



Residents

- ↳ [Back To Board of County Supervisors](#)
- ↳ [Back To General Information](#)

Calendar of Events

[Printable version of this page](#)

Board of County Supervisors Topics

- [About](#)
- [Agenda & Audio Archives](#)
- [Audio Broadcast](#)
- [BCC Reports](#)
- [Board Supervisors' Pages](#)
- [Boards, Committees, and Commissions](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Current Agenda](#)
- [General Information](#)
- [Meetings](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [Resource Protection Area Information](#)
- [Supervisory Districts](#)

BOCS Rules Of Procedure

RULES OF PROCEDURE BOARD OF COUNTY SUPERVISORS PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA

SECTION A: MEETINGS

1. (a) *Regular Meetings* - The Board of Supervisors shall adopt a schedule of the times, dates, and places of its regular meetings, for each calendar year, at its annual meeting, hereby specified to be the first meeting after the election of new members, and the corresponding day of each subsequent year. Regular meetings shall be held on the first, second, and third Tuesday of each month, except legal holidays, provided that the Board may adjourn after the first Tuesday in August until the first Tuesday after Labor Day in September. Meetings shall begin at 2:00 P.M., and may reconvene at 7:30 P.M. or other convenient time for public hearings. The Board may cancel regular meetings as it deems appropriate, so long as the Board meets in regular session not less than once each month, according to its adopted schedule.

(b) *Changing Meetings* - The Board may change the date, time, or place of any regular meeting to another, when such meeting conflicts with any holiday or any such change is otherwise deemed necessary by the Board, or it may establish additional regular meetings in any month. The Board may eliminate any regular meeting shown on its annual schedule of meeting dates in the event that it determines that it can successfully complete its work in fewer meetings. Such change to, deletion of, or addition of a regular meeting may be accomplished by adoption of a resolution changing, deleting, or establishing a regular meeting date, done at a regular or special meeting, which is provided for in this section. The Clerk shall cause a copy of such resolution to be posted on the door of the courthouse, in the James J. McCoart Administration Building, and inserted in a newspaper of general circulation in the County once a week for two successive weeks prior to the first such meeting at such other day, time or place. If the day established for a regular meeting hereby shall fall on any legal holiday, then the meeting shall be held on the next regular business day without further Board action. The Chairman, after consultation with the County Executive and County Attorney, may cancel a meeting in the event that holding the meeting would present a threat to public safety. The Clerk shall provide notice to all Board members and, to the extent possible, by posting on the internet, contacting the media and posting a notice in the James J. McCoart Administration Building.

2. *Special Meetings* –

(a) The Board may hold special meetings by establishing a special meeting date, time, place and an agenda for said meeting at a regular meeting. The Clerk shall post and publish notice of the special meeting in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, §2.2-3707 VA Code Ann., not less than three (3) days prior to the day of the special meeting.

(b) Special meetings at the request of individual supervisors shall be held when requested by four or more members of the Board. Such request shall be in writing, addressed to the Clerk of the Board, and shall specify the time and place of meeting and the matters to be considered at the meeting. Upon receipt of such request, the Clerk shall immediately notify each member of the Board, the County Executive, and the County Attorney, in writing, to attend the special meeting at the time and place mentioned in the request. Such notice shall specify the matters to be considered at the meetings, and shall be sent by certified mail not less than five (5) days before the day of the special meeting. No matter not specified in the notice shall be considered at such meeting, unless all the

Board of County Supervisors Announcements

- [Prescription Discount Card](#)



members of the Board are present. The Clerk shall post and publish notice of the special meeting in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, §2.2-3707 VA Code Ann., not less than three (3) days prior to the day of the special meeting.

3. *Adjourned Meetings* - Any regular or special meeting may be adjourned to a date and time certain prior to the next regular meeting of the Board.

4. *Place of Meeting* - Unless otherwise prescribed as required by the Code of Virginia, the Board's regular meetings shall be held in the Board Chambers at the James J. McCoart Administration Building, One County Complex Court, Prince William, Virginia. Special meetings shall be held at the McCoart Building, or in the place specified by the notice required under subsection 2 of this Section.

5. *Public Hearings* - Public hearings shall be held after notice has been given in accordance with the Code of Virginia.

