

# TUSCARORA UNIFICATION TIMELINE

2024–2025

Several factors have prevented the Tuscarora People from receiving a reaffirmation of state recognition. **Factionalism** has been the most prevalent for generations among the fiefdom social structures of longhouses, which has resulted in organized crime and a bad reputation.

To overcome factionalism, division, and a lack of a united voice, the Tuscarora People have formed a unified government, The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories (TIOKT), which represents **all Tuscarora People**. It is a representative democracy, not a confederation of longhouses. **Longhouses are religious organizations like churches, not tribes. The unified government brings legitimacy and democracy, and ALL Tuscarora people can enroll.**

This unified government will not infringe upon traditional, social, civic, and spiritual activities or the funding of autonomous longhouses, or confederations of such organizations as they exist today (separation of church and state). *It will take time for everyone to understand and adapt to this new paradigm of unification and a centralized government—and that is okay.*

**The unified Tuscarora government council was formed in accordance with an agreed-upon proposal.**

**This timeline outlines how and when the unified government was established with the participation of several longhouses, some of which have now split and returned to their former small but loud opposition group.**

This effort built a single democratic tribal government, not to be one of many past confederacies of longhouses (churches); we engaged with longhouse leadership to automatically enroll their members and build base citizenship rolls from their active membership—totaling a few hundred. This was open to all eligible Tuscarora communities/longhouses in NC, and ultimately, four longhouses participated: Maxton, Prospect, Saddletree, and United Kahtenuaka. Each of these four longhouses appointed two representatives to the Grassroots Working and Election (GWE) Committee to drive the process. *Unfortunately, this approach led to confusion as the participating leadership found it difficult to work towards an elected government and instead regressed to the confederacy approach.*

Several concessions (including canceling the first election) were made to meet the demands of Maxton and Prospect. This was done in a good faith effort to ensure the inclusion of all longhouses, but it came at a cost to the effort. In the end, the Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories Council was formed, including members from Maxton, Saddletree, and United Kahtenuaka. At the last minute, the leadership of Maxton, Prospect, and Saddletree (“The Three Longhouses”) backed out of our agreement—demonstrating why **a confederation makes an unstable government.**

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## CONCESSIONS, COMPROMISES, & OLIVE BRANCHES

Concessions and compromises were made by members of the GWE Committee to accommodate the demands of the Maxton and Prospect longhouses and to try to keep them in the fold. These included:

1. **Eligibility:** We adjusted the qualifications for community/longhouse eligibility from 10 years to 15 years. Maxton and Prospect demanded that it be changed to 20 years to match a previous bill (which was also at 10 years and changed to 20 at their request). They wanted to exclude the United

Kahtenuaka Longhouse for personal reasons and fear that they had larger numbers. The compromise at 15 years still allowed UKL to participate.

2. **Cancelling the first election:** (January 6, 2025) Per the demands of Maxton and Prospect leadership we eliminated the election and implemented longhouse representative appointments for the first year. The reason Maxton and Prospect provided for these demands was their concern that an election would allow the United Kahtenuaka Longhouse, which by far has the largest membership, to have the most representation on the Council (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 01/06/24*). *This concession undermined the main intention of Unification, which was to create a democratic system for ALL TUSCARORA PEOPLE. All parties agreed that this would only impact the first one-year term and that the Constitution would take precedence over the GWE Committee.* This also impacted the timeline. According to the revised Unification Plan, the Council was formed sooner, and the GWE Committee was dissolved sooner because their purpose was to set up the government and run the elections.
3. **Continual postponement of deadlines:** Maxton and Prospect leadership consistently dragged their heels. This was likely a method of obstruction, and it demonstrated a pattern of working in bad faith and a lack of concern on their part. The accommodation provided by the rest of the members demonstrated a good-faith effort and a true desire to include all parties.
  - a. DEADLINE TO SUBMIT FULL ROLLS (MEMBER LIST)
    - i. Originally due December 12, 2024 (*Tuscarora Unification Plan 11/13/24 Draft*)
    - ii. Maxton, Prospect, and Saddletree missed the deadline.
    - iii. Changed to February 1, 2025 (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 01/06/24*)
    - iv. Maxton, Prospect, and Saddletree missed the final deadline.
  - b. PARTICIPATING LONGHOUSE COUNCIL APPOINTMENT DEADLINE:
    - i. Originally due December 13, 2024 (*Tuscarora Unification Plan 11/13/24 Draft*)
    - ii. The Participating Longhouse Council was canceled because the Elected Council was changed to an appointed council (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 01/06/24*)
  - c. CANDIDATE NOMINATION DEADLINE:
    - i. Originally January 1, 2025 (*Tuscarora Unification Plan 11/13/24 Draft*)
    - ii. Changed to LONGHOUSE REPRESENTATIVE APPOINTMENT due February 1, 2025 (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 01/06/24*)
    - iii. Changed to February 3, 2025. All GWE Committee members voted and it passed by majority (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 01/27/24; Tuscarora Unification Plan 01/28/25 Draft*)
    - iv. Maxton and Prospect longhouses missed this final deadline.
  - d. ELECTION DAY
    - i. Originally planned for February 1, 2025 (*Tuscarora Unification Plan 11/13/24 Draft*)
    - ii. Changed to March 1, 2025 (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 11/25/24*)
    - iii. Cancelled per Maxton and Prospect's demands (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 01/06/24*)

