

(4) (i) Within 120 days after the receipt of the petition, the county governing body shall render a decision as to whether or not the petition shall be recommended to the Foundation for approval.

(ii) If the county governing body decides to recommend approval of the petition, it shall so notify the Foundation and forward to the Foundation the petition and all accompanying materials, including the recommendations of the advisory board and county planning and zoning body.

(iii) If the county governing body recommends denial of the petition, it shall so inform the Foundation and the petitioners.

(5) The Foundation may approve a petition for the establishment of an agricultural district only if:

(i) The land within the proposed district meets the qualifications established under subsection (c) of this section;

(ii) The petition has been approved by the county governing body; and

(iii) The establishment of the district is approved by a majority of the Foundation board of trustees at-large, by the Secretary, and by the State Treasurer.

(6) The Foundation shall render its decision on a petition to establish an agricultural district within 60 days of the receipt of the petition, and shall inform the county governing body and the petitioners of its decision.

(7) (i) If the Foundation approves the petition, the agricultural district shall be established by an ordinance of the county governing body.

(II) [, however, the] THE establishment OF THE DISTRICT shall not take effect until all landowners in the proposed district have executed and recorded along with land records an agreement with the Foundation stipulating that for a [period of five years] SPECIFIED PERIOD OF TIME from the establishment of the agricultural district, the landowner agrees to keep his land in agricultural use and has the right to offer to sell an easement for development rights on his land to the Foundation under the provisions of this subtitle.

(III) IN THE ORDINANCE THAT ESTABLISHES AN AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT:

1. THE COUNTY GOVERNING BODY SHALL ESTABLISH THE LENGTH OF TIME REQUIRED FOR A DISTRICT AGREEMENT UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH; AND

2. THE TIME PERIOD OF THE DISTRICT AGREEMENT SHALL BE FROM ~~1 TO 5~~ 3 TO 10 YEARS, BOTH INCLUSIVE.

[(ii)] (IV) In the event of severe economic hardship the Foundation, with the concurrence of the county governing body, may release the landowner's