Except as provided herein, once a public hearing has been advertised on any matter including a rezoning or special use permit application the public hearing shall then be held to avoid inconvenience to the public. The Chairman may then (a) close the public hearing at its conclusion, and the Board may take or defer action on the matter including referral back to the Planning Commission of any land use issue within its jurisdiction; or (b) hold the hearing open for further public comment and Board action at a later date. Any applicant for a rezoning or special use permit may withdraw his application at any time prior to Board action thereon, subject to the provisions of Section 32-700.70 of the Code of Prince William County. No public hearing shall be held on any rezoning or special use permit application which has been withdrawn in writing by the applicant under the provisions of that section.

6. *Open Meetings* - All Board meetings shall be open to the public, provided that the Board may meet in closed session for those purposes authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. No meeting shall become a closed meeting unless there shall have been recorded in open session an affirmative vote to that effect, which motion shall state specifically the purpose or purposes of the closed meeting. No resolution, ordinance, rule, contract, regulation or motion adopted, passed or agreed to in a closed meeting shall become effective unless the Board, following such meeting, reconvenes in open meeting and takes a vote on such resolution, ordinance, rule, contract, regulation or motion.

SECTION B: PRESIDING OFFICER

1. *Chairman* - The Chairman shall preside over all meetings, represent the Board at official functions and ceremonial events, and make such appointments as are not required by law to be made by the Board. The Chairman shall retain the right to vote while presiding.

2. *Vice-Chairman* - The Vice Chairman shall be elected annually; shall preside over meetings in the absence of the Chairman; and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board. The Vice-Chairman shall retain the right to vote while presiding over a meeting.

3. *Chairman Pro-Tem* - A chairman pro-tem shall be appointed by the presiding officer before the presiding officer leaves the room. A chairman pro-tem shall preside over meetings in the absence of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman but shall retain the right to vote while doing so.

SECTION C: QUORUM AND ACTIONS

1. *Quorum* - A majority of all the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. The Chairman shall be included and counted in determining whether a quorum exists.

2. *Required Absence* - No action shall be taken by the Board unless a quorum is present, provided, however, that the temporary absence from the meeting room of members sufficient to constitute a quorum shall not be deemed to prevent the hearing of presentations or the discussion of matters submitted to the Board. The Chairman, Clerk, or the County Executive shall suggest the absence of a quorum prior to the taking of any action by the Board, but a failure to suggest the absence of a quorum shall not be deemed to alter the effect of this rule

requiring a quorum as a prerequisite to any action.

3. *Actions* - The Board shall act in one of the following ways:

(a) *Ordinances* - If required by law, action shall be taken by the adoption of ordinances. Ordinances shall be proposed for adoption, notice given, and adoption accomplished as is provided for by the Code of Virginia.

(b) *Resolutions* - If action by ordinance is not required by law, the Board may act upon adoption of a resolution, with or without prior notice. Resolutions shall be in writing. A copy shall be delivered to the Clerk, all members of the Board, the County Executive and the County Attorney before the resolution is proposed for adoption.

(c) *Motion* - If action is required on matters simply stated, the Board may act on oral motion only.

(d) *Unanimous Consent* - If no formal action is required and no objection is heard, a request of a member shall be deemed a request of the Board without further action, provided that such request is made at a meeting with a quorum present, and further provided that the Chairman states that such request shall be deemed to be a request of the Board.

4. *Proclamations and commendations.*

(a) The Board may issue proclamations on such issues and at such times as it shall deem appropriate. Proclamations shall only be issued upon Resolution of the Board adopted as other Resolutions are adopted. Such proclamations shall be signed by the Chairman of the Board.

(b) The Board shall have two forms of Commendation:

(i) *Board Commendations.* The Board itself may issue Commendations to any persons or groups for meritorious service to the community or other act meriting public notice, by Resolution adopted as other Resolutions are adopted. Such Commendations shall be signed by the Chairman of the Board.

(ii) *Supervisors' Commendations.* The Board hereby expressly authorizes any Supervisor to prepare Commendations for any persons or groups for actions that such Supervisor shall deem worthy of note, and which may be signed by such Supervisor on behalf of the Board, without the necessity of further formal Board action or vote thereon.

5. *Introduction of Policy and Appointment Resolution By An Individual Supervisor.*

(a) A Supervisor shall announce his or her intent to seek Board action at a future Board meeting during Supervisors' Time; such proposals would appear on the agenda in Supervisors' Time at the next meeting for Board consideration, or at such meeting as may be specified by the Board or other code provisions; or

(b) A Supervisor, in coordination with the Chairman, shall circulate appropriate written materials and/or resolutions for inclusion on the agenda for Board consideration during Supervisors' Time; and

(c) When appointments to policy or administrative boards are recommended, they shall be accompanied by a résumé of experience and/or qualifications for the prospective appointee. These boards are the Community Services Board, Human Rights Commission, Library Board, Park Authority, Planning Commission, Service Authority, and Social Services Board.