**OLIVE BRANCHES:** Although all four longhouses participated in the unification effort, two backed out at the end of Phase 1, and a third backed out after the start of Phase 2:

- **Saddletree and United Kahtenuaka Longhouse met the deadline**—appointing their council members (3 each) and signing the agreement by February 3, 2025.
- **Prospect** never signed the agreement.
- **The Council** was formed, sworn in, and began work. This included nominating additional council members (as two bands were not participating). Additional Council members who belonged to Maxton

and Saddletree Longhouses were nominated. The Council then completed a constitution and various policies and assigned officer roles—they were moving ahead.

- **Maxton** signed the agreement 9 days after the deadline and forfeited their seats. They would now need to wait for the Council to determine how to fill the additional seats.
- **Two of Saddletree's Three Council members** resigned from the Council. One remained.

**After its formation, the unified government Council made several efforts to reengage the Three Longhouses and to include them in the Council. The door has remained open to them.**

- a. See below: February 12, February 17 (A), February 17 (B), and March 2-3, 2025

**OTHER: Refusal to sign confidentiality and non-disparaging agreements:** Longhouse leadership determined in the November 9, 2024 meeting that confidentiality agreements were needed to ensure the privacy of all members included in the rolls. All members of the GWE Committee signed their agreements before the December 9, 2024 deadline, except for the two members representing Prospect Longhouse. These members were reminded in subsequent GWE Committee meetings, and they never signed them. This demonstrated a lack of good faith in unifying on the part of Prospect Longhouse.

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## TIMELINE

### PHASE ONE: FORMATION

(COMPLETED WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF REP. GOODWIN'S OFFICE)

#### SEPTEMBER–OCTOBER 2024

1. **Drafted a Unification Plan proposal.** This included reviews with members of Maxton, Prospect, Saddletree, and United Kahtenuaka longhouses (*Tuscarora Unification Proposal 10/12/24 Draft*).

#### OCTOBER 2024

ASSEMBLED LEADERSHIP OF TUSCARORA COMMUNITIES/LONGHOUSES & SHARED THE PLAN:

2. October 12, 2024: This meeting, hosted by Rep. Goodwin in Fayetteville, included 1-2 representatives from each longhouse. **All known communities/longhouses were invited, and five attended.** The plan was shared and all leaders from four longhouses decided to reconvene in November to share their decision to participate or not.

#### NOVEMBER 2024

3. November 9, 2024: **All four longhouses committed to the Unification effort.** The leaders of Maxton, Prospect, Saddletree, and United Kahtenuaka longhouses reconvened, and all four voted to participate in the unification.
4. Each of the four longhouses **appointed two (2) members to the Grassroots Working & Elections Committee ("GWE")** to serve as representatives.

