Robeson County (51%) needed filtration. That figure doesn't include county or city water.
- Further landfill and groundwater assessment is underway.
- Planned efforts include a 50-home testing pilot in Districts 3, 10, and 14, a town hall with NCDEQ Deputy Secretary John Nicholson, and a centralized water-data dashboard with the Cumberland County Association for Indian People.
- He urged the council to take a regional leadership role, saying he wouldn't tell his own family the water is safe to drink.

Committee Reports

Finance: The council unanimously approved the Lumbee Youth System of Care budget, funded by a SAMHSA grant of \$1 million per year over four years.

- The program aims to improve mental health services for youth from birth to age 21.
- It includes three full-time positions and will serve 150 youth in year one.
- Partners are the NC Youth Violence Prevention Commission and ROAR.

Economic Development: CLLR-2026-0820-001. The committee lacked a quorum, so the item needed a motion, Councilman Graylen Mitchell made the motion and Councilman Harold Smith 2nd the motion. The tribe would be the lead grantee, with funds passing to the EMC for construction, and should receive administrative costs.

Health & Human Services: Two resolutions passed.

- **PFAS resolution.** Councilwoman Sharon Hunt made a motion for this resolution to pass and Councilman Carrington Locklear 2nd the motion.
- **Overdose awareness.** A second resolution recognized August 31, 2026 as International Overdose Awareness Day. Came from committee.

Education: The council approved the 2026 scholarship allocation. Came from committee

Constitution & Ordinance: CLLO-2025-0002. Chair Rudy Locklear first noted that Article 3, Section 2 of the tribal constitution charges the government with protecting members' security, which supports action on water. He then presented two items. Everything else was handled without a recorded motion or second.

1. **Election ordinance amendments** (passed; Billy Oxendine voted no). The changes were developed with the elections board after the recent special election. Came from committee.
 - Councilwoman Sharon Hunt moved that the August 25th meeting be livestreamed if possible: no second is recorded, and the Vice-Chair Bobby Emanuel moved on. Councilman Billy Oxendine made a substitute motion to send the gaming resolution back to committee, which failed for lack of a 2nd motion.
2. **Gaming priority resolution** (passed; Oxendine voted no). It designates hospitality and entertainment, including gaming, as the tribe's top economic and community development priority. Came from committee.
 - **Livestream motion:** Councilwoman Sharon Hunt moved that the Tuesday meeting be livestreamed if at all possible.

Chairman's Report

The interim tribal administrator reported for Chairman Lowry, who was absent.

- Enrollment card updates are averaging 40–50 people a day, with short waits.
- On August 19, Blue Cross Blue Shield, DSS, and the tribe packed 200+ comfort backpacks for youth entering foster care. About 55% of foster children in Robeson County are Native.
- Upcoming events: the Lumber River State Park access grand opening on August 21 in Maxton, and the Robeson County Career & Technical Education Center opening.
- Recent farmers markets were well attended.

Rudy Locklear asked about reopening the enrollment rolls, which requires the chairman's recommendation. The administrator said staff are ready and he would raise it with the chairman.

Community Comments

- **Elizabeth Dial Brown (District 5)** said she was missing from the voter rolls despite voting before. She supports a gaming resort and asked for another vote.

- **Kendra Locklear (District 4)** thanked the council for the water resolution but pressed for more urgency. She asked for a text alert telling people to stop drinking the water and for any conflicts of interest to be addressed.
- **Espadonsa Locklear (District 5)** is a nurse whose mother died of pancreatic cancer. She said 21 people within a mile and a half on Hezekiah Road have died, all on county water. She asked the tribe to declare a public health emergency and launch an awareness campaign.
- **Joanne Harris** asked for emergency housing help for a family whose shower collapsed through the floor and who is being told to move out. Staff confirmed they are following up.

Calendar

August

- **Aug 22:** Back-to-school events for Districts 3 & 21 (Rogers Screen Printing, Lumberton, 10–12) and Districts 6, 7 & 20 (Pembroke Recreation Complex, 3–5).
- **Aug 24, 27, and 31:** Budget sessions at 6:30.
- **Aug 25:** Constitution & Ordinance meeting at 6:30.

September

- **Sept 3:** Economic Development at 6:30.
- **Sept 4:** Sheriff's Office Boots & Bow Tie Gala.
- **Sept 8:** Health & Human Services at 6:30; Agriculture at 7:30.
- **Sept 10:** Clinic walkthrough at 5:30; Finance at 6:30.
- **Sept 15:** Constitution & Ordinance at 6:30.
- **Sept 19:** Fun day in Wagram for Districts 11 & 19, 11–2.

Closing

A District 3 member's thank-you was read by Councilman Jody Bullard for the tribe's support of an MMIW vigil honoring Sarah Nicole Graham.

Councilman Larry Chavis made a motion to adjourn.

Councilman Graylen Mitchell 2nd motion.

VOICE VOTE

ALL IN FAVOR

CARRIED

Benediction by Councilman Homer Fields