

**BYLAWS OF THE KITSAP COUNTY AGRICULTURE
ADVISORY COUNCIL**
Adopted MONTH, DAY, YEAR

ARTICLE I. AUTHORITY

The Kitsap County Agriculture Advisory Council (the “Council”) was established by Resolution 011-2026, effective January 26, 2026. The Council shall be governed by said Resolution and these Bylaws.

ARTICLE II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COUNCIL

The Council is an advisory body to the Kitsap County Board of Commissioners (“Board”) and Department of Community Development with duties and responsibilities as set forth in Resolution 011-2026. The Council shall forward its advice and recommendations to the Department of Community Development (referred herein as DCD) and DCD relays to the Board, as appropriate.

As stated in Resolution 011-2026 and as clarified herein, the Council provide input and recommendations on the following matters:

- A. Rural and Resource Lands Chapter components of the Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan, and policies and strategies within the plan affecting agriculture or rural land use;
- B. County regulations or code affecting agricultural operations or production, including but not limited to the Critical Areas Ordinance and the Shoreline Master Program;
- C. County preparation and response to proposed legislation at the state level affecting agriculture in Kitsap County;
- D. The Rural Lands Analysis, including strategies to sustain farming;
- E. How a proposed Working Lands & Agriculture Overlay might support farming operations;
- F. How agritourism can engage the public and enhance farm viability, while addressing potential impacts and clarifying ambiguities in existing code;
- G. Land use compatibility strategies to maintain harmonious coexistence between farms and neighboring uses, including mitigating development impact on agriculture;
- H. Complaints from the community related to agriculture, livestock operations, development pressures, or regulatory ambiguities;
- I. Guidance to county regulatory agencies with regard to common, usual and customary agricultural and animal husbandry practices;
- J. Strategies and policies to encourage and promote the preservation of agricultural lands in Kitsap County; and
- K. Other matters of agricultural policies which may be referred by the Board, or as may be raised by the Council.

ARTICLE III. COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Resolution

The Council shall consist of eleven members appointed by the Board of pursuant to Resolution 011-2026. All members shall reside in Kitsap County or be active agricultural producers operating in Kitsap County. Membership will consist of one agricultural producer, one farmer and one agricultural specialist from each commissioner district and two at-large youth representatives.

Section 2. Potential Members

Potential members shall apply through an online application process on the County's Advisory Group website. All members shall comply with the current edition of the Kitsap County Advisory Handbook and shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing commissioner.

Section 3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 1) **Officers.** The Council has a Chair and Vice Chair only (no Secretary).
- 2) **Chair (Voting)**
 - a) Meeting leadership: Presides over the meetings, ensures respectful and productive discussion.
 - b) Agenda leadership: Works with DCD staff to draft and finalize agendas; determines priority order.
 - c) Meetings management: Calls special meetings/cancellations consistent with Bylaws and in coordination with DCD.
 - d) Spokesperson: Represents the Council in official communications.
 - e) Workflow: Ensures subcommittee charters/reports advance to the full council when ready.
 - f) Quality & compliance: Confirms that meeting logistics and postings meet Open Public Meeting Act (OPMA) and Bylaws timelines.
 - g) Elections: Oversees officer elections each January as required in the Bylaws.
 - h) Onboard of new council members: Chair oversees, with staff assistance, onboarding of new council members.
- 3) **Vice Chair (Voting)**
 - a) Serves as acting chair when Chair is absent or position is vacant.
 - b) Supports agenda prep and meeting facilitation.
 - c) Leads timekeeping and helps maintain meeting focus.
 - d) Coordinates follow-up assignments if delegated by the Chair.
- 4) **Council Members (Voting)**
 - a) Review materials in advance; be familiar with laws/codes affecting agriculture.
 - b) Attend meetings, contribute constructively, declare conflicts when applicable.
 - c) Complete assigned tasks and subcommittee work.
 - d) Represent the perspectives of their district, constituency, or sector in Council deliberations while supporting solutions that advance the interests of the county as a whole.