#### NOVEMBER 2024—FEBRUARY 2025

5. **The weekly GWE Committee Meetings** began on November 19, 2024.
  - a. The GWE Committee consisted of two (2) members appointed (representative) by each participating longhouse and two (2) Tuscarora members appointed by Representative Goodwin's office (who served as liaisons) (*Tuscarora Unification Plan 11/13/24 Draft*)
  - b. The GWE Committee met on 11/19, 11/25, 12/2, 12/19, 12/16, 01/06, 01/13, 01/20, 01/27, 02/03 (*see GWE Committee Meeting Minutes*).

## JANUARY 2025

6. January 6, 2025—**The first election was canceled. Per the demands of Maxton and Prospect leadership**, we eliminated the election and implemented longhouse representative appointments for the first year. The reason Maxton and Prospect provided for these demands was *their concern that an election would allow the United Kahtenuaka Longhouse*, which has the largest membership, to have the most representation on the Council—not understanding that this was **not a confederacy, but a nation of Individuals**.

This concession undermined the main intention of Unification, which was to create a democratic system for ALL TUSCARORA PEOPLE. All parties agreed that this would only impact the first one-year term and that the Constitution would take precedence over the GWE Committee.

7. January 27, 2025: **GWE Committee Final Meeting**
  - a. Upon the final revisions of The Plan by members of the GWE Committee, each longhouse was asked to 1) sign the revised plan and 2) appoint their members to the council by February 3, 2025. This was passed by a majority vote of the GWE Committee (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 01/27/24*).
  - b. **Forfeiture of seats**—The GWE Committee decided that GWE and the new Council would be held “accountable to deadlines.” Any longhouse that missed the deadline (to sign the agreement/plan and provide the names of their appointed members) would forfeit their seats. The newly appointed Council would then “decide on the remaining 6 seats” (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 01/27/24*).

## FEBRUARY 2025

8. February 3, 2025: **The end of Phase I – The Deadline**
  - a. **Only two longhouses met the deadline to sign the agreement and provide the names of their appointed members** (Saddletree and United Kahtenuaka). Two did not (Maxton and Prospect) although their prior demands had been met (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 01/27/24*). As Maxton and Prospect again missed the deadline to appoint members, the Council would “decide on the remaining 6 seats” (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 01/27/24*).
    - i. As an olive branch, council seats have still been offered to the Three Longhouses until the present day (*03/03/25 Letter*).
  - b. **Formation of the Council**—Only two longhouses (Saddletree and United Kahtenuaka) nominated their representatives by the deadline. Two did not (Maxton and Prospect), and although their previous demands had been met, they continued to remain oppositional (*GWE Committee Meeting Minutes 01/27/24*).
  - c. **Dissolution of the GWE Committee**—In all updates to the Unification Plan going back to the original draft shared on October 12, 2024, the GWE Committee was only intended for “Phase One.” It was to “dissolve immediately” when the Elected Council was formed. There were to be no more GWE committee meetings after that point. As the election was canceled and the Council was nominated on 01/27/24, the GWE Committee was dissolved.

*According to the Plan/agreement, the GWE Committee was dissolved because its purpose was to establish the government and run the elections— “Phase One.” (Tuscarora Unification Plan 11/13/24 Draft; 01/28/25 Draft)*

## PHASE TWO: THE CENTRAL TUSCARORA GOVERNMENT

In all versions of the Unification Plan going back to the original shared on October 12, 2024, the formation of the Council, whether via election or appointment, would begin Phase Two. It was always stated that one of

the Council's objectives was to adopt a constitution and that the constitution would supersede any rules outlined in the Unification Plan (*Tuscarora Unification Plan 11/13/24 Draft; 01/28/25 Draft*).

9. February 10, 2025: **The newly formed Council held its first meeting and was sworn in.**
  - a. During this meeting, a member from the Saddletree longhouse allowed disgruntled members from Maxton and Prospect to enter and **disrupt the proceedings** (see *02/10/25 Council Minutes*). The meeting ended. This member was placed on "inactive status" by a majority vote of the council (*letter dated February 10, 2025*).

