

## Mecklenburg County Facility Naming Policy

### Purpose

To establish consistent guidelines for naming buildings and other property, including public areas, owned by Mecklenburg County.

### Guidelines

- I. The authority to name or rename Mecklenburg County (County) facilities is vested with the Board of County Commissioners.
- II. Facilities to be named or renamed must be owned by Mecklenburg County, or must be leased by Mecklenburg County and the naming or renaming of the facility must be permissible under terms of the lease agreement.
- III. In rare circumstances and for just cause, a County facility previously named in honor of or in memorial to a person may be renamed. Facilities owned or leased by Mecklenburg County shall only be renamed if at least one of the following conditions is met:
  - (a) A minimum of twenty (20) years has passed since the adoption of the existing name;
  - (b) The facility has been relocated;
  - (c) The facility's function has changed.
- IV. Facilities owned or leased by Mecklenburg County shall only be named for a living person if at least one of the following conditions is met:
  - (a) The living person made a significant financial contribution to the development or acquisition of a facility and entered into an agreement approved by the Board of County Commissioners that the facility would be named for the contributor;
  - (b) The living person made a significant contribution to the enhancement of the quality of life in the community and is widely recognized and highly regarded for their work in the community;
  - (c) Leased property that has been named by the lessor for a living person.
- V. Facilities owned or leased by Mecklenburg County shall only be named for a deceased person if the following condition is met:
  - (a) The person made a significant contribution to the enhancement of the quality of life in the community and is widely recognized and highly regarded for their work in the community;
- VI. Facilities owned or leased by Mecklenburg County shall only be named for an elected official if:
  - (a) A minimum of five (5) years has passed since the individual last served in elected office, excluding elected officials who are deceased.
- VII. Facilities owned or leased by Mecklenburg County may be given names based upon geographical, historical, ecological, functional or other such factors as the Board of County Commissioners considers appropriate.

- VIII. A County facility under construction or renovation may be given a “working title” and shall only become the official name if approved by the Board of County Commissioners.
- IX. Selection of names should be managed in such a way that prevents duplication and/or confusion.
- X. Naming/renaming requests for Park and Recreation facilities/public areas will follow the process outlined in the Park and Recreation Public Areas and Facilities Naming Policy, which is attached herein as Appendix 1.
- XI. (a) If a private entity has entered into an agreement with the County to raise funds for a capital improvement, construction or renovation, and the entity desires to offer naming rights as a mechanism to raise funds, the policy provisions in the “Park and Recreation Public Areas and Facilities Naming Policy” will not apply.
- (b) After the application is submitted to Mecklenburg County, staff will review the application and perform any due diligence it deems necessary for the purposes of delivering a staff recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. This action will be performed in an efficient but thorough manner, so a public hearing may be scheduled in a reasonable period of time. The recommendation should be presented to the Board of County Commissioners prior to the public hearing being held.
- (c) The Board of County Commissioners will receive the application, hold the public hearing and then consider the application for approval.
- XII. Exceptions to this policy may be made by majority vote of the Board of County Commissioners.

Adopted the 1<sup>st</sup> day of September, 2009

Revised October 15, 2013

Revised March 21, 2017

## **EXHIBIT 1**

### **Application Process**

Applications for naming and/or renaming of Mecklenburg County facilities must be submitted by an individual, independent groups, staff and/or members of the Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners. Applications must be submitted to the Mecklenburg County Manager's Office using the Exhibit 2 form. Applications will go through an extensive screening process, including a background check if the request is to name County property for an individual. Once the application has passed the screening process, a Public Hearing Notice will be placed in the local newspaper 10 days in advance of the hearing. During the public hearing, individuals and/or groups will have an opportunity to express their support or opposition of the naming/renaming request.

**EXHIBIT 2**

**MECKLENBURG COUNTY FACILITIES NAMING AND RENAMING POLICY  
APPLICATION**

**I. General Policy Statement**

The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) shall be responsible for approving all names of facilities in Mecklenburg County Government consistent with the Mecklenburg County Facilities Naming Policy.

**II. Applicant's Information**

Name of Individual/Group Making Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Site of Naming/Renaming to be Considered: \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Recommendation and Supporting Information**

Recommended Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The recommended name is a reference to (check one of the following):

a living person

a deceased person

other reference (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*(If none of the above, please skip all remaining questions and provide a one-page rationale to support recommended name)*

**IV. Background Check**

If the request is to name a facility after a person, living or deceased, please provide the following information about that person. This information will be used only to conduct a background check on the person for whom the naming is being requested and will be held confidential.

