

Tribal Talk



Photo Credit: Eugene Campbell

Message from the Chief

Spring has arrived, and Pow Wow season is just around the corner. As we prepare for this special event, we are grateful for the time and dedication the Pow Wow Committee has put into making it a success.

This is an exciting time for the Upper Mattaponi Tribe—a meaningful opportunity to celebrate and share our cultural heritage, history, and collective achievements. We look forward to seeing many of you there. As always, let us continue uplifting our citizens, honoring our Elders, and inspiring our Youth.

In the spirit of renewal and celebration,
Chief W. Frank Adams

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Announcements

Job Openings

Current job vacancies can be found on our website at www.umitribe.org on the "Careers" page.



Let's Celebrate You!

Join the UMT Family Birthday Club and get a special card from Council on your birthday! For more info or to sign-up, please scan the QR code or visit:



<https://bit.ly/umtcouncilfbc>

Shop and Support

Shop exclusive Upper Mattaponi merch! All purchases support tribal events and initiatives.

Scan the QR code to visit: umtmerch.myshopify.com



Upcoming UMT Office Closures



- May 26 – Memorial Day
- June 19 – Juneteenth
- July 4 – Independence Day
- September 1 – Labor Day
- October 13 – Indigenous People's Day
- November 11 – Veterans Day
- November 27 – Thanksgiving
- November 28 – Native American Heritage Day
- December 25 – Christmas Day
- December 26 – Day After Christmas Day

Limited Edition Pow Wow Tee

On Sale Now: This collectible item will only be available for a short time—and not all colors and sizes will be offered at the Pow Wow.

A limited number of adult sizes will be sold on-site while supplies last, but youth, toddler, and baby sizes are available online only. Skip the line, lock in your favorite color, and make sure you do not miss out on this year's one-of-a-kind design!



Photo Credits: Printful

Tribal Government



Photo Credit: James Dixon

2025 Tribal Council Election Details

As stated in the recent "Notice of Election" from the Election Commission, the 2025 Tribal Council Election will take place on **October 25, 2025, at Sharon Indian School from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM**. Four Council Representative seats are open—three local and one at-large. Qualifications for Council Representatives are outlined in the tribal Constitution, Article VII, Section 2. Citizens may vote by mail or in person. Candidate filing forms are due by July 1 at 5:00 PM, and absentee ballots must be received by October 24 at 5:00 PM. Please keep your information updated with the Tribal Office to ensure you receive important updates.

For questions, please contact the Election Commission— Josie (Lewis) Luu, Jennifer Hicks, and Carolyn Howell — via email at Elections@umitribe.gov.

Empowering Education

The Sharon Indian School Foundation is accepting applications for its annual scholarship and new Educational Assistance Grants. Enrolled citizens of the Upper Mattaponi Tribe with a GPA of 2.75 or higher can **apply by June 6, 2025**. Applicants must submit proof of program acceptance, transcripts, and two reference letters. Awards will be announced by June 30, 2025 and paid directly to the educational institution.

The Foundation's new Educational Assistance Grants can cover expenses (up to \$1,000) like field trips, summer programs, and course fees. Applications are reviewed promptly to support urgent needs, with no deadline.

Both programs ensure Upper Mattaponi citizens have continual access to valuable educational opportunities. Applications can be downloaded at umitribe.org/scholarship.