(d) Appointments to other boards, committees and commissions shall be initiated as above and shall be accompanied by an abbreviated résumé that includes name, address, phone number and an abbreviated statement of qualifications and/or interest in the

appointment.

6. *Process for Appointment of Supervisors to Various Entities.*

(a) A vacancy on any entity to which a Supervisor is to be appointed shall be announced to the Board as soon as possible by the Chairman . This announcement can be made at a Board meeting, by voice or electronic mail message, or in writing. A copy of any written announcement from the entity for which the appointment is to be made should be provided to the Board.

(b) Supervisors, who are interested in being appointed, should announce their interest to the Board as soon as possible.

(c) The Chairman shall notify the Board of the meeting at which such appointment will appear on the agenda to be considered by the Board and when discussion of the appointment will occur in closed session. The Chairman shall request the Clerk to the Board to prepare for the agenda a draft resolution for appointment with a blank for the name of the Supervisor to be considered if the Board has not discussed the appointment in closed session. If the Board has already discussed the appointment in a closed session, then the Chairman may request the Clerk to include a Supervisor's name in the draft resolution.

(d) The Board shall vote on all such appointments of Supervisors at a regular Board meeting.

SECTION D: VOTING

1. *Votes* - Votes shall be taken only upon motions made and seconded. Votes shall be taken in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, §2.2-3707 VA Code Ann.

2. *Method of Voting* - All voting shall be taken by electrical equipment permitting push-button voting from each Board member's seat. At the discretion of the presiding officer, a roll call vote may be taken for the vote on any ordinance or resolution.

3. *Restating the Question* - The Chairman shall restate the question or ask the Clerk to restate the question prior to the taking of a vote, provided, however, that at the request of the Chairman, a Board member may restate the question if it is the opinion of the Chairman that such procedures will expedite the decision of the question.

4. *Tie Votes* - In the event of a tie vote, the matter under consideration shall be deemed defeated.

SECTION E: RECONSIDERATION

Action on an ordinance, resolution or motion may be reconsidered one time and only upon motion of a Board member voting with the prevailing side on the original vote, which motion must be made at the same or immediately subsequent regular meeting as defined by Section A.1.(a) of these Rules of Procedure. A motion to reconsider may be seconded by any member. Any such matter defeated by a tie vote may be reconsidered upon motion by any Board member having voted to defeat the matter at the same or the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Action upon reconsideration of a question shall be taken only following notice as required by law and at least as much notice as was given prior to the original action, unless such action upon reconsideration is taken at the same meeting as the original action.

In instances involving the reconsideration of the adoption, or rejection of an ordinance, whether by tie vote or otherwise, the ordinance shall be readvertised in accordance with the advertising requirements for ordinances specified by the Code of Virginia prior to action on the reconsidered question. A motion to reconsider an ordinance made at any other meeting than that at which a lawful vote thereon shall have first been taken, shall constitute instruction to the Clerk to readvertise the said ordinance for further proceedings according to law.

SECTION F: ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. *Commencement of Meetings.*

(a) At the time specified in Section A of these Rules for the commencement of regular meetings, and at the hour specified for adjourned or special meetings, the presiding officer shall call the meeting to order, and direct the Clerk to note the presence or absence of Board members. A quorum shall be required for the commencement of any meeting.

(b) The Board shall open each meeting, regular or special, with the Pledge of Allegiance and the reading or recitation of a prayer, or with an invocation by a cleric invited for the purpose.

2. *Agenda* - The Chairman, with the County Executive, shall prepare an agenda for each meeting. Any member having matters to be considered by the Board shall submit them to the County Executive for inclusion on an appropriate agenda, in consultation with the Chairman.

2A. *Consent Agenda* - The Chairman is authorized and directed, in consultation with the County Executive, to prepare a consent agenda for the first and third regular Board meetings of the month, for matters of routine, non-controversial nature. There will be no consent agenda at the second regular Board meeting of the month. Motions to approve the consent agenda shall not be debatable, and shall be adopted only by unanimous consent of all Board members present at the meeting. Matters may be removed from the consent agenda and placed on the regular agenda for debate at the request of any Board member, the County Executive, or the County Attorney.

