

1. What qualifications or experiences do you believe best prepare you to serve our Nation as an Executive Committee member?

My qualifications and experiences that best prepare me to serve on the Catawba Nation Executive Committee are rooted in my deep cultural knowledge, my current work for the tribe, and my unwavering love for our members.

Cultural Knowledge: Having been born and raised on the Catawba reservation, I have spent my life immersed in our traditions and customs. I have a deep understanding of our history, our resilience, and the importance of passing down our culture to future generations. I am actively engaged in community events, such as powwows, and work closely with our youth to help them stay connected to our roots.

Current Work for the Tribe: My current work within the tribe allows me to stay engaged with the day-to-day needs of our people. Through this work, I have developed a strong understanding of the challenges we face and the opportunities we can seize for growth. I see firsthand the areas where we can improve, especially in housing, elder care, and cultural preservation, and I am committed to addressing these issues.

Love for Our Members: My love for our members fuels my dedication to the tribe. I am passionate about helping our people thrive, whether it's by advocating for creating opportunities for cultural engagement or supporting our Nation in front of politicians. I passionately believe that by working together, we can continue to strengthen our community and build a brighter future for the Catawba Nation.

These qualities, combined with my heart for service, make me ready and eager to contribute to our nation's leadership as a member of the Executive Committee.

2. What are your top priorities if you are elected to serve on the Catawba Nation Executive Committee?

If I am elected to serve on the Catawba Nation Executive Committee, my top priorities will be:

Housing and Home Improvement: Ensuring there are more housing opportunities for families and providing much-needed home improvements for those in need.

Cultural Engagement: Increasing cultural involvement within the community especially for our youth. I believe that a stronger connection to our traditions will secure the future of our tribe.

Community/Workplace Unity and Support: Fostering a sense of unity among our people, remembering the hardships we have overcome, and ensuring everyone feels supported in their personal and collective growth.

Youth Empowerment: Focusing on programs that invest in our youth, providing them with the tools and resources they need to succeed and lead our Nation forward.

Elder Care: Prioritizing the care and well-being of our elders, who hold so much wisdom and knowledge, and ensuring they have the support and services they need.

These goals are ground in my passion for the prosperity and well-being of our people, now and for generations to come.

3. What, if anything, do you think you would like to do differently from the existing Executive Committee?

One thing I would like to do differently from the existing Executive Committee is to make regular departmental visits and have more meetings with the heads and all staff of our various divisions. By checking in frequently and hearing directly from those on the ground, we can get a better understanding of what is working and where improvements might be needed. This hands-on approach will help us ensure that every department is running smoothly and efficiently, and that our resources are being used in the best way possible for the benefit of all our members.

4. Please discuss your understanding of the Catawba Nation Settlement Agreement.

This settlement agreement has been in place since 1993 and from my understanding is that it is what is called an RSA or Restrictive Settlement Agreement. This settlement agreement not only hinders us a tribe but takes away from our opportunities to grow in South Carolina. We are restricted on how to control our own rolls without legislation and state approval, how much land we can put into trust, along with not being able to have our gaming rights for a IGRA Casino in the state of South Carolina.

5. What is your position on the substance use disorder problem within the Catawba Nation?

Substance use disorder is a serious issue that affects many in our community, and it's something we must address with compassion and urgency. We need a multifaceted approach that includes education, prevention, and accessible treatment options. Strengthening community support systems is key, especially by providing resources for families and individuals who are struggling. Culturally based healing practices, combined with modern therapies, could also be an effective way to help those in need.

Additionally, it is important that we eliminate the stigma around substance use and focus on healing as a community, ensuring that no one feels isolated in their struggle.

6. Regarding enrollment, do you believe a DNA test should be required regardless of whether the Catawba parent of the proposed enrollee is the mother or the father?

Currently it is required to have a DNA test administered if the mother of the child is not an enrolled member of the Catawba Nation. Furthermore, if over the age of 18 I think that DNA should be required. If general council would like to make an amendment to the way enrollment is overseen, I would support that.

7. Do you believe there should be a timeframe for enrollment eligibility?

Yes, this is a touchy question. I think that if over the age of eighteen that there should be some type of stipulation put in effect. The reason being is that I feel that some people are only coming to be put on the roll for per capita payment and all benefits. I am all for adding to the roll, but I think newcomers should have time to engage in the community and learn about the culture before trying to reap benefits.

8. What is your approach to providing transparency regarding decisions made with tribal business, entities, funding, and staffing/staff engagement?

My approach to providing transparency with tribal business, entities, funding, and staffing is centered around clear communication and open accountability. Tribal members deserve to be informed about how decisions are made, how resources are allocated, and the reasoning behind key actions taken by leadership.

9. What is your position on developing a cannabis industry on the Catawba reservation?

I believe developing a cannabis industry on the Catawba Reservation has the potential to bring significant economic benefits to our Nation, but it must be approached carefully and responsibly. If properly regulated, it could create jobs, generate revenue, and provide new opportunities for tribal members, while also offering medical and therapeutic benefits to those in need.

If the general council supports this initiative, I believe it could be a positive venture for our Nation, but only with the right safeguards and a focus on long-term sustainability.

10. The Nation's government has had serious issues with turnover and employee morale. What do you believe is the cause of this and how would you address it?

The high turnover and low employee morale within the Nation's government stem from a combination of factors, including unclear communication, lack of support, limited opportunities for growth, and a disconnect between leadership and staff. When employees feel undervalued or unheard, it directly impacts their motivation, commitment, and job satisfaction.

To address this, we need to first listen to employees through regular surveys, open meetings, and one-on-one discussions to understand their concerns, frustrations, and needs. Establishing a strong feedback loop is crucial so that employees know their voices matter and that their input is being used to improve the work environment.

I would also prioritize professional development and training opportunities, ensuring that staff feel empowered to grow within their roles. Mentorship programs, cross-department collaboration, and clear career pathways could also boost morale and reduce turnover by fostering a sense of purpose and long-term investment in the organization.

Finally, leadership needs to be more engaged and accessible to staff, regularly checking in on their well-being and ensuring workloads are manageable. A culture of appreciation and recognition for hard work and dedication is vital. By building a more supportive, communicative, and transparent work environment, we can create a stronger, more stable workforce that feels valued and committed to the Nation's success.

11. As a Nation, unity is important for our prosperity and longevity. What is your approach to creating unity within our Nation?

Creating unity within our Nation is essential for our prosperity, longevity, and cultural strength. My approach is rooted in open communication, mutual respect,

and a shared commitment to our collective well-being. First, we need to foster open dialogue among all members of the Nation, from elders to youth. This includes creating more opportunities for community gatherings, cultural events, and public forums where everyone can share their perspectives and voice their concerns.

Cultural engagement is another key component. When we connect through our shared traditions, ceremonies, and language, we strengthen the bond that ties us together. I would work to ensure that more cultural activities are accessible to all members, and that we encourage active participation in these practices, both for elders who hold our traditions and the younger generation who will carry them forward.

Additionally, I would advocate for transparent decision-making and leadership accountability. When our people understand how and why decisions are made, it fosters trust and reduces division. We must also bridge any divides within the community by finding common ground, promoting inclusivity, and ensuring that every member feels valued and heard, regardless of their background or status.

Finally, unity requires us to support one another in both good times and challenges. I would focus on strengthening support systems—whether in housing, education, healthcare, or economic opportunities—so that all members can thrive together. By building a community where everyone is empowered and respected, we can foster lasting unity that drives our Nation forward.