

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

BY-LAWS AND PARTIAL  
PROCEDURES

Adopted March 17, 2022

Prince William County Sustainability Commission  
5 County Complex Court  
Prince William, Virginia 22192

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ARTICLE 1 - AUTHORITY AND ESTABLISHMENT

1-1. The Commission, established by the Prince William Board of County Supervisors on Dec 7, 2021 by the Board of County Supervisors under the County Executive form of government on January 1, 1972, has adopted these Articles in order to facilitate its powers and duties.

1-2. The official title of this Commission shall be the "Prince William County Sustainability Commission."

ARTICLE 2 - PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

2-1. The purpose of the Sustainability Commission is to advise the Board of County Supervisors on all matters related to making recommendations for a Community Energy / Sustainability Master Plan.

2-2. The Commission, with the advice and assistance of the Environmental & Energy Sustainability Officer and the County Attorney, shall:

2-2.1. Prepare and recommend a Community Energy / Sustainability Master Plan for the County.

2-2.2. Prepare and recommend elements and amendments to the Community Energy / Sustainability Master Plan.

2-2.3. Carry out all other such matters as may be appropriate pursuant to other ordinances of Prince William County and/or the Commonwealth of Virginia, or as directed by the Board of County Supervisors.

2-2.4. Establish and maintain standing and special committees as appropriate.

2-3. The Commission, with the advice and assistance of the Environmental & Energy Sustainability Officer and the County Attorney, may:

2-3.1 Cooperate with other contiguous counties, cities, towns, planning commissions or appropriate bodies of other localities so as to coordinate activities subject to the Community Energy / Sustainability Master Plan among the localities.

2-3.2 Appoint Ad-Hoc committees and adopt rules as needed to effect such cooperation.

2-3.3 Request information from departments and agencies of the Commonwealth that may affect the planning, development, and implementation of the Community Energy / Sustainability Master Plan.

### ARTICLE 3 – MEMBERS

3-1. Appointments to the Sustainability Commission shall be made by the Board of County Supervisors; one member per Supervisor at their pleasure.

3-2. The term of appointment is normally coterminous with the Board of County Supervisors which appointed the member to the commission.

3-3. Any vacancy in membership shall be filled by the Board of County Supervisors.

3-4 All Commission members serve at the pleasure of the Board of County Supervisors.

3-5. The Board of County Supervisors may appoint non-voting members to the Sustainability Commission. These non-voting members will serve as technical experts available to advise the Commission on topics within their areas of expertise.

3-6. The Board of County Supervisors may provide for the reimbursement of actual expenses of Commission members.

### ARTICLE 4 - OFFICERS AND THEIR SELECTION

4-1. The Commission's officers shall consist of a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson elected by roll call vote annually from the membership of the Commission.

4-2. In the absence of the Chairperson at any meeting, the Vice Chairperson shall preside; and at any meeting where both the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson are absent, the members shall select from their number by roll call vote, a Chairperson pro tem to preside over such meeting and certify the minutes of such meeting.

4-3. The Commission may be provided an Executive Secretary from the Environmental & Energy Sustainability Office Staff who need not be a member of the Commission. The Environmental and Energy Sustainability Officer shall approve the Secretary to the Commission.

4-4. Nomination of officers shall be made annually from the floor at the first regular meeting, and then annually at the first regular meeting in the calendar year. Election of officers shall follow immediately thereafter. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, a roll call

vote shall be taken and recorded in the Commission minutes.

4-5. With a quorum, a candidate receiving a simple majority vote of the members present and voting shall be declared elected, and shall take office immediately.

4-6. Vacancies in office shall be filled immediately by regular commission election procedures.

## ARTICLE 5 - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

5-1. The Chairperson shall:

5-1.1 Preside at all regular and special Commission meetings.

5-1.2. Appoint committees, and be an ex-officio member thereof.

5-1.3. Rule on all procedural questions, subject to majority of the commissioners present.

5-1.4. Be informed immediately by the Sustainability Office of any official communication related to the Commission and report it at the next meeting or sooner at the direction of the Environmental and Energy Sustainability Officer.

5-1.5. Carry out other duties as assigned by vote of the Commission.

5-2. The Vice-Chairperson shall:

5-2.2. Act in the absence or inability of the Chairperson to act.