#### RETURNING TO A DEMOCRACY:

10. Members from Saddletree, Maxton, and United Kahtenuaka were **sworn in** during the first Council meeting, **not as longhouse representatives but as Tuscarora Individuals**. On February 10, 2025, it was decided by unanimous vote (consensus) that they would serve as a Council of individuals (*02/10/25 Council Minutes*).  
**Other leadership that missed the February 3rd deadline could still appoint their members, but they would require council approval, as the process was not to be stifled** (*02/10/25 Council Minutes*).
11. February 12, 2025 (A): **Prospect did not sign the agreement but instead submitted a MOA** to the already dissolved GWE Committee containing several new demands including that they refused to participate in the newly formed government and instead "collaborate."
12. February 12, 2025 (B): **Maxton signed the agreement (The Unification Plan) nine days after the deadline.**

It was previously decided by the GWE Committee (1/27/25) that those who missed the deadline would forfeit their seats (*GWE Minutes 1/27/25*). However, on 2/10/25 the new Council decided that they would provide a **pathway for participation** for Prospect and Maxton.

- a. On February 17, the Council sent a letter to Maxton (see below)
  - b. Maxton never replied to this letter rejecting it, or offering a solution.
13. February 13, 2025: Unified council member, Brandy Locklear Alvarez called, left a voicemail, and sent a text message to one of Maxton's nominees. **She invited her to the council meeting scheduled for February 15, 2025.** The nominee from Maxton replied on the following day and declined the invitation. Brandy Locklear Alvarez responded "I completely understand. Are you able to take a seat on the council moving forward?" and "Feel free to call me to catch up."
  - a. The nominee from Maxton did not reply.
14. February 17, 2025 (A): **The new Council responded to Maxton's nominees** with "gratitude" and requested a replacement for one of them: "The committee would like to respectfully suggest another member of your longhouse..." and justification was provided for the request. It closed with "We hope to keep lines of communication open on this matter and hope to hear from you soon." (*2/17/25 letter*).
  - a. **Maxton never responded**, and on February 24, 2025 an email was sent to Maxton leadership again saying, "This is still an open matter. Maxton can flat out refuse or negotiate. They didn't demand it, it's a "respectful" suggestion. You can still have representation." (*02/24/25 email*)
15. February 17, 2025 (B): **The new Council responded to Prospect's MOA** with several questions for clarification.
  - a. **Prospect never responded.**

16. February 18, 2024: The two Saddletree Council representatives **resigned from the Council** and formed **a small opposition group** with the leadership of Maxton and Saddletree.
17. February 19, 2025: The name, **The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories** was adopted and filed with the NC Secretary of State's office.
18. February 22, 2025: **The Constitution of the Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories** was adopted by the Council on behalf of the Tuscarora People and **officers were appointed**, including Brock Jacobs as Chairman. The small opposition group from the three longhouses that pulled out then hastily approved their own constitution as a confederacy, the same thing that had not worked previously.

#### MARCH 2025

19. March 2-3, 2024: The Council shared its **Nomination Policies** with the leadership of Maxton, Prospect, and Saddletree, which outlined how they could still appoint members to the council (an invitation). The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories sent a letter to the three longhouses **offering six seats (03/03/25 Letter)**.
  - a. They refused to cooperate.
20. March 3, 2024: The Recognition Bill was finalized.
21. March 4, 2024: **A newly formed, small opposition group** (leadership of Maxton, Prospect, and Saddletree) attempted to meet with the Speaker of the House by showing up and waiting outside his office. Representative Goodwin, who has endeavored for years to restore recognition to all NC Tuscarora people, encountered them, and they made it known that they would do all they could to disrupt the success of restoring Tuscarora state recognition.  
**Although these individuals were part of this effort for four months (and had signed applicable agreements), they pulled out just weeks before and now claimed the new government was illegitimate.**

**Correspondence** was exchanged in which this small opposition group, returning to their former name, *the Tuscarora Nation of North Carolina*, claimed the unified government (still including their own members) to be illegitimate. In contrast, correspondence from The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka territories has continued to invite them back, and **the door remains open**.

*This small group does not represent the majority of the Tuscarora People. The Tuscarora Indians of Kahtenuaka Territories represents more than 1,600 constituents—making us one of the largest tribes in NC.*