



GEORGIA COUNCIL ON AMERICAN INDIAN CONCERNS MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 12, 2025

Time: 1:00pm

Meeting called to order by: Nealie McCormick

INVOCATION

Led by Royce McCrary

Council Members Present

Nealie McCormick, Chairman
Rhonda Bennett
Heidi Altman
Maureen Meyers
Royce McCrary
Frank Williams
Christian Dane – Program Manager (non-member)
Donald Kirkland – Senior Advisor (non-member)

Guests Present

Chief Vonnie McCormick, Lower Muskogee Creek Tribe
Mark Pooley, Center for Human Identification
Jim Bennett
Sissee Kirkland

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The meeting minutes for the meeting on July 28, 2025, were distributed for review. Heidi Altman moved to accept minutes; Maureen Meyers seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

A presentation on Missing and Murdered Indigenous People was delivered by Mark Pooley, Director of The Center for Human Identification.

TRIBE REPORTS

Lower Muskogee Creek Tribe: Provided by Chief Vonnie McCormick.

Powwow:

- Continuing to prepare for powwow, which will incorporate more Native cultural elements, specifically Muskogee.



Youth and Cultural Activities:

- Hosting school days Oct. 16-17, which will see over 300 second and third graders visiting the tribal grounds.
- Oct. 17 will hold a gospel scene to kick off powwow.
- Georgia Tribe Night at the Atlanta Braves game on August 9th.

Ongoing Projects:

- Doing several land acknowledgements for different organizations who have requested them.
 - American Nurses Association
 - Association for School Psychiatrists
 - Healthy Teens
- Working with Children's Museum in Atlanta on highlighting a Muskogee person at exhibit.
- Working with USDA to have refrigerated storage area in greenhouse for fresh produce.
- Continuing efforts on federal recognition
- Working with a tribe in Alabama to teach Muscogee language

Georgia Tribe of Eastern Cherokee: Provided by Rhonda Bennett.

Federal Recognition:

- Checked with David Scott's office to follow up with Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Coordinating with David Petite, who is assisting with federal recognition petition.
- Marjorie Taylor Greene indicated she will help the tribe with petition.

Heritage Center and Museum:

- Continuing to receive donations and pledges.
- Have begun the development of blueprints for museum, will be shared October 25th at capital kickoff event.
- A number of people have offered to donate artifacts to the heritage center.
- Receiving support from county historical society, county commissioners, and other state leaders such as Senator Steve Gooch and Representative Will Wade.

Community Engagement:

- Becoming part of the Order of the Arrow with the Boy Scouts.
- Receiving a lot of interest from people in community reaching out about family heritage. Setting up part of tribal council to offer support.

Cherokee of Georgia Tribal Council: No report

BUSINESS

- A) Rhonda Bennett moves to have the Council create and operate a Tribal Institutional Review Board to help the three state-recognized tribes navigate and deal with research proposals in their communities. Motion seconded by Maureen Meyers. Motion carried unanimously.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A) Native American Heritage Month proclamation for 2026 was signed by the Governor.
- B) Georgia Archives Native Symposium is November 15th where Dr. Maureen Meyers will present.
- C) Missing Persons Day on May 16, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

Heidi Altman moved to adjourn meeting. Motion seconded by Maureen Meyers. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:52pm.