3. *Citizens' Time* - The Board shall set aside thirty (30) minutes as Citizens' Time at the beginning of each Board session, and again at the beginning of each evening session. During Citizens' Time the Board will receive comment from any citizen on any item not on the public hearing calendar for the day, without restriction, provided that the Chairman may prohibit or proscribe the use of obscenity or other speech tending to create a breach of the peace; and provided further that no individual citizen shall be permitted to address the Board for more than three (3) minutes. The Chairman shall allocate the aforesaid thirty (30) minutes among those speakers in an equitable manner.

4. *Supervisors' Time* - On each agenda there shall be a period designated "Supervisors' Time," during which each Board member shall be entitled to unrestricted use of five (5) minutes for such purposes as each member deems appropriate. A member may announce his or her intent to seek Board action but may not make a motion during Supervisors' Time. At the end of the five-minute period for each member, the presiding officer shall call the Board to order, and any continuation of the matter then under discussion shall go over to the end of the Agenda, or to a subsequent meeting, as the Board may determine.

5. *County Executive, County Attorney, and Board Matters* - To the maximum extent possible County Executive, County Attorney, and Board matters shall be scheduled in the period from 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the regular Board meetings or such other time as the Chairman may deem expedient.

6. *Administrative and Informational Matters* - Administrative and information matters shall not be placed on the agenda or considered by the Board until the interested member shall have ascertained from the administrative staff, through the County Executive, that all appropriate administrative actions have been taken, or until an unreasonable amount of time following a request for administration action has elapsed and insufficient action has been taken.

Matters having to do with actions or failures to act by the administrative staff shall not be placed on the agenda or considered by the Board until the County Executive shall have been given a reasonable opportunity to furnish the interested member or members with an explanatory statement.

7. *Agency Matters* - Matters having to do with agencies not under the administrative supervision of the County Executive shall not be placed on the agenda or considered by the Board until the affected agency or agencies shall have been given a reasonable opportunity to furnish the

interested members of the Board with background information or data.

8. *Agenda Order*

(a) Order on the agenda shall be established by the Chairman, in consultation with the County Executive, taking into account probable public interest and the need for staff or other presentations. Insofar as is practicable, agenda order shall maximize convenience to the public and minimize any adverse impact on performance of normal staff functions. The Board may amend the agenda by majority vote.

(b) Matters requiring Board action shall generally be scheduled for the first and third regular Board meetings of the month; however, action may be taken on motion of a Board member at the second regular meeting of the month if it is of the nature set forth in Subsection (c) below. Presentations and work sessions shall generally be scheduled for the second regular Board meeting of the month.

(c) Matters neither included on the agenda nor disposed of during each member's unrestricted time shall be taken up only if the presiding officer determines that:

- (1) they are emergency in nature;
- (2) they involve persons who are present but would not be present at a subsequent meeting; or
- (3) action is required by Robert's Rules of Order or these Rules of Procedure.

9. *Minutes* - The Clerk shall keep minutes of the meetings of the Board and shall also maintain one recording, by means of electronic device, of the proceedings at any Board meeting, except closed sessions. One copy of the minutes of the recorded proceedings shall be made available by the Clerk to any person requesting same, with a fee to be paid to the County for the cost of producing such copy. Duplicate tapes will be made, provided a blank tape is presented or a fee paid for the duplicate. All copies shall be made by the County to fulfill requests by citizens.

10. *Closed Sessions* - Each agenda shall specify a time at each regular Board meeting of the month, generally after all public business shall have been concluded during the afternoon session, for closed sessions properly called. When so requested by the County Attorney, County Executive, or any Board member, however, the Chairman may permit a closed session at any other time prior to consideration of any agenda item.

SECTION G: ORDER IN CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

1. *Persons Addressing the Board* - Persons addressing the Board shall limit their presentations to the time allotted by the Chairman, unless the Board extends such time by unanimous consent. The Chairman, in allotting such time, shall take into account the complexity of the matter, its importance in relation to other business of the Board, and the time available during the Board meeting. At the discretion of the Chairman, the conduct of business by the Board may be reordered to allow earlier consideration of matters about which a substantial number of persons desire to address the Board. Insofar as is practicable, persons addressing the Board shall furnish the Clerk and members of the Board with a written copy of their remarks, at or before the meeting.

2. *Recognition* - Recognition shall be given only by the presiding officer. No person shall address the Board without first having been recognized. When all public testimony has concluded, and the Board is considering and discussing the matter, no person shall thereafter be recognized to address the Board.

