

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - 2026 SESSION

CHAPTER 104

An Act to amend and reenact § 15.2-5502 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority; quorum.

[H 305]

Approved April 6, 2026

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 15.2-5502 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 15.2-5502. Directors; qualifications; terms; vacancies; compensation and expenses; quorum; records; certification and distribution of report concerning bond issuance.

The Authority shall be governed by a board of directors of 18 representatives in which all powers of the Authority shall be vested and which board shall include eight Tourism Directors representing each county and the City of Norton, which will hold permanent seats on the board. If a Tourism Director position does not exist in a locality, the governing body shall appoint a representative, preferably from the government staff, chamber of commerce, or travel industry to represent the locality on the board of directors. The remaining seats shall be filled preferably by representatives from the travel industry from each of the eight governing localities. Each Tourism Director, working with the tourism committee from the localities, shall provide a slate of nominations to the governing body for selection of one representative, preferably from the tourism industry segment, which may include the chairman of the local tourism committee; a representative from lodging, restaurants, attractions, parks, or outdoor recreation; or a community leader. The board of directors shall create two ~~ex-officio nonvoting~~ board positions for representatives from the Jefferson National Forest Clinch Ranger District Office and Virginia State Parks, *and such representatives shall serve ex officio with nonvoting privileges*. Appointed representatives shall serve a two-year term that begins on January 1 and may be reappointed for additional terms with appointments made at the year-end board meeting. The board of directors shall have the authority to appoint nonvoting tourism representatives and to determine additional seats as they deem necessary.

The directors shall elect from their membership a chair, a vice-chair, and from their membership or not, as they desire, a secretary and a treasurer, or a secretary-treasurer, who shall continue to hold such office until their respective successors are elected. The directors shall receive no salary, but the directors may be reimbursed for necessary traveling and other expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

The board of directors may remove from the board any appointed member in the event that the board member is absent from any three consecutive board meetings or is absent from any four board meetings within any 12-month period. In either such event, the local governing body shall appoint a successor for the unexpired portion of the term of the member who has been removed.

~~Ten~~ *Eight* members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum of the board for the purposes of conducting its business and exercising its powers and for all other purposes. No vacancy in the membership of the board shall impair the right of a quorum to exercise all the powers and perform all the duties of the board. The board shall keep detailed minutes of its proceedings, which shall be open to public inspection at all times. It shall keep suitable records of its financial transactions and, unless exempted by § 30-140, it shall arrange to have the records audited annually. Copies of each such audit shall be furnished to the governing bodies of the participating localities and shall be open to public inspection.