Tribal Government

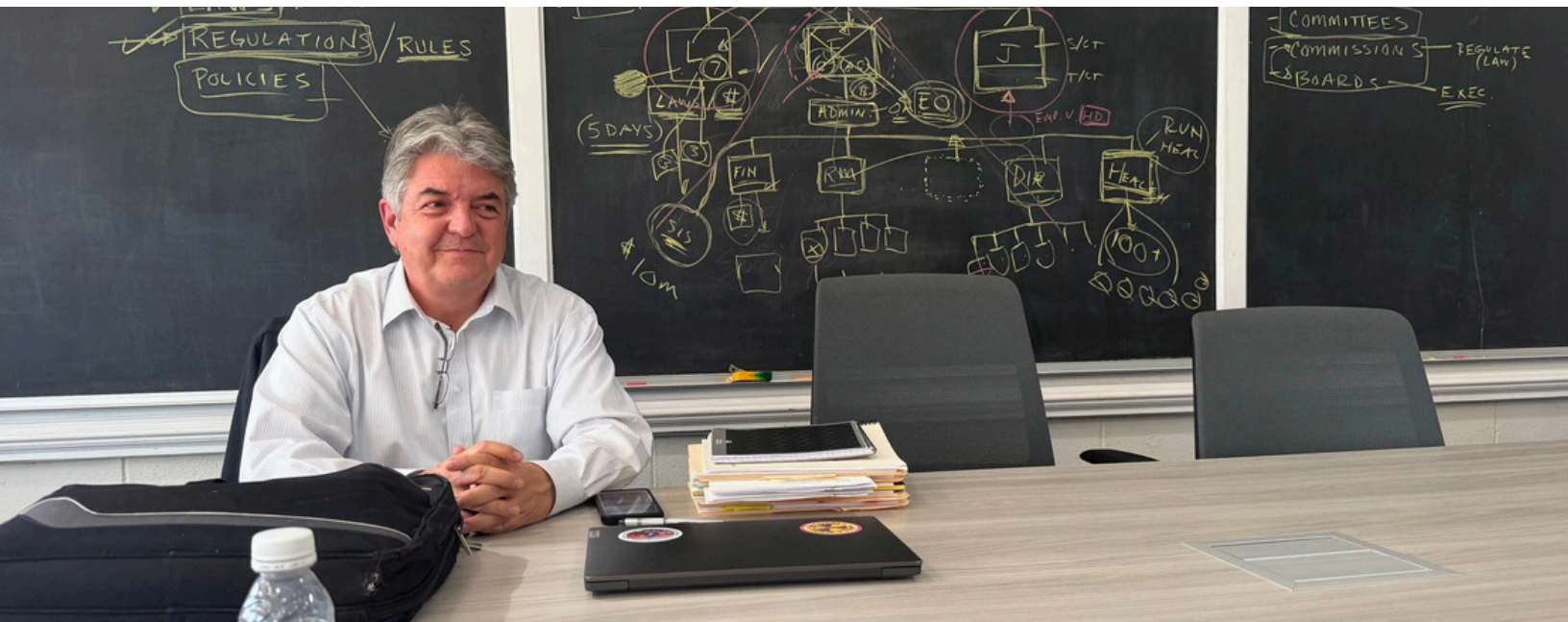


Photo Credit: Owen Adams

A Closer Look at Tribal Governance

Recently, Chief's Attorney, Robert Lyttle, visited to chat with our Executive Branch employees about how the Legislative and Executive Branches work together. He explained that the legislature creates laws through voting, while the executive branch puts those laws into action.

Lyttle also covered the differences between legislation, regulations, policies, processes, and standard operating procedures (SOPs). He emphasized the importance of each in keeping things running smoothly. This helpful session gave our Tribal employees a clearer understanding of how our governance works and how to be more efficient in their roles, ultimately benefiting the community as a whole.

Explore UMT Laws and the Constitution

Tribal citizens are encouraged to explore the Upper Mattaponi Tribe's Constitution and newly passed legislation on Open Law Library. Stay informed – scan the QR code or visit: law.umitribe.org



Upcoming Meeting Dates

5/15 - Council Meeting
at 6:00 PM (virtual only)

Cancelled for Pow Wow:
May Citizen's Meeting

6/28 - Council Meeting
at 9:00 AM (virtual or at Sharon Indian School)

6/28 - Citizen's Meeting
at 10:00 AM (virtual or at Sharon Indian School)

Can't make the meetings? No worries! We offer the option to join all of the Council and Citizen meetings virtually through Zoom.

Pow Wow Spotlight



Photo Credit: Eugene Campbell

A Weekend of Tradition: The 36th Annual Pow Wow

Come celebrate with us **May 24–25, 2025—Memorial Day weekend**—at the Upper Mattaponi Tribal Grounds for the 36th Annual Pow Wow! Gates open Saturday at 10:00 AM with Grand Entry at 12:00 PM. Sunday gates open at 11:00 AM with Grand Entry at 1:00 PM.

Experience the beauty of our own culture through drumming, singing, and dancing, along with delicious traditional foods and unique handcrafted vendor goods. This weekend is a time to honor our shared history, resilience, and the strength of our community. Bring your family, bring your friends, and join us for a heartfelt celebration of who we are. Let's come together and create lasting memories while keeping our traditions alive for future generations!

Please note, there will be no alcohol, weapons, drugs, pets, tents, coolers, or outside food allowed. This year, the Tribe is providing tents around the Arena and a limited number of bleachers for additional seating on a first come, first served basis. Please feel free to bring your own chairs.

