The following State of the Tribe Address was held as mandated by the Lumbee Tribal Constitution before tribal council members and the public.
MR. GARY STRICKLAND: Good evening, folks. We want to welcome everybody to the 2015 State of the Tribe Address that will be given and delivered by the Honorable Paul Brooks. Give Mr. Brooks a big round of applause. It seems like it's only -- it's been such a short time since we were in this same spot last year, but a year's gone by -- 365 days, and a lot has been accomplished. A lot has been done, a lot of houses has been fixed, a lot of services been rendered, and the Chairman will be giving his address and highlighting some of those things, and he will be talking about our future at the same time. Our future is forged completely and fully each and every year by partnerships that we've formed throughout.

At this time, I want to address our leaders -- everybody is important, everybody is special. But we have some individuals in this room that go above and beyond in helping us accomplish our goals. We've already introduced our Chairman. At this time, I'd like to give a round of applause for our Speaker, Mr. Lesaundri Hunt. At this time, I'd like all the tribal council members to stand and be
recognized -- and for the hard work they do also. I also notice in the audience we have the chairman of the county commissioners for Robeson County, Mr. Noah Woods and one of his fellow board members, Mr. Roger Oxendine. We were able to get a county commissioner from Hoke County here, Mr. Tony Hunt, and we have the new town manager for the Town of Pembroke, Mr. Tyler Thomas. And we have a couple of special individuals also that sit here with us. We have our new Senior Ms. Lumbee, Ms. Angelita. Let's give her a round of applause. And she'll be performing for us in a few minutes also. Also, we have our new Ms. Lumbee, Ms. Alexis. We may not have much in the looks on our men, but we definitely have some in the looks on our ladies -- I can tell you right now.

But it has been a year, and the Chairman will deliver great news about our progress, services, and future of our tribe. But if we want to be successful in our future, we must definitely give all the glory to God. We have to look to him for guidance, and at this time, I'd like for the Speaker, Mr. Lesaundri Hunt,
to come and give us our invocation.

MR. LESAUNDR HUNT: Found in the book of Numbers 6:23, there's a passage of scripture that's really known as the priestly benediction, but I'm going to use it as this invocation tonight. And it says,

Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, the Lord bless thee, and keep the: The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord life up his countenance unto thee, and give thee peace.

MR. LESAUNDR HUNT: Amen. And that is my prayer to all the Lumbee people. May the Lord bless and keep us. If he doesn't, then certainly, we cannot do it ourselves. The Bible says in him we live and move and have our bid. Let us always realize it's because of him that we can face tomorrow as someone hymned that song many years ago. Because of him, I can get up in the morning and start another day
because I know I'm nothing -- except I've been
touched by the master's strong hand. Amen.
Thank you for being here tonight for this.
Would you stand with me as we go to the Lord in
prayer?

(A prayer was rendered by Mr.
Lesaundri Hunt.)

MR. GARY STRICKLAND: As I had stated
earlier, we have just recently crowned a brand
new Senior Ms. Lumbee, and we would like to
invite her to the podium to give us special
entertainment. Let's give her a round of
applause.

(Ms. Angelita Hunt rendered a
song.)

MR. GARY STRICKLAND: Thank you, Ms.
Angelita. We have in our program that the
Robeson Rockers will be performing next, but
they do not have all of their members here at
this time, so we're going to push them to after
the Chairman makes his State of the Tribe
Address. At this time, I'd like to welcome to
the podium our tribal administrator, Mr. Tony
Hunt.

MR. TONY HUNT: They're not all here are
they, darling? All right. We're just so
delighted to have all of you here as Gary's
already said and to come and take part in this
event tonight that is a mandate by our
constitution -- that the Chairman will give a
State of the Tribe Address the first week of
July. And we're glad that all of you have
decided to come and spend this afternoon with
us and hear what our Chairman has to say.

I was just sitting there at the table
thinking about what to say, and I kind of
thought of a conversation me and him had --
probably about six or eight months ago. We
were sitting in the office, and we were having
some challenges -- we have challenges here at
the tribe as every organization does. We were
talking, and I asked him -- I looked at him and
I said what in the world are you doing here
anyway -- running for this office and getting
elected and putting up with the things you have
to put up with. I said I know why I'm here,
I'm trying to make a living. Ain't no secret I
said, but why are you here? And he just paused
for a moment, and he looked at me, and he told
me something that reminded me of one of the
stories in the Bible -- when Joshua got ready
to go over into Canaan, and he had told the
children of Israel that they would drink from
wells that they did not dig, they would eat
from trees that they did not plant, and live in
houses that they did not build. He says my
parents afforded to me the opportunities that
I've had and my forefathers and those before
me. And he explained that that's all he wanted
to do -- leave behind for somebody something
else that he had worked hard to help accomplish
that our people could have better opportunities
and education, better opportunities in health
care, and better living conditions in their
homes -- to be able to afford a home when they
could not in the past. And he said that's what
gets me up every morning and causes me to come
here to this place and deal with all the
challenges that I deal with -- because of the
love I have for my people of the tribe. I have
served them just about all my life -- of trying
to better our community and better our tribe.
I have learned a lot from this man, I've
learned a lot about him over the past two and a
half years and, Mr. Paul, I want to say that
I'm so proud to stand here tonight and introduce you as our tribal chairman -- a man with courage and strength -- and when problems comes, he hits them head on and he deals with it. Mr. Chairman, we welcome you tonight to the State of the Tribe.

