

Resolution #15-019

WHEREAS, the Board again recognizes the need for an advisory body constituted from the citizenry of the County to assist in the oversight and direction of the Agricultural and Forestal Economic Development Advisory Board, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Essex County Board of Supervisors that the Board does hereby establish an Agricultural and Forestal Economic Development Advisory Board (the Advisory Board) pursuant to § 15.2-1411 of the Code of Virginia.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the purpose and organization of the Advisory Board shall be as set out in the Charter of said Advisory Board, adopted herewith and made part of this Resolution by reference.

CHARTER FOR THE ESSEX COUNTY AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Agricultural and Forestal Economic Development Advisory Board shall be to serve as the advisory body for the Essex County Agriculture Development Program, whose mission is to develop and implement a continuing plan to sustain and enhance the rural economy. For the purposes of this Board, the agricultural community shall encompass farm and forest land.

DUTIES

The Agricultural and Forestal Economic Development Advisory Board shall have the following duties as determined by the Essex County Board of Supervisors:

1. Serve as a liaison between the Board of Supervisors and the citizens of the agricultural and forestal communities.
2. The Board shall make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors concerning issues of importance to the rural/agricultural community, and to that end, shall have the duty to research and make recommendations concerning the needs and interests of the rural/agricultural community.
3. Support programs that enable the preservation of farm and forest land, agricultural infrastructure and the industry of agriculture in Essex County.
4. Work to educate the non-farming public about the importance of agriculture in Essex County.
5. Advise and alert local, state and federal elected officials serving Essex County on issues of importance to the agricultural and forestal industry in Essex County.
6. The Agricultural and Forestal Economic Development Advisory Board shall have no authority to enter into any contract or incur any obligation binding the County of Essex.

DIRECTORS

The Board shall consist of bona fide farmers and foresters and any others who share a constructive interest in the stated objectives of this Board. The composition of the Board should be representative of agricultural and forestal interests in the county. The Agricultural and Forestal Economic Development Advisory Board shall consist of seven Directors appointed by the Board of Supervisors. One member shall be appointed from each of the four county election districts. In addition, three at-large members will be appointed by the Board of Supervisors. A

representative from the Essex County Extension office and the Essex County Department of Economic Development shall serve in an ex-officio capacity as advisors. These persons shall not be members of the Advisory Board but shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Board in any and all matters.

Rules related to membership, term of office, procedures for removal of members and the filling of vacancies as well as any other procedures related to Advisory Board members may be adopted by the Board of Supervisors, without the necessity of amending the charter.

Directors shall be appointed for a term of four years. The terms of District representatives on the Advisory Board shall be staggered and follow the election of their appointing Board of Supervisor member. The term of the at-large members shall end on the 31st day of December in odd years; specifically, two at-large members will have a term of two years ending 31 December 2017 and one members will have a term of four years ending 31 December 2019. Thereafter the at-large terms will be for a term of four years.

Any vacancy in membership shall be filled by appointment by the Board of Supervisors for the unexpired term only. Any member may be removed by the Board of Supervisors for inefficiency, neglect of duty or malfeasance in office. Frequent absence from meetings may be a basis for removal.

OFFICERS

The officers of the Advisory Board shall be a Chairperson, and Vice-Chairperson and Secretary. The officers shall be elected by the Board at the organization meeting in January to serve for one year or until a successor shall be elected.

The Chairperson shall preside at meetings, call special meetings, and make appointments to committees. The Vice-Chairperson shall serve as Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.

An Executive Committee made up of Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and the Secretary, with the advice of the ex-officio members, shall have the authority to act on behalf of the Advisory Board when circumstances require it. Any action taken by the Executive Committee must be ratified by the Advisory Board at the next meeting.

MEETINGS

All meetings of the Advisory Board shall be open to the public, except certain specific exempt topics identified in Section 2.2-3711 of the Virginia Code. The Board shall meet a minimum of four times per year. The first meeting of each year shall be held before January 31, which shall be the organizational meeting. The purpose of the meeting shall be the election of officers, establishment of the time, date and location for meetings and other business that may need to come before such meetings. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson, a member of the Essex County Board of Supervisors, or on the written request of at least two members. A majority of members shall constitute a quorum at any regular or special meeting. Should there be an unfilled vacancy on the Board the quorum of body shall consist of a majority of the existing Board Members. Meetings will not extend beyond 90 minutes. If the Advisory Board desires to extend the length of a meeting, a motion unanimously adopted by members present shall be required.

REPORTS TO THE ESSEX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The Agricultural and Forestal Economic Development Advisory Board shall provide periodic reports of its activities to the Board of Supervisors, and shall provide an annual report to the Board on or before January 31 of each year for the previous year's activities. In addition, after approval of the Board minutes of each meeting by a majority of the Board, a copy of said minutes shall be provided to County Administration.

RULES OF ORDER

The proceedings of the Advisory Board, except as otherwise provided within these By-Laws and applicable state law, shall be governed by Webster's New World Robert's Rules of Order, 1999, and more specifically, the provisions which pertain to conducting Informal Meetings for small boards.

COMPENSATION

Advisory Board members shall be compensated as the governing body so directs.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Advisory Board members shall comply with the state and local government Conflict of Interest Act (Section 2.2-3100 et seq. of the Code of Virginia).

AMENDMENTS TO THE CHARTER

The Advisory Board may recommend changes to the Charter by a 2/3 majority vote of attending members. Proposed changes shall be presented at a scheduled board meeting and shall be voted on at a subsequent meeting. The recommendations shall be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

Enacted on this the 9th day of June, 2015.

By _____
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

Attest: _____
County Administrator, Clerk