Buncombe County Agricultural Advisory Board

Meeting Agenda for June 16, 2026, at 11:00 am

Buncombe County Ag and Land Resources Office

49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806 Conference room B

Call to order	Chase Hubbard, Chair
Approval of June 16, 2026, meeting agenda	Board
Approval of May 19, 2026, meeting minutes	Board
Public Comment	Public
Applications for VAD/EVAD	Martha Ross
Farmland Preservation Report	Ariel Zijp
Program Policy & Appraisal Discussion	Board
Announcements and Discussion	Board

To enter closed session: G.S.143-318.11(a)(2)(5)

Meeting Minutes
Buncombe County Agricultural Advisory Board - Buncombe Soil & Water Conservation District
49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806
May 19, 2026, at 11:00 am

Ag Advisory Board Members Present: Chase Hubbard (Chair), Wayne Welch (Vice-Chair), Suzy Rankin, Terri Wells, Mark Diaz & Kyle Guie.

Others Present: Ariel Zijp, Martha Ross, Samantha Kirk & Marika Lapham (BC Staff)

The meeting was called to order at 11:03 am.

Approval of the May 19, 2026, Meeting Agenda

- **Kyle Guie made a motion to approve the May 19, 2026, meeting agenda, seconded by Mark Diaz and the motion passed on the vote.**

Approval of the April 21, 2026, Meeting Minutes

- **Mark Diaz made a motion to approve the April 21, 2026, meeting minutes, seconded by Wayne Welch and the motion passed on the vote.**

Public Comment: None.

VAD and EVAD Applications: Provided by Martha Ross. 3 VAD renewals.

- Three VAD renewals, good for another 10 years.

	VAD Totals		EVAD Totals		VAD/EVAD Combined Totals
Totals as of April 2026	Number of Farms	342	Number of Farms	21	363
	Total Acreage	19574	Total Acreage	2005	21579
New totals for May 2026 if proposed applications are approved	Number of Farms	342	Number of Farms	21	363
	Total Acreage	19574	Total Acreage	2005	21579

VAD/EVAD Applications for Board Approval

BUNCOMBE COUNTY

	Primary	Application Type	Acres	Township	Parcel Number (PIN)	Street Address	Phone Number (Cell)
1	Lucinda M Taylor & John C	VAD RENEWAL	58.09	Candler	868871792200000	50 Monarch Way, Candler, NC	828-231-4204
2	William Atkins	VAD RENEWAL	20.6	Barnardsville	977507965000000	29 Creekside Ln, Barnardsville,	828-230-3276
3	Kim Atkins Poore	VAD RENEWAL	41.3	Barnardsville	978418092400000	571 Dillingham Rd,	828-230-3276

- **Mark Diaz made a motion to approve the VAD renewal applications, seconded by Kyle Guie and the motion passed on the vote.**

Farmland Preservation Report: Presented by Ariel Zijp.

Project Name	Acres	Community	Funding Source	Status and Tasks
Splendor Valley LLC	23	Sandy Mush	State Federal	awaiting final title package from Jason to submit to ncda
Roger's Family Farm: Roger's Farm Trust Tract	156.36	Turkey Creek	State	Trustees working to revoke the trust in order to move forward with easement. Once that happens then update title work, edit BDR and move to closing. Requesting State extension
SAHC Community Farm Expansion	35.04	Alexander	Donation	final review of easement deed and then ready to schedule closing
Okoboji Farm	44.77	Fairview	Bond	Project somewhat on pause - HOA in the process of suing neighbor over alleged title issues
Cedar Hill Farm	63	Alexander	Bond State	reviewing Survey draft, EA and Title work and get final apraisal values
Slocumb Farm	122	Turkey Creek	Bond State	Survey, EA and Title work and get final apraisal values
Morgan Branch A - Dairy Farm	109	Newfound	Bond State	Survey, getting final appraisal values, title work, EA and BDR paused pending property cleanup
Morgan Branch Farm B - Other Place	77	Newfound	Bond State	Survey, getting final appraisal values, title work, EA and BDR paused pending property cleanup
Morgan Branch C - Dave's Place	144	Newfound	Bond State	Survey, getting final appraisal values, title work, EA and BDR paused pending property cleanup
Wilson Farm	20	Fairview	Bond State	Contracts paused because title issues are being resolved. Attorney is working through title cure
Saddlebrook Farm	23	Newfound	Bond State	Survey, EA and Title work and get final apraisal values
Brown Legacy Farm	25.09	Newfound	Bond State	reviewing Survey draft, EA and Title work and get final apraisal values
SAHC Jenkins Branch	99	Alexander	Donation	Starting survey - initial survey visit with landowner on 3/18
Dador Farms Phase 2	31.5	Fairview	Donation	initial Title work and contracting survey
Dador Farms Phase 3	70	Fairview	Donation	initial Title work and contracting survey
Cole sisters Farm	18	Newfound	Donation	On Hold due to family dispute
Davis Farm A	51.4	Newfound		Talking with landowners on housesite and farmstead areas and preparing to start AAB approval process in July
Davis Farm B	60.7	Newfound		Talking with landowners on housesite and farmstead areas and preparing to start AAB approval process in July
Davis Farm C	17.37	Newfound		Talking with landowners on housesite and farmstead areas and preparing to start AAB approval process in July
Sluder Branch	59.3	Leicester		Talking with landowners on housesite and farmstead areas and preparing to start AAB approval process in July
Ruby Brown Farm	41.67	Newfound		Talking with landowners on housesite and farmstead areas and preparing to start AAB approval process in July

