



CHITIMACHA
TRIBE OF LOUISIANA

May 4, 2016

Dear Tribal Member:

Over this past weekend, Chairman O'Neil J. Darden, Jr. sent a personal letter to the membership stating that he was terminating his voluntary, temporary leave of absence. We would like to clear up any confusion.

Chairman Darden's description of his removal as voluntary is incorrect. According to the Tribe's Constitution and ByLaws, except for the authority to chair meetings, the Tribal Chairman is allocated only the authority delegated to that position by the Tribal Council. Based on that authority, on February 18, 2016, the Council passed Resolution CHI-TC #12-16:

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the Vice Chairman of the Chitimacha Tribe, that is, April Wyatt, shall have all daily responsibilities and Tribal duties allocated by the Tribal Council and customarily performed by the Chairman, reassigned to the Tribal Vice Chairman and/or any other (Non-Chairman) Tribal Council member authorized by this or subsequent Council Resolutions in the absence or unavailability of the Vice Chairman until further Council Resolution revoking or amending such reassignment."

Therefore, Chairman Darden cannot make the decision to return to his duties as Chairman on his own authority. As noted in the above quoted transfer Resolution section, the transfer may not be revoked or amended unless done so through a separate Tribal Council Resolution. That has NOT occurred. Thus the transfer of authority to the Vice Chairman and the restrictions on the Chairman's authority remains in effect. The Council has notified Chairman Darden of this.

In accordance with the terms of the Tribal-State Compact, before a decision as to whether the State, Tribe or Federal authorities will handle a prosecution of a Tribal member, the case must be reviewed by the United States Attorney's Office. While Chairman Darden is subject to this review and due to the very troubling nature of these allegations, the Tribal Council determined that Chairman Darden would take a leave of absence, while continuing to receive his full salary. His only remaining involvement would be his only Constitutional authority - conducting public Council meetings.