5-2.3. Have the powers to function in the same capacity as the Chairperson in cases of the Chairperson's inability to act.

5-2.4 Ensure the basic support of the Sustainability Office to the Sustainability Commission.

5-3. The Secretary shall:

5-3 .1 Prepare and maintain a set of minutes for all regular and special meetings, as well as committee meetings or work sessions, when requested.

5-3.2 Sign all minutes and, at the end of the calendar year, certify that the minutes of the preceding year are a true and correct copy of same.

5-3.3 Keep a written record of all business transacted by the Commission.

5-3.4 Notify all members of all meetings. A copy of the agenda for all regular and special meetings shall be sent to all members, said agenda being posted publicly at least three business days before the meeting.

5-3.5 Keep a file of all official records and reports of the Commission.

5-3.6 Certify all records and reports of the Commission.

5-3.7 Serve notice of all hearings and public meetings.

5-3.8 Attend to Commission correspondence as hereinafter prescribed.

5-3.9 Prepare and be responsible for the publishing of advertisements relating to public hearings.

## ARTICLE 6 – COMMITTEES

6.1. For the purpose and terms approved by the Commission, the Chairperson may appoint standing and special committees from its membership. Committee meetings shall be set and the time and place announced during a regular Commission meeting. Such committee meetings shall be open to the public, and the committee's decision/findings(s) shall be announced during the committee meeting.

6-2. The time and place of all committee meetings shall be determined by a majority vote of the committee members or Chairperson thereof.

6-3. Minutes shall be prepared for all committee meetings and submitted to the Commission at a regular meeting for acceptance and incorporation into the Commission minutes as consent items.

6-4. Standing committees authorized pursuant to article 6.1. shall be established per resolution and that resolution shall be attached per Sustainability Commission ByLaws and Procedures.

## ARTICLE 7 - HEARINGS AND MEETINGS

7-1. Regular meetings of the Commission shall be held on the third Thursdays of each month except the months of November and December, when the meeting dates shall be determined by a majority vote of the commission members. When a meeting date falls on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be held on the following day, unless otherwise designated by the Commission.

7-1.1. In addition to those required by law, at its discretion, the Commission may hold public hearings when it decides that such hearings will be in the public interest.

7-1.2. All regular meetings shall begin at 6:30 pm.

7-1.4. All regular meetings shall be held at the James J. McCoart Administration Building, One County Complex Court, Prince William, Virginia. Special meetings and work sessions shall be held at the McCoart Building, or in the place specified by the notice required under paragraph 7.2 hereafter. Commission Work Sessions shall be scheduled at the pleasure of the Commission Chairperson. Work sessions may be commenced without a quorum present; however, no action may be taken unless a quorum is present. A straw vote may be taken and recorded in the minutes of all work sessions if directed by the Chairperson.

7-2. The Chairperson may call special meetings and work sessions of the Commission, or a special meeting or work session may be called by two of the Commission members upon written request to the Secretary. The Secretary shall deliver to all members, at least five (5) days in advance of a special meeting, a written notice stating the time, place, and purpose thereof. The foregoing written notice to the members of a special meeting is not required, if the time of the special meeting has been established at a regular meeting, or if all members are present at the special meeting, or if a written waiver of notice is filed. Notice shall be given to the public in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

7-3. All meetings of the Commission, and all records and accounts thereof, shall be open to the public, except as provided in paragraph 7-4. hereafter.

7-4. The Commission may go into closed session in accordance with Section 2.2-3711 VA Code Ann., to discuss certain matters, but the Commission may not take any official action(s) while in closed session.

7-5. A majority of the Commission's voting membership shall constitute a quorum, and the number of votes necessary to transact business shall be a majority of the members present and voting. When there are vacancies in voting membership (due to Commissioner resignation or termination at the convenience of the appointing Supervisor), a quorum will be a majority of the non-vacant voting members. Voting may be by roll call, in which case a record shall be kept as part of the minutes.

7-6. Members may participate from remote locations, as allowed by "Prince William Sustainability Commission Policy Regarding the Attendance of Meetings Electronically Pursuant to § 2.2-3708.3 and Section 2.2-3708.3, VA Code Ann." adopted by the Sustainability Commission on Sept 22, 2022. Remote participation will be voted upon by the voting members physically present at the meeting location. The Chair will determine if a quorum exists after the vote to allow remote participation.