5) **Administrative Support**

- a) Administrative support for the Council will be provided by nonvoting staff representatives from the Kitsap County Department of Community Development (DCD), Washington State University Kitsap Extension (WSU), and the Kitsap Conservation District (KCD).
- b) One DCD representative will serve as the lead administrator for the Council and primary liaison to the Board and its staff. Representatives from WSU and KCD will serve as administrative support staff and advisors, providing technical expertise, resources, and assistance to the Council. Designated County and partner agency staff shall provide administrative, technical, and procedural support to the Council, including meeting logistics, records management, public notice requirements, and compliance with applicable bylaws and policies.
- c) Administrative support responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:
 - i) Meeting records and documentation: KCD or WSU staff will record attendance and prepare draft meeting minutes or summaries.
 - ii) Public notice and meeting materials: DCD staff will post meeting notices, locations, agendas, and approved minutes in accordance with Council bylaws and applicable requirements.
 - iii) Meeting logistics and accessibility: DCD staff will coordinate meeting facilities, technology, and public access accommodations.
 - iv) Process and administrative support: DCD, KCD, and WSU staff will assist with preparing meeting packets, tracking action items, maintaining records, and supporting Council and subcommittee activities.
- d) All administrative support staff shall serve as nonvoting members of the Council.

ARTICLE IV. TERMS OF APPOINTMENT AND VACANCIES

Section 1. TERMS

Council members shall serve terms through December 31, 2027, at which time the Council shall sunset as provided in Resolution 011-2026 unless otherwise extended or modified by subsequent action of the Kitsap County Board of County Commissioners.

Section 2. VACANCIES

Section 2.1 Vacancy Due to Absences

All members are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings. When a member is unable to attend a regularly scheduled meeting, they should notify the Chair or county staff in advance. Lack of notification will be considered an unexcused absence. More than three unexcused absences by any member during any 12-month period may result in removal of the member. Once there are three unexcused absences, the Council shall recommend removal to the Board.

Section 2.2 Other Vacancies

A vacancy in a member's position shall also occur upon resignation, removal, death, incapacity,

or any other circumstance in which the member is unable or unwilling to complete the term of membership.

Such vacancies shall be filled in accordance with the procedures established by the appointing authority and applicable law and shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term.

ARTICLE V. OFFICERS

Section 1. Elections

Officers of the Council shall be the chair and vice-chair. At the first meeting of the Council and thereafter at the first meeting of the calendar year, the Council shall conduct an election of officers. Elections will follow Robert's Rules of Order and will entail a majority vote to seat each officer position. Newly elected officers assume office immediately upon election.

Section 2. Terms

An officer may not serve more than two consecutive one-year terms in either office. After a period of two years out of office, they may be considered for re-election to the position held previously. If a vice-chair moves into the chair position, that is considered Year One of a new office.

The responsibility of the officers are per Section 3.

Section 3. Vacancies of Officers

In the event of a vacancy in the office of chair, the vice-chair automatically becomes the chair to serve out the remainder of the chair's term. A vacancy occurring in the office of vice-chair is filled by election from the current serving members to serve for the unexpired portion of the term of the vice-chair.

Section 4. Presiding Officer in Absence of Officers

In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair at a meeting, the members present shall elect a Chair *pro tempore* from among those present to preside for that meeting only.

ARTICLE VI. QUORUM AND ATTENDANCE

A majority of the current seated voting members shall constitute a quorum. In the event a quorum is not present at a meeting, no formal action or official business may be conducted. Members present may stay to informally discuss agenda items.

The minutes shall reflect the names of those members present and those who are absent.

ARTICLE VII. DECISION MAKING AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

Council members are expected to remain informed on all relevant matters presented to the Council. The decision-making process will strive to ensure that each member's perspective is heard, respected, and thoughtfully considered. Official business may only be taken when a quorum is present. A formal action that requires a vote, such as the approval of minutes, selection of offices, formal recommendations, and position statements, requires a simple majority of members present to pass.

Section 1. Conflict of Interest, Ethics, and Individual Representation

1) Member Role and Representation

- a) All members serve as individual representatives. Members do not represent affiliated organizations, advocacy positions, or personal business interests

2) Conflict of Interest

- a) All members are subject to Kitsap County Code (KCC) chapter 3.25 and RCW chapters 42.20 and 42.23. Among other prohibitions, these rules prohibit members from gaining financially as a result of their position. To ensure government transparency and that private interests do not conflict with the function of the Council, the following actions are required:
 - i) **Disclosure:** Members must disclose whether a Council recommendation could affect the finances of the member or member's family.
 - ii) **Recusal:** When a personal interest is more than remote, as defined in RCW 42.23.040, the member must not participate in discussion or vote on that item and the recusal must be noted in the minutes.
 - iii) **Appearance of a conflict:** Members should avoid even the appearance of undue influence or personal gain.
 - iv) **Guidance:** When in doubt, consult DCD staff for assistance with County legal/ethics resources.