Pow Wow Spotlight

Recognizing the 2025 Pow Wow Committee

As we look forward to this year's Pow Wow, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Pow Wow Committee for their dedication, time, and care in planning such an important gathering for our community.

Led by Chair Connor Tupponce and Vice Chair Suzanne Soule, this team has worked thoughtfully to ensure that our traditions are honored, our guests are welcomed, and our community is celebrated. We are also grateful for the efforts of Owen Adams (Finance & Administration), Rob Adams (Logistics), Martin Saniga (Vendors), and our Cultural Advisors, Reggie Tupponce and William Richardson.

Because of your hard work, this year's Pow Wow will be a meaningful and joyful experience for all who attend. Thank you for helping bring it to life. Many thanks!

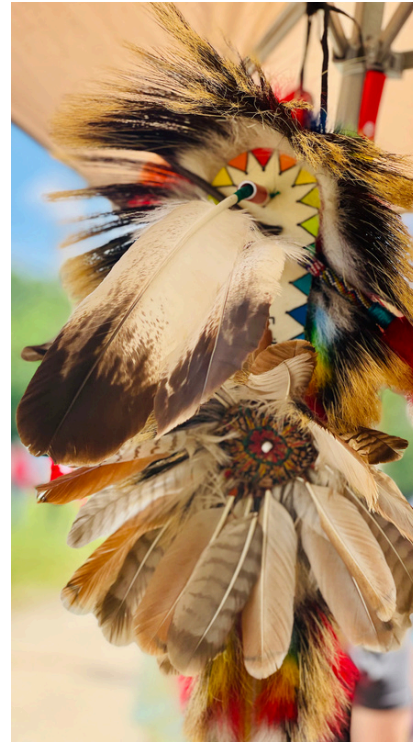


Photo Credit: Ivey Tupponce

Celebrating Our Pow Wow: Key Reminders

As citizens of the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, we carry the responsibility of protecting and upholding the traditions of our Pow Wow. These reminders are offered to help us lead by example, support our community, and teach future generations what respect looks like.

- **Honor Our Space:** Only dancers, drummers, and staff should enter the Arena. Stand quietly and remove your hat during Grand Entry and honor songs. Treat the drum and all regalia with care—they are sacred. Out of safety, cleanliness, and respect for the Arena, please wear footwear—bare feet are discouraged. Encourage guests to do the same.
- **Photography Etiquette:** Avoid taking photos during ceremonies unless the MC gives permission. Let others know when it is appropriate, too.
- **Seating Considerations:** Please make space for elders, dancers, and staff by offering your seat when needed. This shows respect for those who play key roles in our Pow Wow and community.
- **Embody Our Values:** Let us support our vendors, honor our veterans, and show respect to all guests and citizens in attendance.
- **Supervise Children:** Guide our youth to appreciate, respect, and learn about our traditions.
- **Respect Our Gathering:** This is a family event. No alcohol, drugs, weapons, pets, tents, or coolers.

Calls to Action

Join the Team Behind the Drumbeat – Volunteer at Pow Wow

We're excited to welcome volunteers for this year's Pow Wow! There are a variety of fun, flexible two-hour shifts available, so you can lend a hand and still have plenty of time to enjoy the event. To sign up, scan the QR code, visit the link below, or contact Suzanne Soule at (804) 535-0039 for assistance.

Your support helps everything run smoothly, and we are truly grateful for the time and energy you bring. We'd love to have you on board to help make this a memorable experience for all!



Link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E084FA8A928A3F94-55434575-volunteers#/>



Revving Up a Rebuild – Can You Help?

William Adams is currently in the process of rebuilding a small, black Ford Mustang and is seeking motor parts from model years 1979–1993. If you have any leads or can point him in the right direction, please contact him at (804) 246-8844. He can share more details about the specific parts he needs.

Supporting one another in our hobbies and personal projects is a great way to build stronger connections and a deeper sense of community among our tribal citizens. Thank you for your consideration!

Fresh from the Garden

CSA Produce Box Season Has Arrived

To register your household for the upcoming season, please email Katelynn Tupponce at: Katelynn.Tupponce@umitribe.gov or call (804) 535-0015. Pick-up days are every Thursday from 3:00PM – 6:00PM at the UMT Tribal Kitchen / Pavilion located at 13476 King William Rd. To schedule other pick-up arrangements, please reach out to the Agricultural Department. Registration for the season closes on Friday, May 23, 2025.