7-7. Any person addressing the Commission shall limit their presentation to the time allotted by the Chairperson, unless the Commission extends the time by unanimous consent.

7-8. Repetitive testimony shall be discouraged on any matter. Persons with the same position as previous speakers may simply state their name, address, and the position(s) they agree with.

7-9. Only speakers recognized by the Chairperson may speak. All persons in attendance shall refrain from making remarks, unless recognized by the Chairperson. All groups or individuals in the audience shall refrain from creating an atmosphere detrimental, or disturbing, to the conduct of the meeting at the risk of being asked to leave by the Chairperson.

7-10. Questions shall be addressed to the Chairperson; answers and follow-up questions by the Commission shall be reserved until the end of the presentation to avoid interrupting the speaker and duplicating ground the speaker may cover.

7-11. Discussion and debate by the Commission shall be conducted following the presentation of the pending item. Members shall not speak until recognized by the Chairperson. A member who has spoken shall not be recognized again until each member desiring to speak has had their opportunity.

## ARTICLE 8 - ORDER OF BUSINESS

8-1. The order of business for a regular meeting shall be:

8-1.1 Call to order by Chairperson.

8-1.2. Pledge of Allegiance.

8-1.3. Roll call and determination of a quorum.

8-1.4. Public Comment. The Commission shall offer public comment at the beginning of each regular meeting. During this time, the Sustainability Commission will receive comment from any citizen on any item not on the public hearing agenda for the evening, without restriction. The Chairperson shall prohibit the use of obscenity or other speech tending to create a breach of the peace. The Chairperson shall allocate time to each speaker in an equitable manner; a speaker shall not be permitted more than five (5) minutes when representing an organization or more than three (3) minutes when representing themselves.

8-1.5. Consent Agenda. The reading or approval of Official Minutes and Resolutions covering a specified period.

8-1.6. Public Hearings. Public testimony, Commission discussion and deliberation, and voting on all items advertised and listed on the agenda. Refer to Article 7 - Meetings and Hearings.

8-1.7. Sustainability Commission Procedures (Old Business and New Business) other than those herein shall be maintained by the Environmental & Energy Sustainability Office Staff. Discussion of Commission-related items, including policies and procedures and request(s) shall be made to the Environmental & Energy Sustainability Office for information and action(s).

8-1.9. Commissioners' Time. On each agenda there shall be a period designated

"Commissioners' Time," during which each Commissioner shall be entitled to unrestricted use not to exceed five (5) minutes for such purposes as each Commissioner deems appropriate. A Commissioner may announce his or her intent to seek Commission action but may not make a motion during Commissioners' Time.

8-1.11. Departmental Reports. Reports, and discussion thereof, from the Environmental & Energy Sustainability Office, including administrative reports, and discussion(s) of a house-keeping nature.

8-1.12. Adjournment.

8-2. The Chairperson or Secretary shall restate motions before a vote is taken. The names of persons making and seconding motions, as well as roll call voting, shall be recorded in the Commission minutes.

8-3. Parliamentary procedures in Commission meetings shall be governed by the adopted rules of order, namely, "Robert's Rules of Order," in all cases not otherwise provided for in these rules.

8-4. The Commission shall maintain a set of minutes of all regular and special meetings, and work sessions at the call of the Chairperson and these minutes shall become a matter of public record.

## ARTICLE 9 - AMENDMENTS

9-1. These rules may be added to, amended, or waived by a recorded majority vote of the entire membership, provided notice of such change is mailed at least five (5) days before the meeting. In the event said notice of proposed rule change is mailed to each member of the commission at least fifteen (15) days before said meeting, the rule may be changed by majority vote of those present, provided a quorum is in attendance.

9-2. The Commission may temporarily suspend any of these rules by a unanimous vote of the members present.

## ARTICLE 10 - EFFECTIVE DATE

10-1. Nothing in the foregoing by-laws and procedures shall invalidate any official business transacted by the Commission prior to the adoption of these by-laws and procedures.

10-2. The foregoing by-laws and procedures shall become effective upon a vote of the majority of the membership of the Commission at a regular meeting.

10-3. The effective date of the Prince William County Sustainability Commission by-laws and procedures is May 19, 2022.