

**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY  
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY TASK FORCE**

**BY-LAWS**

**APRIL 19, 2016**

**BY-LAWS OF THE  
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY  
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY TASK FORCE**

**I. AUTHORITY**

The Agricultural Advisory Task Force (the “Task Force”) is organized and exists as an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors of Contra Costa County (the “Board”) and the County Agricultural Commissioner pursuant to an Order of the Board dated April 26, 2016.

**II. PURPOSE**

The mission of the Task Force is to advise and provide recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on matters that relate to preserving and promoting agriculture in Contra Costa County. In doing so, the Task Force will also provide a forum to support the exchange of information and ideas, advocate for projects, resolve disagreements, foster consensus and build relationships within the agricultural and ranching community.

**III. DUTIES**

The Task Force shall perform the following advisory functions:

1. Provide leadership and direction in formulating policies relevant to preserving and promoting agriculture, and advise the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors on applicable planning, zoning, and other land-use issues.
2. Make recommendations to enhance the economic viability of agriculture and to minimize undesirable environmental impacts.
3. Provide active participation and leadership to develop a plan to further preserve, enhance and promote agriculture in Contra Costa County.
4. Participate periodically in the review of Contra Costa County's guidelines for the Williamson Act.

5. Report to the Board of Supervisors on effects of proposed local, state and federal legislation affecting agricultural resources
6. Advise and work with city, county, district governments, special interest groups, and individuals concerning conflicts between agriculture, urban development and environmental quality.
7. Advise and work with city, county, state, federal, special interest groups, individuals, and other entities and district governments concerning agricultural preservation funding opportunities.
8. Advise County departments on the impact of programs affecting preserving and promoting agriculture in Contra Costa County.
9. Determine the Task Force's work schedule, procedures, and work products.

#### **IV. MEMBERSHIP**

1. All members shall be appointed by the Board of Supervisors, except as otherwise provided herein.
2. Voting seats
  - a. The Task Force will be comprised of eight voting seats, and each voting seat will be filled by one member.
  - b. In order to ensure that the Task Force represents each region of the County, one seat representing each of the five County districts shall be filled by one member nominated by each District Supervisor.
    - i. Those appointed shall be technical representatives of their profession or field, and advocates for preserving and promoting agriculture in Contra Costa County.
    - ii. They shall demonstrate expertise by their active involvement in agriculture, professional association and/or academic achievement.
    - iii. They shall be able and committed to meet regularly and should be able to communicate effectively with interested members

of the public.

- c. In addition, a seat shall be provided each to the following:
  - i. A representative of the Contra Costa County Farm Bureau that is nominated by the Bureau.
  - ii. A representative of Harvest Time that is nominated by its membership.
  - iii. A representative of Cattlemen's Association that is nominated by its membership.

These organizations shall submit the names of their selected representative to the Board for approval.

- d. It is expected that appointments for the above membership positions will represent the variety of agricultural interests within the County. If the need arises for additional appointments, other experts may be recommended by the Task Force at any time to the Board of Supervisors to become voting members.

- 3. Ex officio members will be non-voting and shall be the following persons:
  - a. Contra Costa County Agricultural Commissioner (or designee)
  - b. Contra Costa County Director of Conservation and Development (or designee)
  - c. A representative of the University of California Cooperative Extension, nominated by the Cooperative Extension Office and approved by the Board of Supervisors
  - d. A representative of the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District, nominated by the District and approved by the Board of Supervisors

## **V. TERMS OF OFFICE**

- 1. All appointed members of the Task Force serve at the pleasure of the Board of Supervisors and shall have terms of three years.
- 2. No voting member shall serve more than two terms in succession.

3. A voting member shall remain on the Task Force following expiration of the term being served until he or she is re-appointed to a successive term or until a successor is appointed.
4. The Board of Supervisors shall fill any vacancy on the Task Force and may utilize the Task Force to screen an applicant's qualifications. The person appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve for the remainder of the term of the person he or she succeeds.
5. Ex officio members and the three seats nominated by industry groups will serve at will for two year terms as long as they represent the entity that selected them to serve as ex officio members of the Task Force and are willing and able to act as members.
6. Resignation: any member who desires to resign his or her position with the Task Force must do so in writing and file it with the Chairperson and Secretary of the Task Force.