Wild & Blooming Workshop

Coming Summer 2025: Get ready for a hands-on, family-friendly workshop focused on Virginia's native pollinators and the plants that support them. Create your own seed bombs with pollinator-friendly native seeds to take home—stay tuned for more details!

Volunteering with the Tribal Garden

Whether you're an experienced gardener or just starting out, help the garden thrive and connect with the community. Volunteer shifts are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, with weekends available upon request. To schedule, contact Katelynn Tupponce at Katelynn.Tupponce@umitribe.gov or (804) 535-0015.

Gather & Grow: 2025 Family Planting Day

On **Saturday, May 10th, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM**, come together at the Tribal Garden & Pavilion for a special community event. Enjoy a day of storytelling, hands-on planting, youth activities, and a community picnic. Lunch will be provided with a Build-Your-Own-Sandwich bar, delicious sides, and drinks.

Please RSVP by Friday, May 2nd to Katelynn Tupponce at (804) 535-0015 or Katelynn.Tupponce@umitribe.gov.



Photo Credit: Suzanne Soule

Health & Wellness



UMT Pharmacy Gears Up for Grand Opening

The Upper Mattaponi Tribe is proud to announce that the UMT Pharmacy is nearing its official Grand Opening—and the community is invited to be part of the excitement! Located in King William next to Dollar General at 27 Commerce Ln, the pharmacy is currently open for pre-registration, Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, making it easy to transition back to a trusted, local pharmacy.

While the official Grand Opening date will be shared soon in a follow-up announcement and featured in local media, the pharmacy is already filling prescriptions for patients with Humana and Optum insurance. Contracts with additional insurance providers are actively being finalized to better serve all citizens and neighbors.

The UMT Pharmacy is open to everyone in the community and will be a much-needed resource, providing convenient and reliable prescription services close to home. Stay tuned—and thank you for supporting your local pharmacy!

Nutrition & Wellness

Good nutrition is the foundation of long-term health and wellness. Did you know that the foods we eat directly affect our energy, mood, digestion, and risk of chronic illness?

By learning healthy habits and planning meals, we can build a strong, balanced lifestyle that supports both physical and mental well-being. Small, sustainable choices—like eating a variety of whole foods and staying mindful of our needs—can lead to lasting change. Taking care of ourselves through food not only strengthens our bodies and minds, it also sets a positive example for those around us.

Healthy Eating Habits

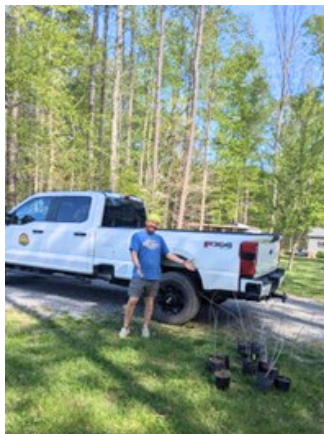
- **Eat a Balanced Diet:** Include a variety of whole foods like fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins, and dairy.
- **Be Mindful:** Watch portions, listen to hunger cues, and eat without distractions.
- **Choose Whole Foods:** Limit processed items and stay hydrated throughout the day.

Meal Planning Tips

- **Plan with Purpose:** Set goals, create a weekly menu, and shop with a list.
- **Prep and Flex:** Prepare meals ahead of time, but leave room for changes and cravings.

Work In Motion

Photo Credit: Conor Real



Spring Tree Giveaway Recap

This spring, the Upper Mattaponi Environment and Culture Department teamed up with the UMT Agriculture Department and the York River Steward to give away 150 native trees. Trees went to Tribal citizens, staff, and the Agriculture Department, which will use them to support the Tribal CSA and increase access to fresh, local food. All trees were native to Virginia and chosen for their cultural and environmental value, including traditional food and medicine uses.

With our new truck, we delivered trees to citizens in King William and plan to offer local delivery again next time. Stay tuned for details. To request specific species, contact Conor Real at (804) 994-1937 or Conor.Real@umitribe.gov.

Growing Smarter: Exploring Food Forests with the Chickahominy Tribe

Our Agricultural Department recently participated in the Gardening Nature's Way: Food Forests, Forest Gardening, & Forest Farming workshop hosted by the Chickahominy Indian Tribe on March 22-23, 2025. This two-day event focused on growing gardens that produce healthier food while benefiting the surrounding ecosystem with less effort than traditional vegetable gardens. The workshop provided valuable insights and hands-on experience, including planting a food forest in two locations, which will directly support the sustainable growth of our own tribal garden.



