



**Little River Band of Ottawa Indians
Tribal Court of Appeals**

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LARRY B. ROMANELLI,
Appellee/Plaintiff

Appellate Court Case No. 26-114-AP
Trial Court Case No. 25-253-GC

v.

Hon. Melissa L. Pope, Chief Justice

**LITTLE RIVER BAND OF OTTAWA
INDIANS TRIBAL COUNCIL,**
Appellant/Defendant

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ORDER AFTER ORAL ARGUMENT WITH OPINION TO FOLLOW

On September 30, 2026, Oral Argument in the present case was held before the Court of Appeals following being previously scheduled but not heard due to an emergency. All parties appeared and made arguments to the Court.

The Court of Appeals went into recess to immediately deliberate due to the critical importance of the issues presented.

The Court of Appeals went back on the record at approximately 1:37 p.m. to deliver the *Order* of the Court of Appeals on the record. This *Order* affirms what was stated on the record with a written *Opinion* to follow.

The Court of Appeals unanimously agrees that the failure of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians ("LRBOI") Tribal Council to override a veto by the Ogema of the Budget establishes the Ogema's Budget as the valid Budget pursuant to Article § 5 (c) of the LRBOI Constitution:

(c) Every action taken by the Tribal Council, whether by ordinance, resolution or appropriation, which modifies the Tribal Budget submitted for approval by the Tribal Ogema, shall be presented to the Tribal Ogema for his/her approval and signature before it becomes effective. The Tribal Ogema shall approve or disapprove of the action taken by the Tribal Council within seven (7) days after the item is submitted to the Tribal Ogema by the Tribal Council. If he/she disapproves of the action taken by the Tribal Council, he shall return it to the Tribal Council within the seven (7) days provided, specifying his/her objections. If after re-consideration, it again passes the Tribal Council by an affirmative vote of six (6) of the nine (9) Tribal Council members, it shall become law and he/she shall sign it notwithstanding his/her objections.

The Majority of the Court, specifically Chief Justice Melissa L. Pope and Associate Justice Berni Darrow, also hold that Tribal Council has the legal duty to appropriate funds pursuant to Article IV § 7 (i) of the LRBOI Constitution.

The Majority of the Court further orders that the LRBOI Tribal Council fulfill this legal duty of appropriating funds pursuant to the approved Budget of the Ogema with Tribal Council having failed to override the veto of the Ogema.

The Court of Appeals orders the LRBOI Tribal Council to fulfill this legal duty by 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 1, 2026.

Associate Justice Bernadene Crampton dissents from this portion of the Order as delivered on the record and as stated in this Order After Oral Argument with Opinion to follow.

A more detailed *Opinion* shall follow that will include more analysis, as well as the dissent of Justice Bernadene Crampton.

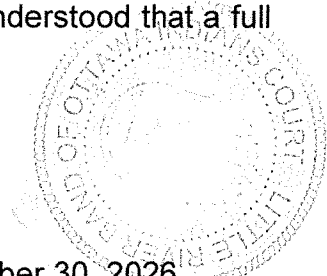
Upon the request of the Chief Justice, all parties confirmed prior to adjourning Oral Argument that they understood the *Order* from the bench as it was possible that a written *Order* today could be delayed. All parties also confirmed that they understood that a full *Opinion* with dissent will also be issued.

The Trial Court Order is affirmed.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

Melissa L. Pope
Hon. Melissa L. Pope, Chief Justice

September 30, 2026
Date



CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that this Order was served upon the parties pursuant to Tribal Court Rule 4.100.

9-30-26
Date

Spring Meadows
Court Clerk/Administrator