3. *Zoning and other Public Hearings* - Hearings on zoning applications and special use permits shall be conducted as public hearings, provided that to the maximum extent possible, the applicant's presentation shall be limited to twenty (20) minutes, which time may be divided as the applicant sees fit. An applicant's time is typically divided into fifteen (15) minutes for presentation and five (5) minutes for rebuttal. Speakers, other than the applicant, shall have three (3) minutes each for their presentation. Persons representing and speaking on behalf of a

recognizable organization shall have five (5) minutes for their presentation. In the event that there is a question as to whether an organization is recognizable for purposes of the extended time limitation, the Chairman shall so determine. A speaker may not yield time to another speaker.

4. *Repetitive Testimony* - Testimony that is repetitive shall not be permitted on any matter. Persons of the same position as a previous speaker shall simply state their names and the positions with which they agree.

5. *Questions* - Questions by members of the Board shall be reserved for the end of a presentation to avoid interrupting the speaker, disrupting the time-keeping process, and duplicating ground the speaker may cover.

6. *Plans, Renderings, Exhibits* - Plans, renderings, and exhibits shall be permitted to be used in the course of hearings on applications for rezoning and special use permits only when the applicant shall first have provided the Board with instruments executed in such form as to assure development and construction in conformity with any such plan, rendering, or other such graphic exhibit in the event the requested zoning action is taken. Such instruments shall be held in escrow by the County Attorney pending Board action, and shall be returned to the applicant in the event such action is other than that requested, unless the applicant shall have consented on the record to some other disposition of them.

7. *Board Discussion* - Discussion and debate by the Board shall be conducted following the presentation of testimony on the item of business pending. Supervisors shall not speak to the item until recognized by the Chairman. A Supervisor who has spoken to the item shall not again be recognized until each other member desiring to speak shall have had an opportunity to speak.

SECTION H: DECORUM

1. *Board Members* - Decorum of Board Members shall be maintained in order to expedite disposition of the business before the Board. Questions and remarks shall be limited to those relevant to the pending business. Supervisors shall address all remarks to the presiding officer.

2. *Others* - Decorum of persons other than Board members shall be maintained by the Chairman, who may request such assistance as may appear necessary. Persons addressing the Board shall limit their remarks to those relevant to the pending items, and to answering questions. They shall address the Board as a whole and address questions and answers to the Chairman. The Chairman shall call the speaker to order; if out-of-order remarks, or other indecorous conduct persists, the Chairman shall order the speaker from the lectern. The order with gavel, if not heeded, will then cause the Chief of Police or his designee to carry out the order.

Persons whose allotted time to speak has expired shall be warned by the Chairman to conclude in one minute, after which such person shall leave the lectern, unless he or she is asked to remain to answer questions from the Board. No persons in attendance shall be allowed to voice remarks except as recognized by the Chairman after audibly stating their name, address, and who they represent, if applicable. Groups or individuals in the audience creating an atmosphere detrimental or disturbing to the conduct of the meeting will be asked to leave by the Chairman.

SECTION I: MISCELLANEOUS

1. *Robert's Rules of Order* - *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the conduct of all meetings of the Board to the extent that they are not inconsistent with these Rules of Procedure.

2. *Amendment of Rules* - These Rules of Procedure may be amended by majority vote of the entire membership at the annual meeting. Any proposed amendment shall be subject to further amendment at the meeting at which the vote is taken.

3. *Seating at the Dais and Reserved Area* –

The Board members shall be seated at the Board dais in alphabetical order by magisterial district beginning at the right with the Supervisor from the Brentsville District being seated next to the County Attorney and ending with the Supervisor from the Woodbridge Magisterial District being seated next to the County Executive. The Chairman at Large shall sit at the center of the dais.

Only members of the Board, the County Executive, County Attorney, administrative staff, and other persons expressly invited shall be entitled to enter the Area behind the Board dais and adjacent conference room used by the Board of County Supervisors for work sessions and Closed Sessions.

4. *Press* - In the interest of serving the public, the County shall to the extent possible within the space available, provide work areas for the working press. These Rules of Procedure shall govern the use of such space, and decorum therein.

Adopted January 3, 1984

Amended January 21, 1986; January 7, 1992; January 2, 1996; January 4, 2000; February 8, 2000; March 14, 2000; effective March 14 – September 19, 2000; and Effective September 19, 2000;

Amended February 20, 2001

Amended January 6, 2004

[Back To Top](#)



**Need Assistance
with "BOCS Rules Of Procedure"**

Prince William County Government
1 County Complex Court, Prince William, Virginia 22192

All content, services and applications on this web site are
Copyright 2003, Prince William County, Virginia
All Rights Reserved