3) Minority Opinion

- a) Any Council member or group of members may submit a minority opinion for the official record when a consensus is not reached, and a majority vote has occurred.
- b) Minority opinions must clearly identify the specific issue, proposed code language, or at issue, along with the rationale for the dissenting view.
- c) When possible, the minority report should also include preferred alternative language or options.
- d) All members supporting the minority opinion shall be listed within the document.
- e) Minority reports must be provided to DCD staff within 5 business days of the meeting at which the vote occurred (or submit with packet if anticipated), for inclusion in the record and any transmittals.

4) Operating Guidelines

- a) In addition to these Bylaws, the Council will adopt a set of Operating Guidelines that outline expectations for meeting conduct and define how both the Council and assigned county staff will fulfill their respective responsibilities.

- b) These guidelines may be approved and/or amended by the majority vote of a quorum of the Council members.

ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS

Section 1. Open Meetings

- 1) All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public and conducted in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA, chapter 42.30 RCW).

Section 2. Public Participation

- 1) The Chair may set time limits (3 minutes per speaker) for public comment and may request sign-in to manage time. Comments should be germane to agricultural policy and Council business.
- 2) The Chair may pause or end comment that is out of scope or violates decorum (KCC 3.02).
- 3) Public comments will be generally summarized in official meeting minutes.

Section 3. Regular Meetings

- 1) The Council shall meet in person at least six times per calendar year, including no fewer than one meeting per quarter. The Council shall set the dates and times for all regular meetings at the first meeting of the calendar year.
- 2) Notice of the meeting location and time shall be posted on the County website no fewer than seven (7) days prior to each meeting.

Section 4. Cancel Meetings

The chair may cancel a scheduled meeting when no business requires Council action or when weather or other conditions make meeting impractical. DCD Staff shall notify Council members of any cancellation.

Section 5. Special Meetings

- 1) Special meetings may be called by the chair or, in the chair's absence, by the vice chair, after consultation with Department of Community Development (DCD) staff. Council members shall receive at least forty-eight (48) hours advance notice of any special meeting.
- 2) All special meetings shall be open to the public in accordance with the law and comply with the special meeting restrictions under the OPMA. No action may be taken on items that are not on the posted agenda.

Section 6. Meeting Locations

- 1) To support broad community participation, the Council should make reasonable efforts to hold meetings at various locations within the county, particularly those accessible to the agricultural community. The locations for regular meetings shall be set at the first regular meeting of the calendar year.
- 2) The Council shall determine the meeting location, which must be accessible to the public as required by law.

Section 7. Agendas

- 1) Meeting agendas shall be approved in advance by the chair or vice chair, in consultation with DCD staff.
- 2) Agenda items may be requested by Council members, referred by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), or carried over from prior meetings or established work plans.
- 3) If urgent matters arise after the agenda has been posted, the Council shall determine at the beginning of the meeting whether and how such matters will be addressed.

Section 8. Minutes

The Council shall keep, review, approve, and publish minutes of all meetings. Minutes shall provide a summary of business conducted and actions taken.

Section 9. Subcommittees

- 1) The Council may establish subcommittees as needed to examine specific issues.
- 2) Recommendations to form a subcommittee shall be determined as set in the Operating Guidelines.
- 3) Subcommittees shall be less than a quorum and are not subject to OPMA.

ARTICLE IX. REPORTING TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

At least once per year, the Council, with assistance from DCD and other administrative support staff, will submit to the Kitsap County Board of County Commissioners an annual work plan to prioritize work and an annual report to advise on agricultural policy issues and recommendations of the Council.

ARTICLE XII. PUBLIC RECORDS

- 1) Meeting agendas, minutes, and supporting documents of proceedings of all Council meetings shall be recorded by administrative support staff for approval by the Council. DCD staff will make the minutes part of the permanent public record and posted online.
- 2) Such minutes shall generally consist of a written meeting summary, including a listing of attendees (Council members and the public) and member absentees, an overview of the discussion, and a record of any actions taken.
- 3) Council members must approve the written meeting minutes at the following meeting.
- 4) Subcommittees are subject to the Public Records Act and shall retain and share any meeting records, if used, including agendas and minutes.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS AND ARTICLES

The Council shall develop and may from time-to-time recommend revisions to these Bylaws acceptable to and approved by the Board; provided that such bylaws shall not conflict with state or county law. The Bylaws shall, at a minimum, address matters such as required attendance at meetings, selection of a chair and vice-chair, scheduling of meetings, quorum requirements and decision-making procedures. Any change to the Bylaws requires the changed language to be introduced at one meeting and voted on at the following meeting. Any approved amendments to these Bylaws will be forwarded to the Board for adoption.