PURPOSE:

o To establish guidelines and procedures supporting the use of appropriate County facilities by Citizen groups.

POLICY:

o It is the intent of the Board of County Supervisors to allow Prince William County Citizens to have maximum use of the public meeting areas in appropriate County facilities and on County grounds consistent with County use and maintenance of the facilities.

o The Building Use Policy is set by the County Executive under general authority granted by the Board of County Supervisors.

o This Policy shall govern the use of the public meeting areas of buildings or facilities owned, leased, or otherwise occupied exclusively or managed by Prince William County, by groups wishing to use such building or facility for its own purposes. Public meeting areas are those areas accessible without having to enter office or work spaces. The areas available include the Atrium, Board Chambers, Bull Run, Potomac, Neabsco Creek, Occoquan River, and Powells Creek Conference Rooms in the McCoart Building; the Atrium, Leesylvania and Locust Shade Conference Rooms, and the Auditorium in the Ferlazzo Building. In addition to these inside areas, the grounds at the McCoart Complex and Ferlazzo Building may be approved for special events. All other areas are precluded from Non-County Governmental functions.

o This Policy shall not apply to facilities of the Agency on Aging, Libraries, Dale City Recreation Center, Park Authority, Service Authority or School Board. The multi-jurisdictional courthouse is not available for public meetings and is therefore excluded from the provisions of the policy.

DEFINITIONS:

o “Group” shall include any not for profit association, corporation, partnership, governmental body, or other entity which is not associated with or a part of the Prince William County Government.

o As used in this Policy, “County” shall mean the government of Prince William County, Virginia, its officers, elected officials agents and employees, acting within their capacity as such and within the scope of their official duties while engaged in the County’s business.

EXCEPTIONS:

o This Policy shall not be applicable to County agencies, or to any of the following excepted users:

o Groups which are a constituent part of the County, including County agencies or departments, or committees formed by the County or by any of its officers, agents, or employees for the purpose of carrying out the County’s work.
Groups which are sponsored by the County, meaning groups which are supported financially or otherwise by the County at the direction of the Board of County Supervisors, members of the Board of County Supervisors, or the County Executive and which are authorized to carry out a policy or goal adopted by the County and which are invited by the County to use any County facility or building for purposes related to the conduct of County government.

Groups which are appointed by the County, meaning any Board, Commission, Authority, Agency, or other entity any of whose members are required by law, contract or agreement to be named, appointed, confirmed by the County.

Groups or individuals invited by the County to meet on County property for purposes associated with the governance of Prince William County, Virginia.

Qualified government entities using facilities for public hearings, meetings with constituents, and for the execution of government programs.

The organizations of the Prince William County Arts Council financially supported in part or in whole by the Prince William County Park Authority are excepted from the provisions of this policy restricting the charging of admission and raising of funds. Other restrictions remain in effect.

PERMISSION TO USE COUNTY BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES:

Permission to use County buildings, facilities and public areas for purposes not related to the conduct of the government of the County shall be granted by the County only in accordance with this Policy. Request for using County facilities is reviewed by the Department of Public Works staff. Approval is granted by the Director or his designated representative. Permission shall be granted only for meetings or other functions which are scheduled to begin and end between the hours of 8:00AM and 11:00PM on normal business days and between 8:00AM and 4:00PM on weekends. Holidays are not included.

Such permission shall be granted only to groups, which operate solely for non-profit purposes.

SCOPE OF PERMISSIBLE USE:

Number of Uses: No group covered by this Policy will be granted permission to use County facilities more frequently than twelve (12) times in any calendar year unless previously negotiated. Theater groups supported in part or in whole by the Prince William County Park Authority are exempted from this limitation to permit practices and performances. An application must be submitted to the Prince William County Department of Public Works between two (2) weeks and sixty (60) days prior to each such requested use or meeting, in conformance with the application procedure set out below. As an exception permission may be granted upon a single application to schedule up to three (3) meetings in advance.

Priority to County Use: For all such applications, priority for the use of any portion of any County building or facility will be given to the County, and to users who meet the definitions set out in the paragraph entitled "EXCEPTIONS", above. No use of any County building or facility will be permitted which inhibits the regular, uninterrupted use of any County building or facility by the County or other excepted user by reason of conflicting need for the building or facility, generated noise, or any other reason.

Revocation of use: Permission granted for use of any such building or facility by any group or individual covered by this policy may be revoked up to 24 hours prior to the scheduled start of the requested use in order to allow use of the facility or building by the County or any excepted user.
o Limitation on Use: Permission to use a County building or facility is limited to the room or rooms, or space, which is described in the Facilities Use Agreement which all users shall be required to execute. No permission is granted to any group or individual to enter any other room, except rest rooms, stairwells, and entry ways which must be traversed to gain access to the meeting room. No activity will infringe on the ability of staff or other organizations to access the facility. All groups using the facilities must limit participation to the posted maximum "allowable" persons in room per fire regulations.

RESTRICTION ON USE:

Precluded from the purposes for use of the buildings and facilities is:

o any fundraiser.

o no facility will be used as an extension of a business operation.

o no admission can be collected.

o no public sales are permitted.

