

REQUESTED BY COUNCILMEMBER ABBOTT

A RESOLUTION TO CREATE THE URBAN
AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, the City Zoning Ordinance was enacted to promote and protect the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the City;

WHEREAS, the ordinance implements the comprehensive plan of the City by encouraging the most desirable use of land for residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, and other purposes by good civic design and arrangement, among other things;

WHEREAS, the AG-1 and AG-2 Agricultural Districts were implemented to protect and preserve agricultural lands for agricultural functions and to protect and preserve agricultural lands and activities in the rural areas of the City in harmony with reasonable levels of rural residential development;

WHEREAS, City Code § 5-543 restricts persons who live in zoning districts other than the Agricultural Districts from possessing what may be colloquially known as barnyard animals, including poultry and swine, and the Zoning Ordinance prohibits persons who do not live in Agricultural Districts from engaging in certain agricultural activities;

WHEREAS, several City residents who desire to own backyard hens or other animals but are unable to do so because their homes are not in an Agricultural District have asked the Council to consider amending the City Code to allow such ownership;

WHEREAS, the City Council would benefit from receiving advice and recommendations of a citizens committee composed of persons with experience in agricultural matters as well as residents who do not live in Agricultural Districts to determine the best paths forward with respect to agriculture in urban areas.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA, THAT:

1. The City Council hereby establishes the Urban Agriculture Advisory Committee.
2. The committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council, and the City Council shall appoint its members.
3. The Committee shall consist of up to eleven members and should include persons with agricultural expertise along with residents of urban areas.

4. Staff support shall be provided by the Planning Department along with representatives of the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation, the Health Department and the City Attorney's Office.

5. The committee shall study issues referred to it by the City Council, the first of which is the issue of backyard chickens in districts not zoned for agriculture, and it shall provide the City Council with recommendations that promote the health, safety and welfare of the City's residents.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia on the _____ day of _____, 2019.

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

City Attorney's Office

CA-1_____
Nov. 8, 2019
R-1