## **VI. OFFICERS**

The Task Force shall select the following officers from its membership:

1. A Chairperson selected from the voting members who shall be responsible for the conduct of all meetings and the calling of special meetings, and who shall be the official representative of the Task Force except when a representative is otherwise designated.
2. A Vice-Chairperson selected from the voting members who shall serve in the absence of the chairperson, and who shall succeed to the office of chairperson if that office falls vacant before the term is expired.
3. A Secretary selected from the ex officio members who shall be appointed by the chairperson subject to confirmation by the Task Force. The secretary shall maintain all records and conduct correspondence of the Task Force, prepare agendas and give notice of meetings and shall certify all official documents and resolutions of the Task Force.

4. Selection of officers shall be held at the first regular scheduled meeting of the Task Force and annually thereafter.

## **VII. OPEN MEETINGS**

Meetings of the Task Force shall be held as follows:

1. Regular meetings shall be held two times per year at a minimum, pursuant to a schedule of dates, times and places determined at the first meeting of the Task Force.
2. Additional meetings may be called by the Board of Supervisors, the chairperson or by a quorum of voting members. Meetings shall only be scheduled with ninety-six (96) hours written notice of the time and place and business to be conducted.
3. All meetings shall be conducted in compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act (Government Code § 54950 et seq.) and the County's Better Government Ordinance.
4. A copy of the agenda and minutes of each meeting shall be mailed to each member, the Board of Supervisors, and any additional persons as authorized by the Task Force. Other persons requesting the minutes of a meeting must do so in writing to the Secretary and pay the prevailing copying and mailing rates.

## **VIII. QUORUM AND VOTING**

1. A quorum for all meetings shall be one more than half of the voting seats of the Task Force, or 5 members. (A vacant voting seat shall still count towards quorum.) A quorum must be present for the Task Force to take any action.
2. A majority vote of those voting members present is necessary for any matter to pass.
3. Proxy voting is not permitted.

4. In the event of a tie vote, the Chairperson may designate one of the ex-officio members to cast the tie-breaking vote. The ex-officio member designated by the Chairperson shall be the member with the most knowledge of the issue at hand.

## **IX. ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Regular attendance at meetings of the Task Force is required. An unexcused absence from three regularly scheduled consecutive meetings will be considered grounds for the Task Force to recommend to the Board that the absentee member's appointment be rescinded by the Board.
2. Excused absences will be granted for the following reasons: illness of self, member of immediate family, or close friend; death of member of immediate family or close friend; requirements of the member's job or elected/appointed position; vacation. A member must contact the Secretary prior to the meeting to be excused from a meeting.
3. The Chairperson will notify any member at risk of having his or her appointment rescinded before recommending rescission to the Board.
4. Rescission of an appointment to the Task Force may only be effected by an action of the Board.

## **X. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS**

1. No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the Task Force other than on those matters named in the publicly posted agenda.
2. All meetings of the Task Force shall be called to order by the Chairperson, or in the Chairperson's absence, by the Vice-Chairperson, or in the Vice-Chairperson's absence, by a Task Force member designated for that purpose by the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson.
3. Public comment at all meetings shall be as provided for under applicable law.

## **XI. SUBCOMMITTEES**

1. Subcommittees of Task Force members may be established as necessary by the Chairperson. Subcommittees may either be standing or ad hoc.
2. All subcommittees shall make progress reports to the Task Force at each of the Task Force's regular meetings.
3. All subcommittee meetings shall be conducted under the same policies governing meetings of the Task Force.

## **XII. STAFFING**

The Department of Agriculture will provide primary staffing to accomplish the work of the Task Force. The Task Force may make recommendations to staff and the Board of Supervisors to hire consultants as required.

**Staff Contact:** Chad Godoy, Contra Costa County Agriculture Department  
Phone number: (925) 646-5240 or  
E-mail: [chad.godoy@ag.cccounty.us](mailto:chad.godoy@ag.cccounty.us)

## **XIII. AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS**

1. These By-Laws may be amended by two-thirds vote of the Task Force on advance written notice. All amendments that alter the provisions of the April 26, 2016 Board Order that established the Task Force must be approved by the Board.
2. Notice of proposed By-Law amendments shall be presented in writing at a regular meeting of the Task Force for discussion. The Task Force shall vote on the proposed amendments at the next regular meeting of the Task Force. The agenda for the meeting at which the proposed amendments are to be voted upon shall contain an item entitled "Proposed By-Law Amendment."

## **XIV. PUBLIC ACCESS TO TASK FORCE RECORDS**

The Task Force shall make available to the general public all records as required by law.