

By-Laws for the Chester County Agricultural Development Council

ARTICLE I - NAME

The organization shall be known as the Chester County Agricultural Development Council, herein also referred to as the Council.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The Chester County Agricultural Development Council was established by resolution of the Chester County Board of Commissioners, dated November 18, 1980, to "promote, encourage and assist in the retention of farmland and activities related to agriculture and agricultural production and examine problems and issues related to agricultural preservation".

The Council helps: Chester County farmers continue to farm while encouraging additional agricultural opportunities, create an environment to attract new farmers and agricultural activities, educate residents and municipal officials, and partner with others to help resolve problems and issues related to agriculture.

ARTICLE III - AUTHORIZATION

The Chester County Agricultural Development Council was established by the authority granted to the Chester County Board of Commissioners by Section 509 of the County Code.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Section 401: Representation – Members of the Chester County Agricultural Development Council shall represent a cross section of geographic areas of Chester County and various businesses directly involved with or related to farming and agricultural production.

Section 402: Residency and Employment Requirements - Each member shall be a resident of the County and/or work therein. If a member who does not reside within the County but works therein becomes employed outside of the legal boundary, then that member shall be entitled to finish their current term but shall not be eligible for reappointment.

Section 403: Size of Membership - The Council shall have no more than thirteen (13) members appointed by the Chester County Board of Commissioners, of which no less than five (5) members shall be directly active in farming or agricultural production.

Section 404: Duties of Members –

- A. Represent the Council and the mission of the County Commissioners to citizens of Chester County, municipalities, farmers, farm organizations and other groups, as appropriate.
- B. Participate in the Council by regularly attending Council meetings and when appropriate, Council subcommittees.
- C. Communicate to the Executive Committee any on-going circumstances that may interfere with participation in the Council.

Section 405: Terms of Office -

- A. All appointments or reappointments, except for vacancies which shall be in accordance with Section 406 below, shall be for a three-year term, with every term officially ending on December 31st of whatever year the term is to expire regardless of appointment or reappointment date.

- B. If said appointment(s) or reappointment(s) has not been made by the County Commissioners by December 31st, the members' terms shall continue on a contingent basis until the official appointment or reappointment is made.

Section 406: Vacancies - Nominations for appointment shall be sent to the Commissioners within three (3) months from the former member's last day of service.

- A. Appointments to fill mid-term vacancies on the Council shall be made by the Chester County Board of Commissioners for the balance of the term vacated with the official term ending on December 31st of whatever year the original term was set to expire.
- B. Appointments to fill vacancies on the Council at the end of a term shall be made by the Chester County Board of Commissioners for a full three-year term with the official term ending on December 31st of whatever year the term is set to expire.

Section 407: Membership Termination -

- A. Voluntary. Any member may voluntarily terminate their position on the Council with written notice sent to the Executive Committee. A member who wishes to terminate their position on the Council is asked to give as much notice of intent as possible so a new appointment can be made. The member, if willing, may continue to serve until a replacement is appointed.
- B. Involuntary. Any member missing five (5) meetings within a twelve (12) month period, excluding extenuating circumstances as determined by the Executive Committee, shall have their membership terminated.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

Section 501: Officer Titles - The Council shall be governed by an Executive Committee consisting of a Chair, Vice Chair, and the immediate past Chair, as well as a non-voting Secretary/Treasurer. The Secretary/Treasurer shall be the county staff Director of Agricultural Development.

Section 502: Duties of the Executive Committee - The duties of the executive committee shall include the following:

- A. Bring policy proposals and other appropriate business before the Council at its regular or special meetings.
- B. Represent the Council to the County Commissioners and to citizens of Chester County, municipalities, farmers, farm organizations and other groups, as appropriate.

Section 503: Duties of Officers

- A. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Chester County Agricultural Development Council and the executive committee, call special meetings, establish and participate in committees, appoint committee chairs, and delegate other tasks and assignments as may be appropriate.
- B. The Vice-Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Chester County Agricultural Development Council in the absence of the Chair, or if the Chair is unable to perform his/her duties for a period of time due to extenuating circumstances the Vice-Chair shall perform all duties on his/her behalf.

- C. The Immediate Past Chair shall serve as an advisor to the Chair and shall help the Chair transition onto the role of Chair.
- D. The Secretary/Treasurer shall be responsible for seeing that all meetings are recorded and that records of fees, expenses, and other budgetary and financial matters are kept.

ARTICLE VI - ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 601: Terms of Office –

- A. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be eligible to preside for two (2) two-year terms. In order to serve for a second two-year term, the Chair and Vice-Chair shall need to receive a majority vote of Council members present at the December meeting following the end of their respective first terms.
- B. Upon completion of his or her term(s), the Chair shall automatically succeed to the office of Immediate Past Chair. The Vice Chair shall not automatically succeed to the office of Chair but may do so upon nomination, acceptance of said nomination, and majority vote of Council members present.

Section 602: Date of Election - Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair officers shall be made biennially at the December meeting of each odd numbered year.

Section 603: Nomination of Officers -

- A. Officers shall be nominated by a nominating committee, appointed by the Chair, and shall be themselves members of the Council.
- B. Nothing written into these bylaws shall prohibit other Council members from nominating additional candidates to be considered for a Council office.
- C. A nominated candidate must be present at the meeting and may decline nomination.

Section 604: Election - An officer shall be considered elected upon having received a simple majority vote of members present.

Section 605: Vacancies - If a vacancy occurs in any office, the Council shall fill the vacancy at an election to be held at the first meeting after the vacancy occurs. The newly elected officer(s) shall fill the remainder of the vacated term and still be eligible for reelection to two (2) two-year terms.

ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS

Section 701: Meeting Rules – Council Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with general parliamentary rules such as Robert’s Rules.

Section 702: Meeting Dates - Meeting dates, times and places, shall be established by the Council and may be changed at any time pending a majority vote.

Section 703: Special Meetings - Special meetings may be called upon five (5) days notice, by the Chair and/or at the request of five (5) members of the Council.

ARTICLE VIII - QUORUM

- A. To reach a quorum to hold an official meeting at which Council business may be conducted, a simple majority of all members is required (e.g. in the case of 13 Council members, 7 must be present to hold an official meeting).
- B. If there are vacancies on the Council, then the number of filled positions shall constitute the full number of Council members from which a quorum to hold an official meeting shall be determined.
 - 1. In the case of an even number of Council members, quorum shall be met by the attendance of half of the members (e.g. in the case of 12 Council members, 6 must be present to hold an official meeting).

ARTICLE IX - VOTING

A simple majority vote of members present at an official meeting is needed to pass all resolutions and to transact all other items of business requiring a vote, except to amend these by-laws or change meeting dates, both of which require a majority vote of all Council members not merely those present.

ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS

These by-laws can be amended only by a majority vote of all members of the Council, not merely those present, and shall be subject to approval by the Board of Commissioners. Notice of any proposed amendment must be made to all members and to the Board of Commissioners at last twenty-one (21) days prior to the vote being held.