



**WASHINGTON COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND  
PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**BYLAWS**

**(in accordance with Policy PR-22, Boards and Commissions)**

**Article I**

**Name and Principal Office**

The name of the Board is the Washington County Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board (the Board.) The principal office of the Board is located at the Washington County Administration Building, 100 West Washington Street, Hagerstown, Maryland.

**Article II**

**Mission Statement**

The Board shall have the responsibility to promote the preservation of agricultural land throughout Washington County by offering information and assistance surrounding the retention of farmlands and woodlands to the Washington County Board of County Commissioners (Commissioners) and its local farm community.

**Article III**

**Priorities**

The Board shall:

- A. Assist the Commissioners in reviewing the status of agricultural land preservation districts and land under easement;
- B. Advise the Commissioners with respect to the establishment of agricultural land preservation districts and the approval of purchases of easements by the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) within Washington County (county);
- C. Advise MALPF concerning county priorities for agricultural preservation;
- D. Promote the preservation of agriculture within the county by offering information and assistance to farmers with respect to the establishment of agricultural land preservation districts and the purchase of easements;
- E. Approve or disapprove an application by the county for certification under §5-408 of the State Finance and Procurement Article;
- F. Meet as needed with forest conservation district boards in order to work cooperatively to encourage the promotion and retention of farmland and woodland in their respective jurisdictions; and,
- G. Perform any other duties as assigned by the Commissioners.

**Article IV**

**Membership**

Pursuant to Maryland Annotated Code, Agriculture Article, Subtitle 5. Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, Section 2-504.1, an Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board shall be appointed by the elected body by each county.

A. **Composition.** The Board shall be comprised of five (5) individual voting members appointed by the Commissioners, three (3) of whom shall be owner-operators of commercial farms who earn 50 percent or more of their income from farming.

B. **Terms.** Terms of the individual voting members shall be five (5) years; no member may serve more than two (2) consecutive full terms. A partial term will not be considered a full term for the purpose of these term limits. Original member terms shall be staggered.

C. **Termination of Membership and Vacancies**

1. Membership on the Board may be terminated by voluntary withdrawal or by removal by the Commissioners. Any member may withdraw from membership by giving written notice to the Board chair of such intention.

2. The Board may recommend to the Commissioners that the membership of an individual member be terminated based on one or more of the following criteria:

- a. inadequate attendance including excused and unexcused absences;
- b. breach of confidentiality;
- c. action/behavior that is inappropriate or inconsistent with County policy; and

3. The Commissioners shall have the authority to remove any member of the Board at any time when, in its sole and absolute discretion, the best interest of the community shall be served.

4. Any vacancy occurring in the Board for any reason shall be filled for the unexpired term by the Commissioners.

**Article V  
Officers**

A. **Elected Officers.** Members of the Board shall elect from among their members a chair, and vice-chair. Notwithstanding any provision of these bylaws, no member may simultaneously hold more than one office. The officers shall have the duties and powers usually attendant upon such officers and other duties and powers not inconsistent herewith as may be provided by the Board and/or the Commissioners.

B. **Terms.** The chair and vice-chair shall take office at the close of the Annual Meeting and shall serve for a term of one (1) year. Officers are eligible for reelection or reappointment for one (1) additional year. Vacancies occurring during a term of office must be filled for the unexpired balance of the term of office. When a vacancy in the office of the chair occurs, the vice-chair shall automatically succeed to the office of chair.

C. **Chair.** The chair shall:

1. Preside as the chief officer of the Board and shall be present at all meetings of the Board;
2. Maintain the right to vote on matters presented to the Board at all meetings of the Board;
3. Serve as a non-voting ex-officio member of all sub-committees and appoint the chair of each sub-committee from among the members;

4. Provide the Commissioners with written notification of the approval or disapproval of district and easement applications;
5. Ensure that proper records are maintained;
6. Communicate to the Board such matters and make such suggestions as may in the chair's opinion tend to promote the achievement of the goals outlined in these bylaws; and,
7. Perform such other duties as are necessarily incidental to the office.

D. **Vice-Chair.** The vice-chair shall perform all duties of the chair during his or her absence.

E. **Officer Removal, Resignation, and Vacancies**

1. The Board may recommend to the Commissioners that a member serving as an officer be removed from his or her officer position based on one or more of the following criteria:

- a. inadequate attendance including excused and unexcused absences;
- b. breach of confidentiality;
- c. actions/behavior that in the opinion of the Board is inappropriate or inconsistent with policy; and

2. The Commissioners shall have the authority to remove any member from an officer position of the Committee at any time when, in its sole and absolute discretion, the best interest of the community shall be served.

3. In the event of an officer vacancy that is caused by removal, resignation, or any other reason, the Board shall elect a member to fill the vacancy. The election shall take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting following the effective date of the vacancy. A member elected to fill a vacancy shall serve out the remainder of the officer's term left vacant. The partial term served shall not be applied to the term limits.

## **Article VI Meetings**

A. **Meetings.** Meetings shall be subject to the Open Meetings Act and members of the public shall be permitted to attend all meetings except as provided by law. General parliamentary rules, as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order, as amended from time to time, shall govern, when not in conflict with these bylaws.

1. **Regular Meetings.** The Board shall hold at least two meetings per year at such time and place that is convenient, and notice shall be given at least three days prior. A member shall disqualify himself from voting whenever he finds that he has a personal or monetary interest in the district application or land under easement. A member may disqualify himself from voting whenever any applicant, or his agent, has sought to influence the vote of that member.

2. **Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the Chairman upon written request of a majority of members of the Board. The Chairman may call special meetings at such times as he deems necessary.

B. **Attendance.** All members shall be required to attend the regularly scheduled Board meetings as scheduled. Failure to attend these meetings may be at the discretion of the Board and result in the following:

1. A third missed meeting in any fiscal year may result in a letter to the member from the chair regarding the attendance policy.

2. Disassociation from the Board as a voting member may occur after the third unexcused absence of regularly scheduled meetings in any fiscal year.

C. **Quorum.** Fifty-one percent (51%) of the total membership shall constitute a quorum. If such a majority is not present at any time, the presiding officer shall adjourn the meeting until a quorum is present.

D. **Sub-committees.** Other standing or special sub-committees of the Board may be formed by the Board as deemed necessary.

#### Article VII

##### Fiscal Year and Budget

A. **Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the Board shall begin on the 1st day of July and end on the last day of June.

B. **Budget.** No budget will be provided to the Board unless deemed necessary by the Commissioners.

#### Article VIII


##### Amendments to Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended, repealed, modified, or altered, in whole or in part, by the Commissioners, in their sole and absolute discretion. If such an amendment or change is proposed by the Board, such proposal must be submitted in writing and approved at a meeting of the Board. The proposal to amend these bylaws and the text of the proposed amendment must be included in the notice of the next meeting of the Board. At that time, the Board shall vote on the proposed amendment. Such proposed amendments shall be recommended to the Commissioners only if the proposal receives a quorum vote of the Board.

Approved and adopted this 24th day of September 2019.

ATTEST:

  
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Krista L. Hart, *County Clerk*

  
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Jeffrey A. Cline, *President*  
Board of County Commissioners of  
Washington County, Maryland