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CHEROKEE NATION®

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Office of the Principal Chief

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Principal Chief
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Bryan Warner
Deputy Principal Chief
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EXECUTIVE ORDER
2026-03-CTH

**EXECUTIVE ORDER ESTABLISHING PRINCIPAL CHIEF'S TASK FORCE ON THE
MANAGEMENT, REACQUISITION AND DISCLOSURE OF RECORDS OF THE OFFICE OF
PRINCIPAL CHIEF**

1. **AUTHORITY:** The Constitution and laws of the Cherokee Nation.
2. **POLICY:** It is in the interest of the Cherokee Nation to preserve and make available for public inspection the records of the Principal Chief in a manner free from political considerations and in a manner that acknowledges other important national interests such as individual rights to privacy, individual rights to property, the orderly administration of governmental operations and relationships with foreign governments. It is further in the interests of the Cherokee Nation to assess the status of Principal Chief records as it relates to current ownership or possessory interests and strategies for acquiring original, facsimile or electronic copies of said records from individuals, governments and institutions. Cherokee Nation further should declare, as a matter of Cherokee Nation law and policy, that records generated in connection with the administration of the Office of Principal Chief, since the inception of that office in 1827, is the property of the Cherokee Nation, held in the public interests, publicly disclosable with appropriate exclusions and conditions as determined by Cherokee Nation law in the public interest and that such records in the possession of any individual, government or institution should return such records to the possession of the Cherokee Nation. Based on the foregoing the Principal Chief's Task Force on the Management, Reacquisition, and Disclosure of Records of the Office of Principal Chief is hereby established to undertake a threshold examination of this subject and make recommendations to the Principal Chief and the Council for further action.
3. **Principal Chief's Task Force on the Management, Reacquisition, and Disclosure of Records of the Office of Principal Chief:** There is hereby established the Principal Chief's Task Force on

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the Management, Reacquisition, and Disclosure of Records of the Office of Principal Chief, operating pursuant to the composition, objectives and other parameters set forth herein, and ***alternatively known as the Principal Chief's Records Task Force:***

a. **Composition:** The Principal Chief's Records Task Force shall be composed of the following members:

- i. **Keith Austin**, Cherokee Nation Businesses Cultural Tourism Consultant, former member of the Council of the Cherokee Nation (Chair)
- ii. **Molly Jarvis**, Cherokee Nation Cultural and Economic Development (CNB), Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer (Co-Chair)
- iii. **Jack Baker**, President, Oklahoma Historical Society; President, National Trail of Tears Association; former member of the Council of the Cherokee Nation
- iv. **Camerin Fite-James**, Executive Assistant to Principal Chief Hoskin
- v. **Dr. Ross Mulcare**, Cherokee Nation Businesses, Sr. Manager of Cherokee Nation Research Center
- vi. **Todd Hembree**, Cherokee Nation Businesses, special counsel; Cherokee Nation Attorney General (2011 to 2019)
- vii. **Seventh member chosen by appointed membership, subject to approval by the Principal Chief**

b. **Task Force Advisory Members, by invitation:** All living former Principal Chiefs of the Cherokee Nation.

- i. **Bill John Baker** (October 19, 2011 to August 14, 2019)
- ii. **S. Joe Crittenden** (*Acting Chief* August 14, 2011 to October 19, 2011)
- iii. **Chadwick Smith** (August 14, 1999 to August 14, 2011)
- iv. **Joe Byrd** (August 14, 1995 to August 14, 1999)
- v. **Ross Swimmer** (August 14, 1975 to August 14, 1985)

Advisory members will receive special briefings and an opportunity to provide input and recommendations to, and ask questions of, the Task Force.

The Task Force may request the assignment of such clerical and administrative assistance as necessary to perform its work. Additionally, the Task Force is generally authorized administrative

expense funds available under the Housing, Jobs and Sustainable Communities Act to fund its work, subject to approval of specific amounts.

c. Definitions

- i. **Records of the Principal Chief:** Any record in any form, including written, audio and visual, including hard copy and digital format, created in connection with the work of a Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, from the inception of that office in 1827 through the present date, or individuals working directly within his or her control and in the interests of his or her administration, excluding such records of a purely personal nature with no substantial nexus to the administration of the authority or responsibilities of the Office.

d. Objectives: The Task Force should examine the following subjects:

- i. *What definition of "Records of the Principal Chief," if other than that described in at forth in this order, should apply for the purposes of guiding the work of the Task Force?*
- ii. *An inventory of the status of records of each Principal Chief, including where such records are held and by whom, the physical condition of such records, whether such records have been digitized and an estimate as to the volumes of such records that have not been digitized and whether there exists a summary or other reference to such records useful for further investigation.*
- iii. *With respect to the records of each Principal Chief, to the extent such records are determined to be out of the possession of Cherokee Nation, what are the recommended strategies to reacquire such records?*
- iv. *Where, and under what legal authority, should Records of the Principal Chief be held?*
- v. *Identify, in summary fashion, current law relating to the reacquisition, storage or disclosure of Cherokee Nation public and archival records, including but not limited to Records of the Principal Chief.*
- vi. *What conditions or exclusions should attach to Records of the Principal Chief as it relates to public disclosure of such records, including but not limited to such considerations as delaying release of such records for a specified number of years after the subject Principal Chief leaves office, redaction of records identifying private individuals, etc.? In this analysis the Task Force should make such*

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recommendations irrespective of current controlling law, but should make an appropriate notation, where current law may be relevant to the analysis or may warrant amendment (eg, the Cherokee Nation Freedom of Information Act).

- vii. What legal or administrative guardrails are advisable to eliminate political bias in the reacquisition, storage or disclosure of Records of Principal Chief?*
 - viii. What issues, questions, concerns or recommendations are raised by all living former Cherokee Nation Principal Chiefs?*
 - ix. Identify a cross section of stakeholders and professionals, including current Cherokee Nation appointed and elected officials and non-appointed cabinet members, members of Cherokee Nation or related entity boards and commissions, academics and archivists and solicit their input in a standardized format.*
 - x. Create a means of soliciting Cherokee Nation citizen input via the Cherokee Nation Gadugi Portal.*
 - xi. What executive and or legislative action should be taken by Cherokee Nation to effectuate the purposes and policies of this Order and the recommendations of this Task Force?*
 - xii. Should the Task Force be adapted by legislative act to a more durable body authorized by law to continue guiding, recommending or making administrative determinations as it relates to the reacquisition, storage and disclosure of Cherokee Nation records, including but not limited to Records of the Principal Chief?*
- e. **Deadline:** The Task Force shall complete its work and issue a final report by June 30, 2026, unless extended in writing by the Principal Chief.
- f. **Prohibition Against Bias:** Members of the Task Force will undertake their examinations of the issues presented and make recommendations in response to this Order in a manner free from political or personal bias as it relates to the individuals who have held the Office of Principal Chief, or the incumbent principal chief.
- g. **Transparency:** Although the Task Force is an executive branch advisory group and not a public body within the meaning of the Cherokee Nation Freedom of Information Act, its final report shall be distributed to Cherokee Nation elected officials and to the general public via the Cherokee Nation website within 45 days of completion.

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4. **ORDER:** The Principal Chief's Task Force on the Management, Reacquisition and Disclosure of Records of the Office of Principal Chief is hereby created to achieve the purposes and policies set forth in this order.

5. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** This Order is effective immediately on this date, April 14, 2026.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CHUCK HOSKIN, JR.', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chuck Hoskin, Jr.
Principal Chief
Cherokee Nation