CHAIRMAN PAUL BROOKS: I don't remember saying all that. Good afternoon, Lumbee tribal members, tribal council, tribal administration. I am your tribal chairman, Paul Brooks. I want to thank you for your attendance today for the State of the Tribe Address.

I'd like to begin today by addressing -- by reassuring you all that I stand strong -- I stand strong in my fight for elders, veterans, and youth. Our elders and our veterans have proven to be the pillar of our foundation. Without them, our tribe would not be where it is today. Our tribal youth are fortunate to have these mentors who can provide sound advice for our future leaders.

An internal audit by an independent auditing agency selected by tribal council members was recently completed. This audit produced no findings. The Lumbee Tribe of
North Carolina will appeal the findings of the final monitoring report. The tribal council has proven to be innovative decision makers who remain focused on the effectiveness of our tribal government as it pertains to our tribal membership, the working relationship between the tribal council and the tribal administration and will continue to put forth the effort needed for the advancement of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.

The fiscal budget for 2016, once again, focuses on the quality of life of tribal members. The projected fiscal budget for 2016 is $17 million. The administration continues to provide quality rehab services to those that are need of repair. These rehab services are necessary in upholding the goals set by the administration in an effort to provide efficient services to our tribal members. The administration will continue to construct new homes for families living in the service area. These new homes will provide safe, affordable housing for our tribal members and will also add additional assets to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. Since taking office in 2011,
assets has increased during my tenure by $15 million. The upcoming year for the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina is indeed promising. Currently, we are working with the SBIRT to secure contracts for Lumbee Tribal Enterprises. I'm the first chairman to provide tax credits for senior housing in a community that will allow elders to have fellowship together in their golden age, in their golden years. And I feel that Pembroke Senior Village is the key to preserving our tribal foundation. This $8 million tax credit project will provide our elders a sense of security and belonging in a community in which they can continue to flourish. Now, we have our veterans -- will also be a strong focal point for the upcoming year. We are currently in the process of discussing housing options that are available for veterans. By providing housing to our veterans, we will be able to give back to those who have gave of themselves so that we can enjoy our freedom.

I will continue to advise my administration to seek funding focusing on health care as well as education. I feel that
these areas are critical to the future of the
Lumbee tribe because without proper educational
opportunities, we cannot continue to flourish.

The Changing Lifestyles Living Longer
Program, over the next year, will continue to
educate our tribal members on ways to prevent
chronic diseases such as cancer, obesity, and
diabetes. This program is essential in
improving the health disparities faced by our
tribal members. The Lumbee tribe will also
continue to encourage our youth within the Boys
and Girls Club to establish an interest in
science, technology, engineering, and
mathematics. Science and math are
traditionally low-scoring test areas for our
Lumbee youth, so by implementing programs that
will provide supplemental instruction in these
subject areas, we can overcome these
statistics.

The upcoming year will be a year of
progression, a year in which open communication
and transparency will continue. As your tribal
chairman, I will make every effort to instruct
my staff to provide efficient, effective
service for all tribal members.
As our vision statement suggests -- and this is the vision statement that's in our constitution -- the sovereign nation of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina will preserve and enhance for all time the Lumbee way of life and community pursuant to the constitution of the Lumbee people. It is my goal for the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina administration, council, as well as tribal members to embody this statement in an effort to fulfill the dream that our forefathers has left us here. And the final statement, the final statement -- we together are making a difference. Thank you, and God bless each one of you.

MR. GARY STRICKLAND: Thank you, Chairman, for your leadership and your determination, your drive and your vigor -- and to see the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina continue to move forward through all the adversities that we deal with.

We are ready for our Robeson Rockers to be able to perform, and then after that, that will be the end of this event, and we'll be starting our homeownership appreciation evening for our tribal members. So let's welcome -- and
they'll be performing in the back, so you don't
have to look at me any further, and you'll have
a much better time -- I'll promise you that.
So let's welcome -- give a round of applause
for the Robeson Rockers.

(The Robeson Rockers performed.)

(End of the State of the Tribe
Address.)
CERTIFICATE

I, Megan Newsom, hereby attest that the proceedings taken down before me on Tuesday, July 7th, 2015, at 120 Youth Drive, Pembroke, North Carolina 28372, are a true and accurate representation of the proceedings this 30th day of July, 2015.

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Megan Newsom
Reporter