Photo Credit: Brady Johnson

Work In Motion

Buzzing with Purpose: Honeybees Join the Tribe

The Upper Mattaponi Environment and Culture Department is now home to three honeybee hives, installed on April 12 by Environmental Technician Johnathan Oxendine. The hives will eventually provide honey for Tribal use and support food sovereignty alongside our agricultural work.

Honeybees are vital pollinators, and these hives offer opportunities for education, stewardship, and sustainability. They reflect our commitment to caring for the land and building a healthier environment.

Curious about our honeybee hives? Scan the QR code above to watch our new YouTube videos. The bees are still settling in, but future chances to observe hive checks in-person may be offered in the future. Questions? Contact Johnathan Oxendine at Johnathan.Oxendine@umitribe.gov.



Watch as Johnathan explains how bees are transported, why queens are separated during travel, and how managed hives differ from wild ones!



Photo Credit: Johnathan Oxendine

Community Services Has Moved!

The Upper Mattaponi Tribe's Community Services Department has officially moved and is now located at **353 Kelley Lane**. This department currently includes Housing and Elder Care services, and continues to support citizens with essential programs and resources. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Kathryn Rowell, Director of Community Services, at Kathryn.Rowell@umitribe.gov or (804) 535-0093.



Photo Credit: Kathryn Rowell

Work In Motion

Elders: Take Charge of Your Heart Health

Heart health is vital—and it is not too late to join *Honoring the Gift of Heart Health!* This free program is designed for American Indian and Alaska Native communities and focuses on preventing cardiovascular disease (CVD) through simple lifestyle changes. Tribal elders will learn how to manage blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes, stay active, and build lifelong habits.

Classes are **every other Thursday at 2:00 PM** at Sharon Indian School. Upcoming dates are **May 1, 15, and 29**. CVD is the leading cause of death among all Americans. Join us as we learn, grow, and take steps toward better heart health—together!

For questions, please reach out to Jennifer Tupponce at Jennifer.Tupponce@umitribe.gov.

Youth & Family Night Returns

We are excited to share that Youth & Family Nights are back! These events bring together our community for hands-on learning, cultural connection, and fun for all ages. Our most recent gathering featured a workshop on hand drum making using deer hide and wood—an inspiring night of creativity and tradition. Mark your calendars for these upcoming evenings and reach out to Martin Saniga (Martin.Saniga@umitribe.gov) with any questions:

- **May 7:** Fish, grill, and unwind at Adamstown Pond.
- **June 4:** Explore Native board games & Indigenous traditions.



Photo Credits: Ivey Tupponce

\$50 for Completing the Census—Act Now!

Have you completed your Tribal Census? Enrolled citizens who submit their census by July 1 will receive a \$50 incentive. Just scan the QR code or visit the link below to submit your responses. Your participation helps strengthen the future of the Upper Mattaponi Tribe. Thank you for being an active part of our community!



Tribal Census Link: <https://forms.office.com/r/SrweEWp9Fd>

Staff Shoutouts

New Leadership in Housing Program

Congratulations to Karlia Washington on her promotion to Housing Program Manager in March 2025, after eight months as Housing Case Manager! With 14 years of experience at the Virginia Health Department, her calm and caring approach is invaluable in any housing, well, or septic crisis. Reach her at the new Community Services building, by phone at (804) 393-1180, or via email at Karlia.Washington@umitribe.gov.

Photo Credit: Ivey Tupponce



Harvard Bound: Desirée Dyer Selected for NCAI Program

Congratulations to Desirée Dyer, Senior Director of Grant Operations, on being accepted into the National Congress of the American Indians (NCAI) 2025 Leading Tribal Nations Executive Education Program! This prestigious one-week program equips tribal leaders with strategic governance skills through collaborative learning and case studies at Harvard Business School.

We are thrilled to see Desirée represent our community in this distinguished program and are excited for the contributions and leadership she will bring to our vital tribal projects.