LIABILITY:

o Any group using any County building or facility pursuant to this Policy shall be required to execute a release of liability in a form approved by the County Attorney, releasing the County from any liability for negligence for any damages caused to the user, or its property, during the time of the use.

o Moreover, any such group using County property or facilities shall be required to execute an agreement in a form accepted and approved by the County Attorney to guarantee and hold harmless the County from any liability to third parties for injury caused by the group, or any persons or groups invited to attend the meeting or session on County property.

o The group shall be liable to the County for any and all damage to County property or injuries to County employees, officers, or agents caused by the group, or by any of the group's officers, agents, or employees, or by any person attending or seeking to attend the group's meeting, whether or not such damage is the result of negligence, intentional acts, or accident.

o Moreover, as part of any application for use, any such user whose use for a particular function will involve 30 or more persons must provide evidence of liability insurance available to finance the obligations assumed in this Policy, and providing a minimum of $100,000 in coverage, payable to the County.

APPLICATIONS:

o All applications to use any County property or facility under this Policy shall be made to the Prince William County, Department of Public Works, Buildings and Grounds Division, 9412 Peabody St., Manassas, VA 20110. The County will provide forms. The applicant shall state the name and address of the applicant, and of its officers. The applicant shall also state the date and time requested for the use, the expected length of the use, the nature and purpose of the use, and the number of people expected to attend the proposed activity. Applications must be made at least two (2) weeks before the proposed use, but not more than sixty (60) days prior to the proposed use. Applications not expressly accepted or rejected within two (2) weeks of the application, or within 48 hours of the time of the scheduled use, whichever is later, shall be deemed rejected.
SIGNS AND EMBLEMS:

- An authorized group may erect signs in conformance with the Prince William County’s Zoning Ordinance. Signs on County property advertising the time and place of the authorized meeting, and the name of the group will be limited in size to no greater than 4’x4’. Signs may be put in place no sooner than one (1) hour prior to the scheduled start of the meeting, and must be removed at the conclusion of the meeting. No other signs, emblems, or symbols may be erected on County property by any group or individual.

- A copy or facsimile of any sign or emblem to be used shall accompany the application form.

SET UP:

- The authorized user is responsible for setting up the meeting place, providing extra chairs in meeting rooms, and supplying such items as easels, bulletin boards, and other equipment. The group may use equipment such as bulletin boards and chalkboards owned by the County and located in the approved meeting room. The user shall be responsible for returning the furniture and fixtures in the meeting room to its original configuration after the conclusion of the meeting or other use.

- Use of any electrical equipment by user shall be subject to County approval.

CLEAN UP:

- The authorized user shall be responsible for all clean up following the conclusion of the meeting. All trash must be removed from the premises at the user’s expense, except that up to four bags of non-toxic trash may be placed in any County trash disposal bin located on the property being used. Custodial service using County staff may be required based on the number of persons attending the meeting and the length and purpose of the meeting. Costs for this service will be borne by the user.

- The cost of any clean up by County staff required as a result of the user’s failure to do so shall be charged to user at the overtime rate of County staff utilized.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, AND SMOKING:

(revised 9/12/03)

- There shall be no alcoholic beverages served upon, consumed upon, or brought onto County property. Drugs shall not be brought onto or used on County property. Smoking is prohibited in all County buildings.

PERMITS:

- The authorized user shall be responsible for securing any permits or approvals, such as parking permits, required in connection with the meeting or other use.

CANCELLATION:

- Any permission granted under this policy to use County buildings or facilities shall be deemed automatically withdrawn in the event the County government is closed because of inclement weather or other emergency during the scheduled time of the meeting. Cancellation information will be provided telephonically to the point of contact.
SECURITY:

- The user shall provide at its own expense any security, which the user desires in addition to the normal security, provided by the County for its own purposes.

- Cost to provide security of the County facility extending beyond the normal security schedule due to the meeting of the group must be borne by the group.

EQUAL ACCESS:

- This policy shall apply to all groups and individuals applying to use County buildings or facilities. No group or individual shall be excluded from equal access to County buildings and facilities because of considerations of race, sex, religious or political persuasion, or because of the political, religious, or social aims expressed by the individual or group, or by any group's members.

DENIAL OF ACCESS:

- The use of County buildings and facilities shall be denied to any group which has, at any time prior to any requested use, been responsible for, or caused, any damage to County property through or because of acts of vandalism, violence, or rowdiness, or has failed to clean up facilities, by any members of such group, or invitees to approved meeting. Subsequent approval may require a higher insurance level or additional security and custodial charges. However, no individual or group shall be denied access under this section to the use of County buildings or facilities because of damages not caused directly by the group or individual, group members, or invited guests.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- The Department of Public Works will: receive, evaluate, and coordinate the use of designated areas in County facilities by Citizen Groups.

SCOPE:

- This policy applies to Citizen Groups, which operate solely for non-profit purposes. Since the County imposes no user fees for access to its facilities, and since its facilities are limited, it has chosen to provide access to these facilities to non-profit groups rather than to profit making groups or for profit making uses.

Approved by:

Craig S. Gerhart
County Executive