- Conversation ensued on some of the projects.
- The Farmland Preservation Ordinance passed at the commissioners' meeting.
- Next steps: meeting with planning department to print/assess systems in place for public hearing processes.
    - Ariel and Martha are also taking a few training courses on public hearings so they will be prepared.

Farmland Preservation Program Policy Review: Presented by Ariel Zijp and Martha Ross.

- Looking at 6 policies that can be revised as needed throughout the years. These are guided by the Land Trust Alliance.
- Conservation Easement Project Acceptance Policy
    - A long-term policy
    - Projects are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, allows AA board to look at individual projects and includes a cooperative/respectful landowner as a requirement. Conversation ensued.
    - In the policy, will change acreage cut-off from 15 to 10 acres (or special instances for 10 acres)
- Conservation Easement Appraisal Policy
    - A long-term policy
    - Required by state and federal grant applications – essentially that we had basic standards for each appraisal
        - Pre-appraisal: estimates, as well as give the landowner how much you may qualify for
        - Official funding appraisal: for state and federal grants
        - IRS appraisals: happens right after the conservation easement has closed and is a requirement for any landowner who wants to claim tax benefits for their conservation easement
            - We have paid for IRS easements in the past – but none of the other farmland preservation programs in the area are doing this.
            - County attorney suggests it's best practice to not pay for IRS appraisals- not due to liability but does the appraiser feel comfortable taking on the liability. Conversation ensued.

- Conservation easement Annual Monitoring Guidelines and Protocols
    - Please see March Meeting Minutes for a refresher on the new LCAB grant process
    - Keeping a proactive relationship with the landowner is so important for the success of the conservation easement and helping to manage the workload on staff. Conversation ensued.
- Conservation Easement Encroachment or Violation Policy
    - Documentation is extremely important
    - Ariel and Martha have taken de-escalation classes.
    - In 2025, there were 3 minor violations, and one was a technical violation
- Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District Monitoring Guidelines
    - Essentially a mini-13-year conservation easement
    - Still requires visitation and monitoring. Conversation ensued.
- Conservation Easement Records Policy
    - Any relevant tax documents associated with real estate transactions must be stored in perpetuity.
        - Ariel and Martha have secured several back-up record retention methods
- Ranking Systems:
    - Currently 2 ranking systems (AAB Project Evaluation Ranking System (standard) and AAB Bond Ranking System (slightly modified to the share request) – would be easier for staff if it were only the AAB Bond Ranking System.
    - Both are very similar, but the difference lies in B3 – Development pressure versus funding and donation leveraged
    - Conversation ensued. Plan to discuss at June 2026 board meeting.

Announcements & Discussions: None.

Terri Wells made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mark Diaz, and the motion passed on the vote.

With no further announcements or discussion, the meeting ended at 12:18 pm.

June 2026 VAD/EVAD Report

VAD/EVAD Applications for Board Approval

	Primary	Application Type	Acres	Township	Parcel Number (PIN)	Street Address	Phone Number (Cell)
1	Cathy Rymer Davis	VAD NEW	60.75	Newfound	869959590700000	852 Newfound Road, Leicester,	828-515-1052
2	Cathy Rymer Davis	VAD NEW	51.4	Newfound	869937922700000	960 Newfound Road, Leicester,	828-515-1053
3	Cathy Rymer Davis	VAD NEW	17.37	Newfound	869908975400000	99999 Brooks Branch Road,	828-515-1054

	VAD Totals		EVAD Totals		VAD/EVAD Combined Totals
Totals as of May 2026	Number of Farms	311	Number of Farms	24	335
	Total Acreage	16966	Total Acreage	2395	19361
New totals for June 2026 if proposed applications are approved	Number of Farms	314	Number of Farms	24	338
	Total Acreage	16966	Total Acreage	2395	19361

Farmland Preservation Report

BUNCOMBE COUNTY

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Cedar Hill Farm	63	Alexander	Bond State	BDR and Title work in the works, final appraisal complete
Slocumb Farm	122	Turkey Creek	Bond State	Survey, EA and Title work and get final apraisal values
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