



# Chatham County, NC

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 24-5257, **Version:** 1

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Vote to approve recommendation of Agricultural Advisory Board to appoint John Headen for Agricultural Advisory Board membership

The Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) consists of up to 9 members of the Chatham County Agricultural community and is charged with oversight of the Chatham County Voluntary Agricultural District and Farmland Preservation programs, as well as providing guidance and advice on agricultural issues to the Chatham County Board of Commissioners (BOC).

Currently, there are only five members of the AAB. At its regular meeting on April 9, 2024, the AAB voted unanimously to recommend the AAB appointment of John Headen. By ordinance, the Board of Commissioners is responsible for appointing AAB members. Therefore, this request is for a motion from the BOC to appoint John Headen to the Agricultural Advisory Board based on the unanimous recommendation of the AAB. The AAB requests that Headen be appointed to fill a vacant term from 2023-2026.

### Discussion & Analysis:

By ordinance, the BOC is responsible for appointing at least one AAB member from each of four quadrants: Northwest, Northeast, Southwest, Southeast. Currently the AAB does not have a representative from the Southeast quadrant. However, no suitable application from the Southeast quadrant has been submitted for consideration in over 9 months. A provision in the Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance governing AAB membership guidelines states: "If no willing candidate from a quadrant is willing to serve, upon request of the Agricultural Advisory Board, the Board of Commissioners may appoint a member from another quadrant."

Headen is an experienced cattle farmer and well-known representative of the Chatham County agricultural community. As no application was received from a qualified Southeastern quadrant representative, AAB chair Dave Eskelund makes a request to appoint Headen from the southwest quadrant in accordance with the ordinance procedures governing appointment. The AAB board is still soliciting applications for the other 3 vacant appointments and will be soliciting applications from a Southeast quadrant representative.

### How does this relate to the Comprehensive Plan:

"Support the viability of agricultural operations through land use policies and regulations." Chapter 4, Policy 2. The Agricultural Advisory Board is charged with providing guidance to BOC members on enhancing the pride and identity of Chatham County's agricultural community. Headen's appointment will provide valuable experience and leadership in this endeavor.

"Support permanent, voluntary protection of agricultural lands." Chapter 4, Policy 5.

The Agricultural Advisory Board provides oversight for Chatham County's agricultural land protection program. Headen's appointment will strengthen the AAB's capacity for providing land protection oversight.

**Budgetary Impact:** None. AAB members are not compensated for membership.

**Recommendation/Motion:** Motion to appoint John Headen to the Agricultural Advisory Board to fill a vacant 2023-2026 term.