

Vermont Housing and Conservation Board  
**GUIDELINES**  
**FARM VIABILITY ADVISORY BOARD**

**PURPOSE**

In accordance with 6 VSA §4710, “An Act Relating to a Farm Viability Program, and also in accordance with the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board’s adopted Policy Position on the Vermont Farm Viability Enhancement Program (“the Program”), a Farm Viability Advisory Board is constituted to advise and offer guidance to the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) and to Program staff on matters relating to the Vermont Farm Viability Enhancement Program.

**MEMBERS**

The Farm Viability Advisory Board shall consist of the following members:

- The Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, or designee
- The Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Economic Development, or designee
- The Manager of the Vermont Economic Development Authority, or designee
- The Director of the University of Vermont Cooperative Extension Service, or designee
- The Executive Director of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, or designee
- Four Vermont farmers appointed by the Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, in consultation with the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
- A person who has expertise in agricultural economics, financing, or business planning appointed by the Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

The Secretary may choose the four farmer members to reflect, generally, the agricultural sectors identified as potential recipients of the Program’s services. The farmer members’ background and experience may include any combination of conventional dairying, nonconventional or diversified dairying, fruit and vegetable production, nondairy livestock production, or any other agricultural background and experience that is representative of Vermont agriculture and determined by the Secretary of Agriculture to be representative of the types of farms that would most benefit from the Program’s services.

**OFFICERS**

The Farm Viability Advisory Board shall be chaired by the Secretary of the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (“the Secretary”).

The Secretary may appoint a member of the Advisory Board to chair meetings from which the Secretary or the Secretary’s designee will be absent.

**TERMS OF OFFICE**

The Secretary of the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Economic Development, the Manager of the Vermont Economic Development Authority, the Director of the University of Vermont Cooperative Extension

Service, and the Director of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board shall serve indefinitely as *ex officio* members.

The four farmer members and agricultural finance specialist shall serve two-year terms, except that at the first meeting of the Advisory Board, the chair shall stagger appointments by assigning two of the four farmer members to one-year terms. Thereafter, the terms of the farmer members shall be for two years, with two members' terms expiring each year.

The Secretary shall appoint members at the start of each State fiscal year. The Secretary may reappoint members to a maximum of three consecutive terms. The Secretary may request the resignation of an Advisory Board member if the member has been unable to attend a reasonable number of meetings.

## **MEETINGS**

The Chair of the Advisory Board shall call meetings in consultation with the Director of the Vermont Farm Viability Enhancement Program and/or other VHCB staff. Meetings may be held at any suitable location in Vermont at times that are most convenient for a majority of the Advisory Board's members. VHCB will provide per diem expense reimbursement and mileage reimbursement for farmer members' travel to and from meetings.

The Advisory Board, by an affirmative vote of at least five members, may choose to adopt rules of procedure for voting and quorum, or the Advisory Board may choose to operate informally.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

The Farm Viability Advisory Board shall receive administrative support from the Director of the Vermont Farm Viability Enhancement Program, and/or from other staff of VHCB.

At the direction of the chair of the Advisory Board, the Director shall provide written notice of meetings to members, shall prepare agendas and any written materials needed for meetings, and shall record minutes.

## **POWERS AND DUTIES**

The Farm Viability Advisory Board shall advise the VHCB Board on the VHCB Board's Policy Position on the Vermont Farm Viability Enhancement Program. The Advisory Board shall also help to prioritize the needs to be addressed by the Program, to identify the types of services and methods of delivery that would be most appropriate, to evaluate the Program's effectiveness, and to provide any other advice or guidance that the VHCB Board may request.

The Farm Viability Advisory Board shall not have the authority to award VHCB funds unless such authority is delegated by a resolution of the VHCB Board.