Current Address (if living): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

V. Name of civic/community activities, position of leadership and dates of involvement:

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VI. Organizations and positions held: \_\_\_\_\_

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VII. Awards and honors: \_\_\_\_\_

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VIII. Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Appendix 1

### Park and Recreation Public Areas and Facilities Naming Policy

#### General Policy Statement

The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) shall be responsible for approving all names for public areas and facilities of Mecklenburg County Government **consistent with the Mecklenburg County Facilities Naming Policy**. All such petitions and other requirements surrounding the naming and/or renaming of public areas and facilities will be entertained and recommended for consideration by individuals, independent groups, staff and/or other approved governmental bodies. Staff and/or citizen advisory boards will comply by conducting three (3) public readings of the proposed names during a timed agenda item identified as Community Workshop at their monthly meeting. Therefore, these readings will require a ninety (90) day public input process before being recommended to the BOCC. Citizen comments regarding the proposed naming/renaming may be presented verbally during the Community Workshop(s) or in written letter, facsimile or email form to the staff. Prior to solicitation or placement of a proposed name on “any” agenda, the staff will first give notice to the BOCC through a Request for Board Action supported by appropriate background information on the need for naming/renaming of the proposed public area and/or facility under consideration. Staff will seek participation by members of the BOCC in the naming/renaming process, particularly the BOCC member representing the district in which the facility is located.

#### Presentation to the Staff

The staff will receive written, facsimile or email applications ONLY. Requests may come from any Mecklenburg County resident, organization, or the staff of Mecklenburg County. The application request will include as much background data as possible indicating why a particular name should be designated for a particular area or facility. Recommended names for consideration should be submitted no less than 180 days in advance of the public area and/or facility’s proposed dedication.

#### Criteria for Consideration

- I. The staff will accept applications from any County resident or group of County residents who wish to recommend the naming of a public area and/or facility in honor of a person, historical event, natural phenomenon or geographic location.
- II. The staff may recommend the name of an individual for a public area or facility, when that individual has made exceptional contributions to the County. Such contributions may have been rendered in money, land, time or in overall public service and/or promotion of public service. Exceptional service to the County and/or community at-large in all areas of public service is equally acceptable.
- III. Generally, the staff believes that facilities within a public area and/or facility should not have separate names, but should bear the name of the public area or facility itself. When a facility within a public area or facility that has already been named is

to be named, the inner-facility will in some manner denote its affiliation with the encompassing area or facility.

- IV. The name must not duplicate, or be closely related, or pronounced similarly, to any other name within the County, or any other local municipal system(s) so as to minimize any/all confusion to the general public.
- V. When the staff believes that the contribution of a particular individual or group of individuals warrants the name to be associated with a public area or facility that already has a name, the community or the staff may request to add that name to the existing name. Only one (1) additional name may be added and no more than two (2) names may be given to any area or facility.
- VI. Recognizing that it is appropriate to change names of a public area or facility under certain conditions, the BOCC reserves the right to change the name of an area or facility after a minimum of twenty (20) years. This time frame applies only to those public areas and facilities that have been named for an individual.
- VII. When naming or re-naming a public area or facility, the staff may accept and present applications to the citizen advisory and neighborhood bodies ONLY after solicitation of BOCC involvement. If appropriate, a first public meeting will be for discussion of the matter; a second public meeting will be to receive public input; a third public meeting will be held to take action on the matter. All these meetings will occur during a period not to exceed ninety (90) days from the first public meeting.
- VIII. Applications for naming a public area 200 acres or less or a facility of 10,000 square feet or less requires a petition, expressing support of the request, with valid signatures of a least twenty-five (25) adult residents of Mecklenburg County within the service radius.
- IX. Applications for naming a public area of more than 200 acres or a facility of more than 10,000 square feet serving more than the nearby community or neighborhood requires a petition, expressing support of the request, with valid signatures of one hundred (100) adult residents of Mecklenburg County.
- X. Applications for changing the name of an existing public area or facility by addition of another name or a complete name change requires a petition , expressing support of the request, with valid signatures of one hundred (100) adult residents of Mecklenburg County.
- XI. The BOCC may desire to place a plaque at an appropriate location within a public area or facility, whereby the name(s) of individual(s) may be placed in recognition of their contributions. This action may occur when the BOCC finds that it is inappropriate to name a public area or facility in its entirety for the individual(s).

- XII. When, following solicitation and there has not been a suggested title or appropriate suggested title for a new public area and/or facility, staff may then determine an appropriate title for recommendation to the BOCC.
- XIII. Certain features in public areas and/or facilities could be named for such things as flowers, birds, animals, etc. instead of people. Consideration for naming these items should be at the discretion of the staff and do not need approval of the BOCC.
- XIV. On occasions there may be organized or unorganized opposition to the naming/renaming of a public area and/or facility. Those opposing a request should follow the same general process and requirements described above that regulate applications to name or rename public areas and/or facilities. In particular, the opposing party/parties must submit a written statement to the BOCC or its designees, detailing the specific reasons for their objections. Any individual and/or group opposed to the naming/renaming could be required to appear before staff to answer questions concerning their written statement of opposition. The opposition also must provide a petition consistent with the requirements of the naming/renaming applicant(s).
- XV. When opposition occurs to a request, staff will delay action on the naming/renaming of the public area and/or facility for at least ninety (90) days, to evaluate the opposition's information and provide a reasonable time to support the decision-making process.
- XVI. During the process of opposition, the staff is responsible for informing the public of the status of the naming/renaming request, through appropriate communications that could include but may not be limited to:
  - (a) Issuance of Public Service Announcements (PSA) via local media forms.
  - (b) Site signage.
  - (c) Internet, etc.

All available information devices will be used to encourage public participation and involvement reflecting all pro/con viewpoints held by different elements of the citizenry. Such information must be available for review by the public for a minimum of thirty (30) days.