Welcome New UMT Employees

- **Shalanda Vaughan:** LPN, Aylett Family Wellness (AFW)
- **Laurie Akers:** Front Desk, AFW
- **Christy Hardy:** Front Desk, Aylett Family Dentistry
- **Nickey Adams:** Agriculture Technician, Agricultural Dept.
- **Kayla Knott:** Housekeeper, Elder Care Dept.
- **Jessica Putnam:** Health Center Manager, AFW
- **Starr Shands:** Pharmacist, UMT Pharmacy
- **Kaitlyn Sokolowski:** Pharmacy Technician, UMT Pharmacy
- **Rimoun Botros:** Pharmacist, UMT Pharmacy
- **Nina Brundle:** GIS Analyst, Environmental Dept.
- **Morgan Faulkner:** General Counsel, UMT Government
- **Alicia Leroy:** RN, AFW

Shaping the Tribe's Legal Future

The Upper Mattaponi Tribe welcomes Morgan Faulkner, tribal citizen and passionate advocate for the community. A lifelong resident of King William County, Morgan lives in Aylett with her husband and two sons. She previously served as a Senior Assistant Public Defender in Richmond, where she managed more than 2,400 cases and led the team assigned to Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court.



Photo Credit: Ivey Tupponce

Morgan has faithfully served the Tribe on Council, as Assistant Chief, and now chairs the Sharon Indian School Foundation. In her role as our representative on the Virginia Code Commission and as the Tribe's new General Counsel, she works to ensure our voice is heard in legal matters and looks forward to serving in this exciting role!

Events Calendar

May 2025

May 1	Heart Health Session 5 (Elder Care)	2 PM at Sharon Indian School
May 1	2025 Youth Summer Camp – Applications Due	
May 2	Gather & Grow “Family Planting Day” – RSVPs Due by 5:00 PM	
May 7	Youth & Family Night	6–7:30 PM at Sharon Indian School
May 10	Gather & Grow “Family Planting Day”	10 AM – 2 PM Upper Mattaponi Tribal Garden & Pavilion
May 15	Heart Health Session 6 (Elder Care)	2 PM at Sharon Indian School
May 15	UMT Council Meeting	6 PM via Zoom Only
May 22	Garden/Flower Boxes & Dinner (Elder Care)	6 PM at Sharon Indian School
May 23	CSA Produce Boxes – Registration Closes	
May 24–25	Upper Mattaponi Tribe’s 36 th Annual Pow Wow	Saturday Gates 10 AM, Grand Entry 12 PM Sunday: Gates 11 AM, Grand Entry 1 PM Upper Mattaponi Tribal Grounds
May 29	Heart Health Session 7 (Elder Care)	2 PM at Sharon Indian School

June 2025

June 4	Youth & Family Night	6–7:30 PM at Sharon Indian School
June 6	Sharon Indian School Foundation – Scholarship Applications Due	
June 12	Heart Health Session 8 (Elder Care)	2 PM at Sharon Indian School
June 17	Bingo Night & Dinner (Elder Care)	6 PM at Sharon Indian School
June 18	Youth & Family Night	6–7:30 PM at Sharon Indian School
June 26	Heart Health Session 9 (Elder Care)	2 PM at Sharon Indian School
June 28	UMT Council Meeting	9 AM at Sharon Indian School and via Zoom
June 28	UMT Citizen’s Meeting	10 AM at Sharon Indian School and via Zoom

July 2025

July 1	2025 Tribal Census – Last Day for \$50 Incentive	
July 1	2025 Tribal Council Election – Candidate Filing Forms Due	
July 9	Youth & Family Night	6–7:30 PM at Sharon Indian School
July 10	Heart Health Session 10 (Elder Care)	2 PM at Sharon Indian School
July 21–25	Summer Youth Camp	8 AM – 6 PM at the Upper Mattaponi Tribal Grounds
July 23	Annual Mattaponi River Trip	TBA
July 25	Elder & Family Drive-In Movie Night	7 PM at the Upper Mattaponi Tribal Grounds
July 26	UMT Council Meeting	9 AM at Sharon Indian School and via Zoom
July 26	UMT Citizen’s Meeting	10 AM at Sharon Indian School and via Zoom

Resources

Elected Officials Directory

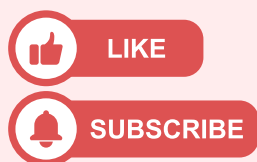
- Chief W. Frank Adams
- Assistant Chief Lou Wratchford
- Speaker of the Council Rob Adams
- Councilperson Ken Adams
- Councilperson Owen Adams
- Councilperson Desiree Dyer
- Councilperson Eithna "Beth" Gondos (At-Large)
- Councilperson Wilma Hicks
- Councilperson Harry "Sonny" Knighton

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 Monday - Friday
 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM



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THE UPPER MATTAPONI TRIBE

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KING WILLIAM, VA 23086



Contact the Tribal Talk Team!

If you would like to submit a story for consideration or remove yourself from the Tribal Talk mailing list, please email

TribalTalk@umitribe.gov